

Making Connections: Developing A Social Media Strategy To Communicate And Collaborate With Your Audiences



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Let's make this interactive!



Old Media to New



New Ways of Connecting



Social Media is a conversation...



...between actual humans



Basics of social networking



- Online communities
- Members feel a sense of belonging
- Users create “profiles”
- They look for and add friends
- Receive recommendations from their network
- Easy for members to share creatively:
photos, videos, music, etc

Getting Started



So... where do you start?

4 Ps of Social Media

- Prepare
- Pick your starting point
- Pay attention
- Participate



Making Connections

Prepare

- Convince others
 - Why use social media?
 - Word of mouth communication is the oldest and most powerful form of communication
 - We trust what our friends tell us
 - We trust what our friend's friends tell us
 - We trust anything enough people tell us



From Lach Mullen, Fort Bend County
Office of Emergency Management



Making Connections

Prepare



- Goals & strategy
 - What is success? What are your social media goals?
 - Examples:
 - Return on Engagement (ROE)
 - Promotion
 - Build rapport
 - Make it part of your overall communications plan:
 - Integrate social media into daily activity
 - Make sure your updates are in line with the priorities and messages of your organization



Making Connections

Prepare



- Resources
 - Money
 - most things are free, but not everything
 - do you have a budget for accounts, equipment, access?
 - People
 - Who is going to monitor/participate social media?
 - Will this need to be added to their job descriptions? employee evaluations?



Making Connections

Prepare



- Resources, cont.
 - Equipment
 - Are you behind a firewall? Can you access the networks needed?
 - Do you have a digital camera? video camera? web enabled mobile phone? computer that will allow you to install tools such as TweetDeck?
 - Do you have mobile internet access?



Making Connections

Prepare



- Policies & procedures
 - Time issues
 - How quickly can you respond?
 - How much time will this take?
 - Do you need official policy?
 - Who is empowered to respond?
 - Which departments/personnel need to be brought into the project?
 - IT
 - PR
 - Customer Service



Making Connections

Prepare

- Target
 - Who are you trying to reach?
 - Residents
 - Businesses/Industry
 - Media
 - Other government officials
 - Know your target
 - Networks
 - Language
 - Direct communication



Making Connections

Prepare

- Other items
 - Make sure you have master file of access logins, with others aware of its existence and location



Making Connections

Pick your starting point



- Choose your social media networks
 - Pick one based on your targets
 - Social Networks – Facebook, MySpace
 - Meeting, finding, connecting, promoting, discussing
 - Multimedia – YouTube, Slideshare
 - Sharing, learning
 - Bookmarking – Delicious
 - Link sharing, “the cloud”
 - News – Digg
 - News sharing, opinion sharing



Making Connections

Pick your starting point



- Pick one based on your targets, cont.
 - Reviews – Yelp
 - Sharing reviews of companies, services
 - Blogs – Blogger, Wordpress
 - Opinion sharing, news sources
 - Microblogs – Twitter, Yammer
 - Sharing short updates
 - Wikis – Wikipedia
 - Collaboration
 - Location based social media (newest trend)
 - Foursquare (CVB potential for marketing city sites)



Making Connections

Pick your starting point Recommendations



- FACEBOOK
 - Facebook: 5th most highly visited website
 - 10 million users and 55,000+ networks (growing 3% a week)
 - The maturing of Facebook (2007 numbers):
 - 100,000 age 64+
 - 310,000 age 45-63
 - 380,000 age 35-44
 - 3 million age 25-34 (fastest growing demographic, 45+% of all users)

Pick your starting point Recommendations



- YouTube
 - Second most used search engine online
 - Share your videos
 - Favorite recommended videos
 - Embed on your site
 - Free hosting
 - City Channel



Pick your starting point Recommendations



- Twitter
 - Micropublishing
 - Free opt-in SMS and Mobile updates
 - As easy to use as texting
 - Clean, simple, fast
 - Can be tied into PIER
 - Lots of buzz!



Pick your starting point Recommendations



- WordPress
 - Popular blogging tool
 - Set up a blog in 15 minutes
 - Lets you control message informally
 - Gives you a personal touch

Pick your starting point



- Open personal account
 - Get comfortable
 - Start!
- Create plan for your organization
 - Open organizational account.
 - Start!
- If your resources are available, pick another and start there.



Making Connections

Pick your starting point



- Build your network
 - Friends
 - Colleagues
 - Directories:
 - Twellow
 - Industry listings



Making Connections

Pick your starting point

- Start Today!



Making Connections

Pay attention

- Listen to what's being said about your organization, your city
 - Twitter Search
 - Google Search (blogs & news)
 - Technorati
- Read what others are writing
 - RSS Feeds
 - Google Reader
 - Bloglines



Making Connections

Pay attention

- Who are others following, talking about
 - Friend your friend's friends
- What is being said about your topic
 - Are other blogs linking to yours?
- Watch the trends
 - Technology & tools
 - Topics and discussions



Making Connections

Participate

- Be authentic
- Be honest
- Spend time to build trust
- Contribute to the conversation
 - Respond to questions, clarify, add more info
 - Press releases aren't enough
- Promote via your non-social networks
- Stay engaged



Making Connections

Participate



- How to use Facebook
 - Set up a page for your organization
 - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>
 - Address, Hours, Website
 - Import RSS feed as notes
 - Edit Page >Notes – Admin Options> Edit > Import a blog
 - Advertise your Page
 - NEW! Get a “vanity url” for your page
 - Monitor results

Participate



- How to use Twitter
 - Post short recaps of News Releases
 - Post quirky things: show your personality
 - Post data
 - Chat with people
 - Virtual police scanner
 - Use Hashtags - #

Participate



- How to use YouTube
 - Load “backgrounder” videos
 - Load informal commentary on News Releases
 - Load relevant breaking news as appropriate
 - Capture video of interviews and post unedited
 - Favorite other relevant videos
 - Comment, comment, comment!

Things I’ve learned



- The tool isn’t what’s important, what’s important is how you use it.
- Be aware of what you’re trying to do. It’s important to have a goal when approaching these tools.
- Be aware of your limitations. Social media can be time intensive, and most of us have limited resources, so don’t try to do everything at once.



Making Connections

Things I've learned



- Get everyone on the same page.
 - If you begin engaging your audiences, then be prepared to start receiving complaints, suggestions and questions via those new channels, whether that's your intent or not.
 - You will need to have public relations or community relations, information technology, and your organization's customer service department all aware of the activities, and have made decisions on how you're going to handle inquiries before you receive them.



Making Connections

Things I've learned



- Traditional media is reaching less and less
- Social media can help you
- Take it slow
- Invest the time
- Build trust
- Learn from others
- Get started
- LEARN FROM WHAT YOU'VE DONE, & ADJUST.



Making Connections

Q&A

- Questions?



Making Connections

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