Smart911™
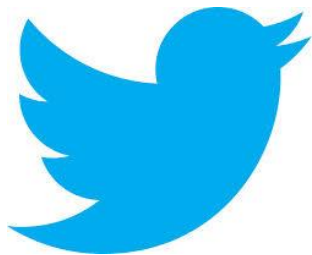
Keeping Your Community Smart About Safety

Best Practices Guide:

Social Media

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RAVE
MOBILE SAFETY

Introduction

The definition of social media is: the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

It is a constantly evolving, frequently used and currently the most powerful communication tool. It is also a fast and easy way to reach many members of your community with various messages. Whether you are currently involved in social media, or just looking to get started, this guide will give you the tools to get your accounts up and running and begin interacting with your community.

Getting Started

What social media programs are right for my agency?

You first need to determine your goals with social media. For community outreach with Smart911, the 4 most frequently used tools are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. Each of these can serve a specific purpose, and the combination of them all can increase the reach of each message. If you are just starting out, Facebook and Twitter are the two suggested methods to begin your programs.

What is the benefit or best use of each tool?

Facebook – This is a great way to interact with, get feedback from and speak directly to citizens. You can promote events, share news and resources and post photos or marketing materials. Your content can then be shared by other agencies and individuals. The conversation is generally more casual and conversational, and has the opportunity to address both serious and fun topics.

Twitter – An easy way to send very brief and direct messages quickly. Great for current news and updates such as accidents, traffic, emergency alerts. You'll find more interaction with other organizations and agencies, advocates and media.

YouTube – Strictly a video feed but is the second largest search engine in the world. An easy way to store and share video clips such as media coverage on your agency or events, PSAs for citizens on any of your programs or testimonials, training videos and other messages. The content can be shared across all sources including Facebook, Twitter and Linkedin and can be organized into playlists or categories.

Linkedin– A professional network, similar to Facebook but with a less casual approach to conversation. The best use for an agency is the groups feature, in which you can search out and join conversations on various topics local, regional and national. Good for interacting with other industry professionals as well as advocates in your community.

Establishing Accounts

Facebook

You will first need to determine who will be the admin(s) of your Facebook account. In order to create a Page for your agency, you will need to be logged in through an individual Facebook account. Once logged in go to www.facebook.com/pages and click "Create page". From here follow the steps to establish a page for your agency.

Once your page is created there are a few things you should add immediately:

> - A profile picture – this can be your agency logo or other image that citizens will easily relate to your agency.
> - A description & contact information- this is the basic overview of your agency and details such as your website, contact info and other notes.
> - Add other admins- any member of your team that will be able make changes.

Using your page:

> - Start adding your Facebook info on all other community facing materials including your website, email signatures, flyers, newsletters and email lists so citizens can "like" your page.
> - Begin posting a status or updates – this is any message or content that you want citizens to know about. It can be as simple as a welcome message or news update for the day or it can be links to articles, resources, promotion or upcoming events, and even photos.
>   - These updates will show up in the news feed of all of your followers
> - Make sure to "like" the Smar911 page so you will get the updates that are posted there.
>   - You can share any of the Smart911 updates by clicking the "share" button below the message and then adding in any text you want to include
>   - Comment on Smart911 posts so followers can see your page as well

Make sure to get the most out of your posts:

> - Facebook is a constant stream of information, so to be sure you are reaching as many people as possible frequent repetition is key. Start by posting similar messages every day at different times to see which has the biggest response.
> - Engage your users- ask questions, tell them to like a post if they agree with it, request feedback, make sure you are starting conversations in order to increase interaction with your community.
> - Leverage other pages- once you have "liked" another page, whether a local media station, community group or other, you can then tag that page in a post. In the text of your post put an @ before the name of the page- this will automatically generate a link to that page so you will reach more followers. For example- if you want to thank a school for supporting your recent campaign:
>
>   "Thanks to @school for letting people know about Smart911 and how it can help you during an emergency"

Twitter

Twitter is a very simple process, all you need to do is establish a Twitter handle and password, and associate the account to an email address. Twitter is a constant stream of short messages limited to 140 characters. You can include links to websites as well as photos.

Once your account is created there are a few things you should add immediately:

> A profile picture – this can be your agency logo or other image that citizens will easily relate to your agency.
> A description & contact information- this is the basic overview of your agency and details such as your website, contact info and other notes.

Following & Followers:

> Just like Facebook, add your Twitter handle to all other community facing materials including your website, email signatures, flyers, newsletters and email lists so citizens can follow you.
> Start following relevant organizations and people. The Smart911 handle is @smart911 You can also search for organizations or people in your community based on keyword
> The more people you follow, the more who will likely follow you.

