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City of Milpitas

Social Media Guidebook

You and your Department's start to going Social!

Draft Edition: June 2014

Social Media Guidebook Contents

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I. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this Guidebook is to establish guidelines for effectively utilizing emerging social media resources to disseminate information. This guide establishes a method for chosing your social media outlet, identifies responsible parties, specifies best practices to be used in disseminating information and outlines appropriate conduct. The Guide should be reviewed frequently and modified accordingly to reflect changes in this highly dynamic technology and to ensure the continued efficient and effective use of these services.

Social media systems improve the immediacy of getting messages to intended audiences by use of real time notifications and by allowing access over a multitude of portable devices. As a result, stakeholders are better informed and connected, thus keeping stakeholders informed on a timelier basis and providing the opportunity or collaboration. The use of social media systems is intended to complement existing information distribution methods - not to replace the City of Milpitas website. By using social media, the City strives to improve opportunities for timely communication, and to build better relationships with residents, business, employees, visitors and other intended audiences.

Your department's presence on social media sites represents an extension of the City's media and communication efforts. As a result, the look and feel of the City's overall communications effort, also known as branding, must be consistent.

Get the Word Out!
Post a sign in your entryway to let your customers know where they can find you online.

II. Getting Started

So you think you want a Social Media page! Before jumping in both feet first, make sure your team has considered the following:

- What's the purpose for your department/program site?
- Which social media platform(s) will be used?
- Who'll be the authorized users?
- What is your desired profile name?
- How frequent will content be posted? Do you have enough content throughout the year to make regular postings?

Now you're sure you want a page! Any program wishing to create or remove a social media site must submit a request via e-mail to the Social Media Review Team. The request must be authorized by your Department Head prior to submittal.

Social media site creation and deletion requests must contain the following information:

- Requesting employee and program;
- Purpose and scope of site;
- Whether the request is a new site, or represents a change to an existing site;
- Types of materials to be posted on the site;
- Anticipated frequency of updates;
- A description of the target audience;

Use images to amplify your Facebook & Twitter updates!

One simple way to boost your engagement is to use images to amplify your status update.

III. Account Request Process

City of Milpitas
CALIFORNIA

Social Media Account Plan and Request Form

INSTRUCTIONS

This form should be completely filled out by your Social Media Administrator and approved by your Department Head. The completed form will be electronically submitted to the Social Media Relations Team. You will be contacted by a member of the team with further instructions.

1 Submitter Info > 2 Account Info > 3 Work Plan > 4 Approvals

Date

6 / 2 / 2014

MM DD YYYY

Department *

Department Social Media Administrator *

First Last

Administrator Email *

Extension *

Must be **4** digits. *Currently Entered:* **0** *digits.*

Program

Continue

1. Contact your Social Media Administrator and inform them that you would like to start a social media site.
2. Review the Social Media Guidebook.
3. Submit the Social Media Account Request with your Social Media Administrator to your department head for approval.
3. Submit your department head approved Account Request to the Social Media Review Team (SMRT) via email to the “Socal Media Review Team” Distribution List.
4. The SMRT will review the request and submit for approval or denial to the City Manager or his designee.

Submit your request to the SMT about 4 weeks before you want to launch your site! This will give you time to get trained, gather your site information and pictures!

IV. Your Social Media Account

Best Practices

1. Consider your audience when developing messaging, determining language and images and structuring content. Social media can be highly effective when you narrow your target audience.

2. Exercise good judgment. Refrain from comments that can be interpreted as slurs, demeaning, or inflammatory. As a representative of the City of Milpitas, you have a responsibility to conduct yourself with decorum and present the City in a positive light.

3. Bring value. Consider what tailored, specialized information you can give your followers.

4. Refer back to the City's website. The website is the primary source for detailed information. Social media can be an alternative point of contact but information should not be posted in lieu of posting on the City Website.

5. Productivity matters. Decide how much of your department's mission and goals depend on utilizing social media and plan carefully to limit your efforts. You must be able to commit to the time needed to maintain real-time information on the social media you choose.

6. Maintain a "professional" social media presence. A City-sponsored social media presence should never be a substitute or duplicate of staff's personal pages.

7. Keep our "brand" consistent and highly visual. Utilize the City's official color, logo. Use photos. Remember to get photo releases at events and activities!

Maximize Exposure!
Link to your Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram pages from newsletters, emails, and website.

IV. Your Social Media Account cont.

Posting Limitations

1. Be respectful and exercise discretion and thoughtfulness for the City, other employees, customers and local businesses. Information posted should be practical and appropriately documented.

2. "Chatting," blogging" and ongoing back and forth dialogue is discouraged.

3. Use of social media by the City means content will most likely be considered a public Record subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act and the City's Open Government Ordinance. Privacy rights, fair employment rights, anti-discrimination and harassment rights protected under State and Federal law must be considered when posting to a social media site or when receiving responsive material from outside users. The Brown Act requirements that govern City decision making bodies make it problematic if City Commissions wish to have their own social media site. On-line interactions amongst Commissioners could create a "meeting" which was not noticed to the public in violation of the Brown Act. For this reason, City Commissions should not have social media sites and individual Commissioners should be careful that their communications do not constitute a "quorum" on matters within the Commission's responsibilities.

