

# 2011 CI Training

## Understanding Citizen Journalism- Using Social Media

Crystal City, VA. – July 19, 2011

## WHY ARE WE HERE?

- o How is the public learning about issues important to the EPA?
- o Where are they getting their information?
- o Who's influencing their point of view?
- o How can you use social media?

The news media is still important, but...

Reliance on mainstream news media as the primary communications channel is not a viable long-term strategy

## News Cycles: Before & Now

Before	Now
Wire services	Twitter
Radio	Blogs/Internet sites
CNN	Personal social networking sites
24 hour news shows	24 hour broadcast
Evening television	Radio
Newspapers	Morning newspapers
Weekly news magazines, newspapers	Organizational listservs
Opinion & public interest forums (editorials, columns, op/eds, letters to the editor, weekly public affairs programming)	Morning talk shows
	Evening news/next round coverage
	All the above turbo charged by mobile



EXPERT VOICES NEEDED

[www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

Why Should the EPA Care?

Agency mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment.

- EPA information shapes the policy environment
- The public relies on EPA information in times of environmental crisis

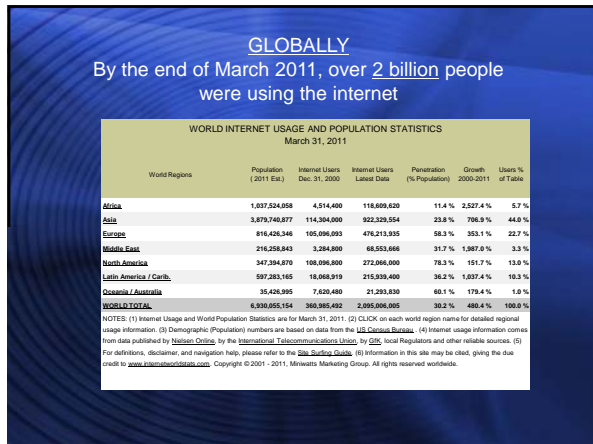
News Never Sleeps

The 24/7 news cycle—cable television, the internet, the blogosphere—has the effect of trivializing big stories and making big stories out of trivial ones . . . the press is [not] just the messenger. . . we're often the message itself, too."

*Time* Managing Editor Richard Stengel

Osama bin Laden: Speed of Information





- ### UNITED STATES
- 79% of American adults said they used the Internet and nearly half of adults (47%), or 59% of internet users, say they use at least one Social Networking Site (SNS).
  - This is close to double the 26% of adults (34% of internet users) who used a Social SNS in 2008.
  - Among other things, this means the average age of adult-SNS users has shifted from 33 in 2008 to 38 in 2010.
- Pew Research Foundation Report, June 2011

- ### UNITED STATES
- Facebook is the most popular social networking site:
- 92% of SNS users are on Facebook
  - 29% use MySpace
  - 18% use LinkedIn
  - 13% use Twitter
- Pew Research Foundation Report, June 2011

- ### Don't Forget the Fundamentals
- Who** do you need to reach? (Your Audience)
  - What do you want them to **think**? (Perceive)
  - What do you need them to **know**? (Messages)
  - What do you want them to **do**? (Action)

- ### And More Fundamentals
- As with any communications encounter:
- Be prepared. Have key messages top of mind.
  - Don't ramble.
  - Assume everything you Twitter, blog, etc., is "on the record."
  - Be direct. Don't lie, mislead or misrepresent the facts.
  - Simplify. Avoid jargon or highly technical terms.

## EPA Social Media Policies

### A Summary

#### Before Using Social Media Tools:

- First, seek supervisor approval to use social media tools on behalf of EPA.
- Thoroughly review EPA Social Media Guidelines and policies.
- Have a communications plan in place.
- Determine key messages to be conveyed.

## EPA Social Media Policies

### A Summary (cont'd)

#### Represent Your Office:

- Participate in your official not your personal capacity.
- Make sure online activities and content are consistent with job responsibilities and expertise.

#### Respect Your Time and Effort:

- Consider the time and effort needed to respond and the value of your participation.
- Discuss with your supervisor whether a particular interaction is worth your time and effort.

## EPA Social Media Policies

### A Summary (cont'd)

#### Be Transparent and Honest:

- Do not comment or edit anonymously.
- It's okay to reference to your EPA position and title.
- Contractors should name their companies and be clear they work on behalf of EPA and are not EPA employees.

#### State Facts, Not Opinions:

- Do not engage in discussions of opinion about EPA's programs; this could be construed as propaganda or lobbying.
- Cite your sources when stating facts.
- If authorized to write an opinion piece, comply with applicable EPA publication policies.

## EPA Social Media Policies

### A Summary (cont'd)

#### Protect Nonpublic Information:

- Be thoughtful about what you publish or post online.
- If you would not say something offline or include it in a written letter, do not post it online.
- Pay attention to the rules about misuse of position. (See Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch.)

## EPA Social Media Policies

### A Summary (cont'd)

#### Ethics Apply, Even Online:

- EPA employees are bound by the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch.
- Do not use your public office or EPA position, title or authority for private gain.
- Do not misuse government property or government time.
- Do not divulge nonpublic information.
- Abide by the Hatch Act and do not lobby.
- Simply put, behave professionally, responsibly, impartially and above all ethically.