Tweeting

> You are limited to 140 characters, so make sure your tweets are brief and efficient. Abbreviations and shorthand are acceptable to get your message across.
> Hashtags (#) are used to manage conversations on a certain topic. If you include them in your tweet you can join a conversation on something specific. For example, if you are tweeting about hurricanes, use #hurricane   If someone searches for the term hurricane in a conversation, your tweet will be included. Specific events also use hashtags (#NENA2013, #NNO, #911Education)
> Similar to Facebook, someone you can include a @ before their Twitter handle to tag them in a tweet. If you wanted to direct a tweet at someone (or is someone wants to direct a tweet to you- you can tag them). For example "@policedept, will there be road closures on #July4?"
>> o   You can also add a period (.) before the @ to have your tweet to be seen by all of your followers
> You can re-tweet someone else's tweet just by clicking the re-tweet button – this will then publish their tweet through your account.
> Suggested Smart911 Tweets are included at the end of this guide.

Managing Multiple Accounts

Hootsuite

Social media can be a time consuming endeavor, so it is important to utilize free tools to help alleviate schedule or timing restrictions. Hootsuite is a great tool that can be used for free to manage your social media accounts. Once you create an account you can link it to your Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts to be able to manage interactions and schedule posts, updates and tweets all in one place. www.hootsuite.com

> You can create your updates/posts/tweets for all accounts at once and schedule them to be posted at a later date and time.
> You can choose which social media account to post to- or post one message to multiple accounts.
> You can shorten a link to reduce the characters (important for Twitter).
> You can view mentions of your account or direct messages on all accounts in one place.
> Multiple individuals in your agency can access the account with the login info.

Examples of Content

Facebook:

General posts:

Be Smart About Safety. The more time 9-1-1 can save the more lives they can save. Take 5 minutes to create a Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

You don't plan to call 9-1-1, but now you can plan ahead. Protect your family by creating a Smart911 Safety Profile today at www.smart911.com

70% of 9-1-1 calls are from cell phones. Give 9-1-1 the info they need by creating a Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

Be Smart About Safety. Give 9-1-1 helpful info that could help save your life. Take 5 minutes to create a Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

Take 5 minutes right now to create your @Smart911 Safety Profile at www.smart911.com . It's free and could save your life!

Help us, help you. Create a Safety Profile today at www.smart911.com and give 9-1-1 the info they need.

First responders are better equipped to help you when you create a Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

Posts you can edit to include your information:

[Town] now offers Smat911! [Town] officials encourage all citizens to create a Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

[Town] first responders are now better equipped to help you thanks to Smart 911. Create your Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

Learn more about the free @Smart911 service provided to all [town] residents.

Facebook posts encouraging interaction:

Already created a Safety Profile? Like this post so your friends know the importance of creating a profile at www.smart911.com

Like this post if you've created a @Smart911 profile and encourage your friends & family to do it too at www.smart911.com

Fill in the blank: I created a @Smart911 Safety Profile because _____

Fill in the blank: I created @Smart911 to protect my_____

Twitter:

Give 9-1-1 info that could help save your life. Create a #SafetyProfile at www.smart911.com

If you have not taken the time to create your FREE @Smart911 Safety Profile, please take a few moments to do so at www.smart911.com

Be Smart About Safety. Create your @Smart911 Safety Profile at www.smart911.com . It's free and could save your life!

Help us, help you. Create a Safety Profile today at www.smart911.com and give 9-1-1 the info they need.

First responders are better equipped to help you when you create a Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

The more time 9-1-1 can save the more lives they can save. Take 5 mins to create a #SafetyProfile at www.smart911.com

You don't plan to call 9-1-1, but now you can plan ahead. Be Smart About Safety. www.smart911.com

Tweets you can edit to include your information:

[town/city/county] now offers Smat911! Officials encourage all citizens to create a Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

[town/city/county] first responders are now better equipped to help you thanks to @Smart 911. Create your Safety Profile at www.smart911.com

Tweets encouraging re-tweets:

Already created a Safety Profile? RT this so your friends know the importance of creating a profile at www.smart911.com

RT this if you've created a @Smart911 profile and encourage your friends & family to do it too at www.smart911.com

Safety Tips or an event:

Throughout the year you will receive frequent campaigns from Smart911 focusing on events, awareness weeks/months or other reasons to speak to your community about Smart911. Each of these will include a component for social media. Be sure to reach out to your existing contacts and ask them to include these messages on their social media channels as well – they may have a timely message that works well with it.