4. No photos of identifiable people without a signed photo release on file. At your community events where you are taking photos, you can also post a notice that photos for publication are being taken and request that those who do not wish to be included in the photo see a staff member.

Research Popular Content From Your Competitors!

If a type of content is popular with the audience of your competitors and colleagues, it stands to reason that a similar post will be popular with your audience.

IV. Your Social Media Account cont.

5. Your department's on-line presence reflects the City. Be aware that your actions captured via images and posts reflect that of the City and its mission, vision and values.

6. No personal information about any staff member, Council member, Commission member or resident should be included. Any item or topic that would be acceptable on the website is permitted. No lobbying in support of or against a particular policy or decision is permitted.

7. Access to Social Media sites during work hours on city-owned equipment should be restricted to official business only.

8. All information and messages posted to your social media site are considered public record and are subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Issue "calls to action!"
If you want to engage with your customers on social media, you have to ask for it (in moderation, of course). Facebook posts with questions generate 92 percent higher comment rates than posts without questions. Be sure to ask your question at the end of your post—that draws a higher comment rate than if the question is placed higher up.

V. Social Media Administrators

Department heads should designate one or more persons from their group to serve as the administrator for the department's efforts in using social media. That staff person will have complete authority and direction over the department's social media pages.

The Administrator's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Review and recommend pilot projects that expand the use of social media systems beyond outreach;
- Create their department's SOP that establishes their criteria and guidelines for use of social media systems;
- Monitor departmental efforts and projects involving outreach using social media, and evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts;
- Ensure that the branding of the departmental activity is consistent with the overall City effort;
- Add, change and remove systems from the list of approved social media systems;
- Explore ways to incorporate outreach with existing systems in order to improve efficiency, reduce redundant entry and facilitate maintenance; as more experience is acquired in this area;
- Post and refresh media content.
- Any other issues related to the use of social media systems.

Schedule To Post Updates Just Before, After The Hour and/or During Lunch Hour.

Schedule to post updates just before or just after the hour. This catches people who are checking social media just before or just after a meeting. Lunch hour is also the most popular time for social media viewing.

VI. Site Standards

1. All social media sites and related content will adhere to applicable State, Federal and local laws, regulations and all City policies.

2. All social media site content is considered a public record and subject to the California Public Records Act and the Milpitas Open Government Ordinance. Social media sites are also subject to subpoena's issued in lawsuits filed in Court. Regarding the latter, refer any subpoena served on the City to the City Attorney. At the same time, take steps to preserve any material requested under the subpoena until such time as it is determined whether it should be produced. Social media site content should be preserved under an applicable department record retention policy.

3. All social media sites are required to be branded in a manner consistent with City identification standards and, where applicable, should link to the City's web site.

4. All social media sites must contain the following disclaimer: "The City of Milpitas "Department Name's" use of social media sites is provided as a public service. The City of Milpitas is not responsible for any content posted by other parties or linked to this social media site. The responsibility for external content or comments rests with the organizations or individuals providing them. Any inclusion of external content, links or comments by the City of Milpitas does not imply endorsement."

5. Do not post copyrighted material, photographs or videos where permission has not been granted.

6. All City social media sites shall clearly indicate that they are an official City site and are maintained by the City of Milpitas "Department Name", shall contain the official City logo, Department Logo, and shall have the City contact information prominently displayed.

VII. Role of Social Media Review Team

Your Social Media Review Team will:

o ***Review*** account requests;

o ***Recommend*** the approval or denial of new account requests;

o ***Perform*** quality control of existing social media sites on a quarterly basis. Inactive sites or sites that have egregious violations of site requirements may be disabled;

o ***Train*** employees who will be administering social media sites on setting up site permissions and "how to's" of their new social media page.

Your Social Media Review Team will not:

o Post content or photos to your Social Media Page.

o Respond to private messages or "tweets" to your social media profile.

o Write your department Social Media SOP's. Examples will be provided to those needing assistance.

Don't Make The Most Common Twitter Mistake!

When you start a tweet with "@" sign, it won't appear in your followers' feeds. Instead start tweets with "." or a word.

Example:

The @49ers are awesome! (Correct)

@49ers are awesome (Incorrect)

VIII. Security & Record Retention

Accounts & Credentials

Social media accounts should not be associated with your City or personal email accounts. A new email address will need to be created.

o Email address may be used for multiple types of Social Media services

o Email address convention:

- Social[Dept][1-digit]@ci.milpitas.ca.gov
- Options for [Dept]

  FD - Fire

  PD - Police

  RC - Recreation

  HR - Human Resources

Email Account *Examples:*

- For Recreation: *SocialRC1@ci.milpitas.ca.gov*
- For Police: *SocialPD1@ci.milpitas.ca.gov*

o Chosen email account must be submittted to the SMRT on the account request form.

