



Social Media and PR

Purpose of Social Media for Government Entities & Stakeholders

- ▶ Can help you successfully communicate with the public you serve
- ▶ Share critical, timely information
- ▶ Enable governments to control the narrative on key issues
- ▶ Allows governments to use subject matter experts to share information
- ▶ Protect your agency and keep public trust

Social Media Statistics

- ▶ According to Pew Research Center, these are the percentages of U.S. adults that use social media sites online or on mobile:
 - ▶ YouTube: 73%
 - ▶ Facebook: 68%
 - ▶ Instagram: 35%
 - ▶ Pinterest: 29%
 - ▶ Snapchat: 27%
 - ▶ LinkedIn: 25%
 - ▶ Twitter: 24%

Characteristics of Social Media

- ▶ Open
- ▶ Conversation and dialogue
- ▶ Multiple voices
- ▶ Getting the message to stakeholders
- ▶ Attention economy
 - ▶ Can lead to political persuasion as people use social media for their news

Opportunities in Social Media

- ▶ Knowledge sharing
 - ▶ Crisis Communications
 - ▶ Setting the record straight/rumor control
 - ▶ Test messaging
- ▶ Life sharing
 - ▶ Humanize your locality's "brand"
- ▶ Social networking
 - ▶ Citizen engagement
- ▶ Community building
 - ▶ Build trust through transparency

Crisis Communications

- ▶ Provides for immediate life safety communication
- ▶ Serves as outlet for supporting people that need help or information
- ▶ Social listening to get sense of what's happening and community needs/issues
- ▶ Keep messages short and actionable
- ▶ Link to more detailed content – most state agencies have information on their webpages for disaster response and recovery
- ▶ Identify and include hashtags to amplify the reach of your message
- ▶ Send updates frequently
- ▶ Utilize a government messaging system – there are several available. This is often managed by local emergency management agencies
 - ▶ Choose a messaging system that integrates with the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS).
- ▶ Continue to share updates even when an event has ended. Remember, recovery can often take years
- ▶ Follow trusted messengers for updates – VDEM, VSP, VDOT, NWS, etc.

How to Use Government Social Media Effectively

- ▶ Establishing a sense of trust with your community
- ▶ Responding to comments and questions
- ▶ Keeping followers up-to-date

Your community and constituents are already there. Therefore, your job is to publish content that attracts attention from your followers while also encouraging engagement.

How to Use Government Social Media Effectively

- ▶ Establishing a sense of trust with your community
- ▶ Responding to comments and questions
- ▶ Keeping followers up-to-date

Your community and constituents are already there. Therefore your job is to publish content that attracts attention from your followers while also encouraging engagement.

So how do we do that...

How to Use Government Social Media Effectively

- ▶ Be a source of community news and updates

How to Use Government Social Media Effectively

- ▶ Be a source of community news and updates
- ▶ Respond to your community's questions and concerns

How to Use Government Social Media Effectively

- ▶ Be a source of community news and updates
- ▶ Respond to your community's questions and concerns
- ▶ Educate your community and better their lives

How to Use Government Social Media Effectively

- ▶ Be a source of community news and updates
- ▶ Respond to your community's questions and concerns
- ▶ Educate your community and better their lives
- ▶ Humanize your agency or office

How to Use Government Social Media Effectively

- ▶ Be a source of community news and updates
- ▶ Respond to your community's questions and concerns
- ▶ Educate your community and better their lives
- ▶ Humanize your agency or office

Now that we've highlighted what sort of content to publish, let's talk about best practices when it comes to social media and government...

Best Practices of Government Social Media Accounts

- ▶ Emphasize visual content

Best Practices of Government Social Media Accounts

- ▶ Emphasize visual content
- ▶ Get conversational with your constituents

Best Practices of Government Social Media Accounts

- ▶ Emphasize visual content
- ▶ Get conversational with your constituents
- ▶ Use community and event-specific hashtags to monitor messages

Best Practices of Government Social Media Accounts

- ▶ Emphasize visual content
- ▶ Get conversational with your constituents
- ▶ Use community and event-specific hashtags to monitor messages
- ▶ Respond to your constituents in a timely manner

Best Practices of Government Social Media Accounts

- ▶ Emphasize visual content
- ▶ Get conversational with your constituents
- ▶ Use community and event-specific hashtags to monitor messages
- ▶ Respond to your constituents in a timely manner
- ▶ Publish your content to multiple channels

Best Practices of Government Social Media Accounts

- ▶ Emphasize visual content
- ▶ Get conversational with your constituents
- ▶ Use community and event-specific hashtags to monitor messages
- ▶ Respond to your constituents in a timely manner
- ▶ Publish your content to multiple channels

Next: Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

- ▶ Listen for relevant conversations

Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

- ▶ Listen for relevant conversations
- ▶ Educate your audience with valuable content

Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

- ▶ Listen for relevant conversations
- ▶ Educate your audience with valuable content
- ▶ Keep it simple

Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

- ▶ Listen for relevant conversations
- ▶ Educate your audience with valuable content
- ▶ Keep it simple
- ▶ Engage

Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

- ▶ Listen for relevant conversations
- ▶ Educate your audience with valuable content
- ▶ Keep it simple
- ▶ Engage
- ▶ Post regularly

Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

- ▶ Listen for relevant conversations
- ▶ Educate your audience with valuable content
- ▶ Keep it simple
- ▶ Engage
- ▶ Post regularly
- ▶ Stay secure

Seven Social Media Tips for Government Agencies

- ▶ Listen for relevant conversations
- ▶ Educate your audience with valuable content
- ▶ Keep it simple
- ▶ Engage
- ▶ Post regularly
- ▶ Stay secure
- ▶ Remain compliant



Social Media Don'ts

Don't

- ▶ Do not provide a statement that a site is open to any comment, criticism or feedback. You are only setting yourself up for failure;
- ▶ Do not remove posts because you do not like the content or criticism “viewpoint discrimination”;
- ▶ Do not block certain members from posting on your social media site because you do not like the content of their comments;
- ▶ Be a Tech-Savvy Employer

Don't

- ▶ Do not provide personally identifiable information of citizens;
- ▶ Do not post anything that could be construed as derogatory, negative, or offensive;
- ▶ Do not discuss public business on private email accounts;
- ▶ Do not discuss public business on social media accounts via private messaging;

Lebanon mayor sued in federal court for blocking business owners from her social media page



Irvine Mayor Sued Over Facebook Blocking And Deleting Of Comments

BY [NOAH BIESIADA](#) Published Jul 24, 2020 Updated Dec 8, 2020 [Why you can trust Voice of OC](#)



Compliance/Liability Concerns

- ▶ FOIA
- ▶ First Amendment
- ▶ Be a tech-savvy employer
- ▶ Keep Anti-Discrimination Laws Top of Mind



Questions

Contact Information

- ▶ Thomas Bullock

- ▶ tbullock@vrsa.us

- ▶ Lisa Herndon

- ▶ lisa.herndon@herndon-va.gov

- ▶ Lauren Opett

- ▶ lauren.opett@vdem.virginia.gov