## EPA Social Media Policies

### A Summary (cont'd)

#### Maintain Records When Applicable:

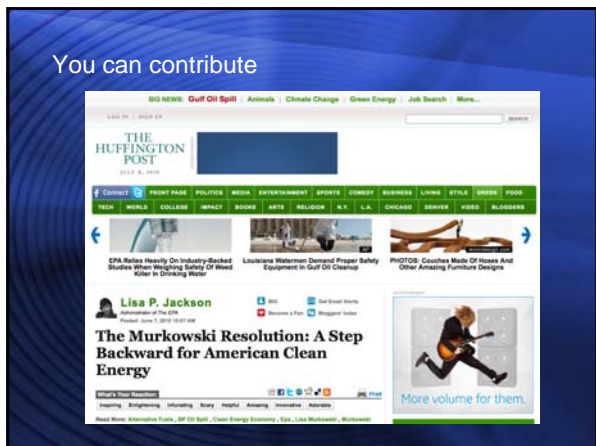
- Print to paper and manage according to record keeping policies any agency records created or received using social media tools.

For specific Social Media Tool guidelines, visit:

<http://govsocmed.pbworks.com/EPA-Social-Media-Guidance-Documents>



You can contribute



You can support the EPA blog and help grow its readership.



You can read blogs and stay on top of what people are talking about.

You can comment and help make the discussion more informed.

o On Firedog Lake, [Congress and Obama Ignore Health Effects, Budget Savings, Cave to Polluters](#)

o Talking Points Memo

[Major Trade Association Asks Issa To Curb Toxin, Safety, Financial Reform Regs](#)

### A Word About Blog Commenting

- **Remember that you're writing in public.** You never know who will read or comment. Put your best foot forward.
- **Keep it short.** Online readers don't have patience for big blocks of words. Keep comments to 2-4 sentences.
- **Be conversational.** Online writing is casual and conversational, but do use good spelling and grammar.
- **Be polite and respectful.** No "flame wars" or name-calling.


### A Word About Blog Commenting (cont'd)

- **Be up-front.** Don't pretend to be someone you're not. Could create a real blow to your credibility.
- **Be relevant.** Make sure what you're saying is pertinent to the comment thread you are replying to.
- **Link when possible.** If you can, add a link to an online article that backs up your point.
- **Keep up the conversation.** If someone else responds to your comment, it provides you with another opportunity to jump in.



YouTube is a video sharing website on which users can upload and share videos. Many organizations, including the EPA, maintain YouTube channels.

<http://www.youtube.com/usepagov>



Not such successful efforts:

From EDF: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtuJHku7tSLA>

From EPA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2B40xOKBeE&feature=channel>

More successful efforts:

From EDF: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNUs89UIVjw>

From EPA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5K7T8B7wok>

### Other Social Media Communities

- Social book marking 
- Crowd-sourced editorial 
- Favorite things 

### HOW TO KEEP TRACK OF THE CONVERSATION

- o Google Reader  
<http://www.google.com/reader/>
- o Google Alerts  
<http://www.google.com/alerts>

**Practice Google Account Log-in Info:**

Username:  
EPA.socmedia@gmail.com

Password:  
EPATraining

Blogs, videos and podcasts have much in common with mainstream media.

- o They are content-focused, with room for infinite creativity, details and nuance.
- o They are geared to mass audiences anyone is welcome to read/watch/listen.
- o Producers have a limited idea who their audiences are.

Social media networks rely on **one-on-one connections**



<https://www.facebook.com/GloPan>





**US Army Corps of Engineers**  
Omaha District

NEWSROOM WHO WE ARE MISSIONS HISTORY CONTACT US

**Spring 2011 FLOOD Response Information**

The Omaha District covers areas north of Rulo, Neb. For areas south of Rulo in Kansas and Missouri, visit the [Kansas City District](#).

An imminent threat of annual flooding must exist for the Corps of Engineers to assist communities in a flood fight. The threat must be established by National Weather Service forecasts or by the Corps' determination of annual flooding from adverse conditions. Another request from a state's governor for the Corps' assistance is required. The request must be technically feasible and economically justified.

Flood services most often provided by the Corps during a flood fight includes providing technical engineering advice, salvage and pumps to flood communities, as well as building emergency levees/dikes.

**Resources:**

- Maps and inundation files:** These pages include maps that provide FEMA-02 project information, federal levee locations and professional maps showing areas of potential inundation.
- Research Update:** Links to a list of the most current information regarding the Missouri River Region.
- Citizen Resources:**
  - Click a claim by disaster as a result of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operations related to Missouri River Flooding in 2011 - [Standard Form 35](#)
  - The Corps has established a process to accept and review claims from those who believe they are entitled to compensation for damages attributable to the Corps' Missouri River operations. The process will allow the Government to evaluate the claims, and, if valid, to offer appropriate compensation as permitted by law.
- Government Resources**
- Press Resources**

**ALSO, FOLLOW US ON TWITTER...**

USACE Omaha District  
**OmahaUSACE**

Today's Research is now online July 14, 2011 #2011MissFlood  
<http://fb.me/2011MissFlood>

More questions? Feel free to ask us!

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