Passwords

Passwords must be submittted to the SMRT on the account request form.

Your password should satisfy the following complexity requirements

- Minimum 8 characters
- At least 1 capital letter
- At least 1 digit
- At least 1 special character (!@#$%^&)

Should your account password need to be changed, you *must* contact the Social Media Review Team by emailing SMRT@ci.milpitas.ca.gov.

Backup

All City Social Media account must be backed up either locally, or to cloud services recommended by Information Services Department. Backup of all City accounts will also be done by the Information Services Department. Backups may be done by individual department with prior IS approval.

Training

User Training will be provided by SMRT and Information Services by request.

IX. Facebook 101

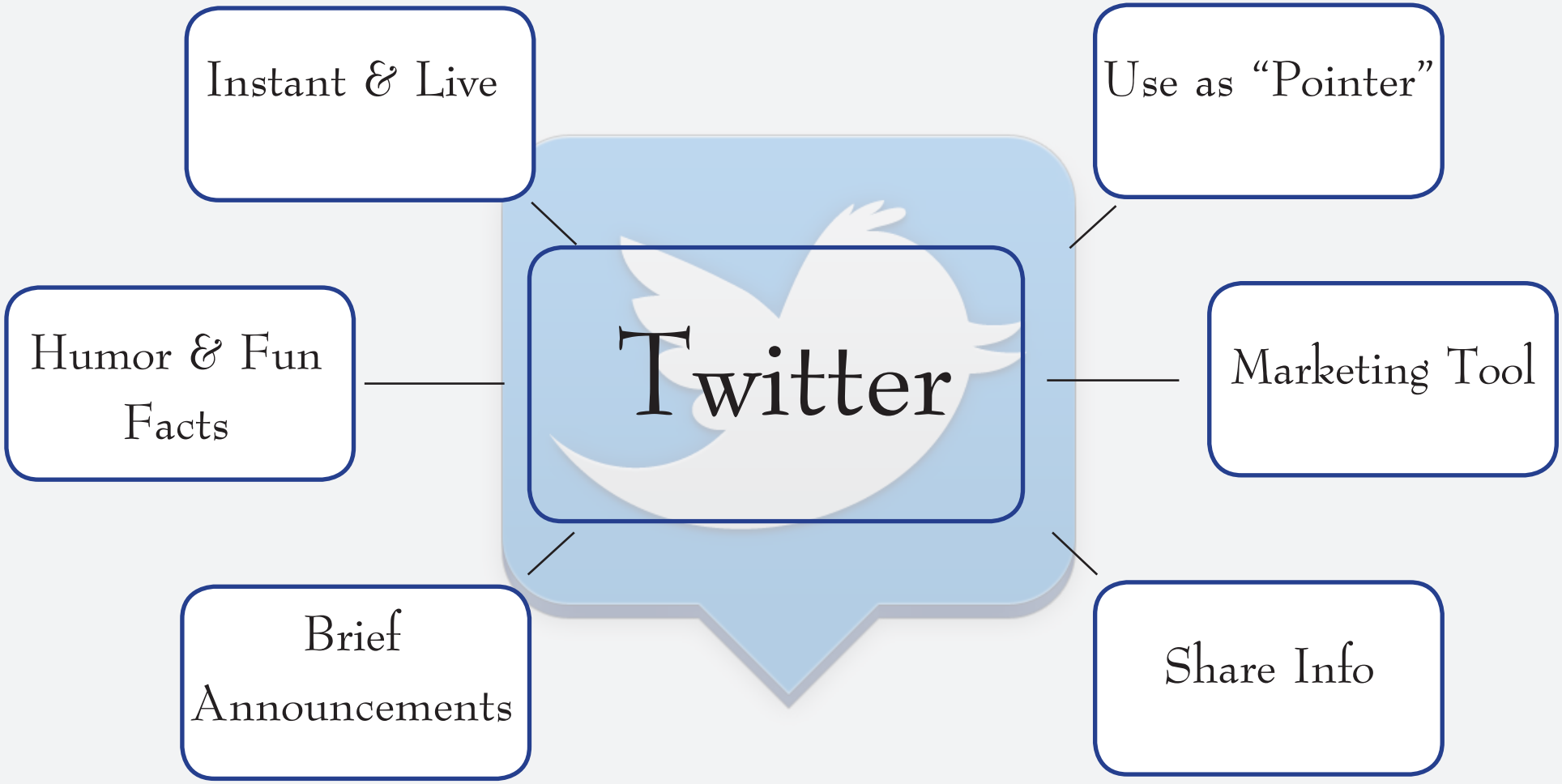
BASICS

- The more people that view the better
- Likes are better than views
- Shares are even better

PICTURES

- Pictures rule
- Landscapes are great
- Brand yourself with your logos and colors

POSTS

- Keep it simple
- Think about the value behind each post
- Use Post Planner if you're busy

X. Twitter 101