Social Media Part 1: Getting Started

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Stephen Mann

North Carolina Department of Transportation

slmann3@ncdot.gov

: **@SLMann3**

<u>**Definitions**</u>

Blog: An online journal that's updated on a regular basis with entries that appear in reverse chronological order. Blogs can be about any subject. They typically contain comments by other readers, and links to other sites.

Facebook: The most popular social networking site in the world, with more than 200 million members. Members' home page streams can now be seen in a wide range of applications and devices.

Feed: A web feed or Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed is a format that provides users with frequently updated content. Content distributors syndicate a web feed, enabling users to subscribe to a site's latest content. By using a news reader to subscribe to a feed, a user can read the latest posts or watch the newest videos on a computer or portable device at the user's discretion.

Flickr: Founded by two entrepreneurs and purchased by Yahoo! in 2005, Flickr is the world's premier photo sharing and hosting site. Its members have uploaded more than three billion photos.

Instagram: An online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing, and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them either publicly or privately on the app, as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Flickr.

Microblog, Microblogging: The act of broadcasting short messages to other subscribers of a web service. On Twitter, entries are limited to 140 characters, and applications like Plurk and Jaiku take a similar approach with sharing bite-size media.

Platform: The framework or content management system that runs software and presents content. WordPress, for example, is a service that serves as a platform for a community of blogs.

Podcast: A digital file (audio or video) made available for download to a portable device or personal computer for playback. A podcast also refers to the show that comprises several episodes. A podcast uses a feed that lets a user subscribe receive the latest audio clips, via their digital doorstep.

RSS, RSS feed: Really Symple Syndicaton (RSS) (may also be called web feeds) is a web standard for the delivery of content (e.g. blog entries, news stories, headlines, images, video) enabling readers to stay current with their preffered publications or producers without browsing from site to site, blogs and news content using a news reader. All blogs, podcasts and videoblogs contain an RSS feed, which allows users to subscribe to

content automatically and read/listen to the material on a computer or a portable device. Most people use a RSS reader or news aggregator to monitor updates.

Snapchat: A mobile app and service for sharing photos, videos, and messages—called snaps — with other people. Snaps sent directly to a person disappear once they are opened. A Snapchat story is a compiliation of snaps that appear to users for 24 hours and then they disappear.

Social Bookmarking: A method by which users locate, store, organize, share and manage bookmarks of web pages without being tied to a particular machine. Users store lists of personally interesting Internet resources and may make their lists publicly accessible. The best-known social bookmark site is called Delicious.

Social Media: Works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia that are published and shared in a social environment, such as a blog, podcast, forum, wiki or video hosting site. More broadly, social media refers to any online technology that allows people to publish, converse and share content online.

Tweet: A post on Twitter, a real-time social messaging system. While all agree on usage of tweet as a noun, people disagree on whether you "tweet" or "twitter" as a verb. RT stands for retweet: Users add RT in a tweet if they are reposting something from another user's tweet.

Tweetup: An organized or impromptu gathering of individuals that use Twitter. Users often include a hashtag, such as #tweetup or #sftweetup, when publicizing a local tweetup.

Twitter: A popular social network, unveiled to the public in July 2006, that allows members to post updates of using more than 140 characters. People have begun using Twitter in interesting ways to point to news stories, raise funds for charity, etc,

Twitterverse: Akin to blogs and the blogosphere, the Twitterverse is simply the universe of individuals use Twitter and the conversations taking place within that sphere.

Widget: Sometimes called a gadget, badge or applet, a widget is a small block of content, typically displayed in a small box, with a specific purpose, such as providing weather forecasts or news, that is constantly updating itself (typically via RSS). Widgets make it easy to add dynamic content to a website site or blog.

Wiki: A collaborative website that can be directly edited by anyone with access to it. Small teams often find that they can accomplish a task easier by creating a collaborative online workspace using wiki software such as pbworks, Socialtext or mediawiki.

WordPress: A popular open source blog publishing application.

YouTube: The world's most popular video hosting site, making up 10 percent of all bits that travel across the entire Internet.

Facebook

- Tone is Casual, but Professional
- Avoid or Define Jargon
- Keep it Short, but Informative
- Use Links/Photos/Videos to Make Posts Stand Out
- Have a Clear Call-to-Action to Drive Engagement (e.g., "Click here," "Read more below," "Comment and let us know your thoughts," etc.)

Twitter

- **Tweet**: Messages of up to 140 characters or less.
- **Username (or handle):** Twitter users identify themselves by their username or "handle." (e.g., @NCDOT)
- **Retweet (RT):** If a tweet from another Twitter user is relevant, you can retweet to display their message to your network.
- **Mention**: You can link to each other by putting the @ symbol in front of the username in a message.
- **Hashtag:** When you put the # symbol before a word. By doing this, you enable others to join in a larger conversation on a topic or find information quickly. (e.g. "Thanks for coming to #LifeSavers2017")

Instagram

- Communicate Through Images — Make It Visually Appealing
- Be Creative
- Avoid Links in the Caption (They Aren't "Clickable")
- Use Hashtags: Posts With Over 11 Hashtags Tend to Get More Engagement (Track Maven, 2016)
- Take Advantage of Instagram Stories — Allows For More Real-Time, Less-Polished Content.

Challenges/Steps for Success

- **Convincing Upper-Level Management to Launch Into Social**
  - Present them with facts that back up the importance of social media
  - Show them examples of what similar agencies are doing
  - Draft a social media policy that covers all of your bases

- **Negativity — You Can't Make Everyone Happy All the Time**
  - You just have to roll with the punches. Do your best to respond if they have a legitimate concern.
  - The majority of the time, people just want to be heard. Take the opportunity to turn a negative situation into a positive situation by addressing their concern.

- **Employee Turnover**
  - If and when you have employee turnover, be sure to change passwords if the employee had access to any social accounts and/or remove them from any admin roles that they might have on social accounts.

- **Set Expectations**
  - Social media never sleeps. Set expectations with your audience that you will not be monitoring sites 24/7. (e.g., Set hours of operation on Facebook or an auto-reply for messages received after hours)

- **Cross-Train Other Employees**
  - Teach others on your team how to operate various social channels in order to avoid any lapse in content if you or the main social media coordinator is out of the office.

- **Maintain a Current List of Login Information**
  - In the case of employee turnover, this helps avoid getting locked out of any accounts. Create an electronic copy that multiple people have access to.

Useful Resources:

- Social Media Image Size Guide: bit.ly/1rLA3mP

- Best Times to Post on Top Social Platforms: bit.ly/2lzFKF5

- Social Media Statistics: bit.ly/2ilfDjK

- How to Use Hashtags on Instagram: bit.ly/2lzDCxc

- Essential Social Media Statistics for Audience Targeting: bit.ly/2lzRXcX

- Social Media Management/Analytics Tools: Sprout Social (Highly recommended)
  Hootsuite
  Simply Measured
  TweetDeck

- Helpful Newsletter: PRdaily.com