

The Twitter Effect

Using Social Media in EMS



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Objectives

- After this class you will better understand
 - **What is social media**
 - **Why is social media important**
 - **Using social media**
 - **How it can benefit EMS agencies and organizations**
 - **Marketing your social media sites**
 - **The successes and challenges for OEMS' social media program**

In the beginning



- The internet was created as a way for people to connect and talk without actually seeing or even knowing each other
 - Prodigy
 - Free e-mail
 - Message Boards
 - Chat Rooms



Why is social media important



- Wikipedia - More than 13 million articles in 260 languages
 - www.wikipedia.com
- You Tube - More than 100,000,000 videos and growing
 - www.youtube.com

Why is social media important



- Twitter - Estimated at more than 55 million visitors per month
 - www.twitter.com
- Facebook - Estimated at more than 316 million visitors each month
 - www.facebook.com

What is Social Media



- *It's a fusion of sociology and technology, transforming **monologues (one to many)** into **dialogues (many to many)** and is the democratization of information...has become extremely popular because it allows people to connect in the online world to form **relationships** for personal, political and business use. - Wikipedia*

What is Social Media in our Terms



- Social media is a way to engage with citizens and key groups
- Social media is not about technology
- It is a movement that that allows people to engage on a different level



Who is using it

- **65% of teens use online social networks**
 - 27+ Million teens
- **35% of adults use online social networks**
 - 77.5+ Million adults
- **75% of adult social media users visit at least once a week**

Why are they using social media



- Can you guess the fastest growing group of social media users?
- Engagement
 - Involvement
 - Interaction
 - Intimacy
 - Influence

Platforms



Most commonly used platforms today



- Facebook
- MySpace
- Twitter
- Flickr
- You Tube
- Blogs (blogspot / Press it)
- What is deemed popular by the masses



Using Social Media

- New media is a two way street
- Interactions and conversations
 - Not just to broadcast information
- You need to identify why you want to use new media
 - How it will benefit you?
 - How will it benefit your audience?



Using Social Media

- Who do you want to reach?
 - General Public?
 - Agency Members?
- Things to do:
 - Establish goals
 - Who will maintain the sites?
 - How often will you update?
 - Will you need an approval process to make updates?
 - Who will be your voice?
 - Establish policies



Interaction

- Think about your audience first
 - Why should they come to you and what will you offer them?
- Design and engage your sites around your audience
 - This can include primary and secondary audiences



Who are you reaching?

- Do you have demographics of your audience?
- Social media allows you to reach more people than you may anticipate...

How much should you share?



- Social media has made it expectable for people to share every aspect of their lives on the Web
 - Who is seeing this?
 - Is it really just limited to your “approved” friends?
 - What are the consequences of posting some of this information?

How Social Media can benefit EMS agencies



- Interagency use:
 - Establish a new way for members to communicate
 - Stay informed and updated on agency news and information
 - Allow new members to get to know other members and feel accepted
 - Retention tool

How Social Media can benefit EMS agencies



- External use
 - Public education
 - Help uncover the mystery of EMS in your community
 - Injury and illness prevention
 - Promote events and fundraisers
 - Create more of a community within your community

How Social Media can benefit EMS agencies



- Discuss issues that affect your agency and how the community can help
- Recruitment!



Can they find you?



- How do you plan on your audience finding you?
 - Traditional marketing tools to get started – fliers, postcards, etc.
 - Share your site every where you can!
 - Anticipate your audience needs and questions



Can they find you?

- Use your members
 - Friends become friends and it continues
- Make your site searchable or list key words to attract those who may be interested in your messages
- Surveys – find out what they want from you

Office of EMS Online



- What platforms we use
 - Facebook
 - MySpace
 - You Tube
 - Blog
 - Twitter



What we have learned

- Maintaining all of these sites can be overwhelming
 - Suggest limiting to one or two platforms
- Approval processes
- Getting stuck in a rut
- Keeping to a schedule

What has been successful for us



- Interaction
 - People respond to us and we welcome the conversations
 - We are able to handle questions that would normally clog the phone lines
 - We continue to grow and push for stronger relationships with our audience



Things to remember

- The technology is merely a platform – worry about the principals not the platform
- Good design is critical for adoption
- Be flexible!



Discussion

- We want to hear from you
 - Tips & tricks you have learned
 - Lessons you have learned
 - Successes you have shared



Feel free to contact us

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