OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

U.S. Army Social Media Handbook

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ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA DIVISION

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Letter from the Chief of Public Affairs

Team-

You already know that communicating your organization's messages is important. Today, it takes more than press releases to successfully communicate. Being an effective Army communicator today relies on proactive planning, nesting messages, engaging audiences on a variety of platforms, monitoring what is being said both online and in traditional media, and taking a proactive role in telling the Army's story.

As part of that, we need to make sure we use all the tools at our disposal to keep our Soldiers and the general public informed.

Social media is another set of tools that helps us spread the Army message faster than ever. These tools not only help us to respond to a 24-hour news cycle, but also help us lead conversations and participate in the stories. By reaching out to the online community, we're able to be where more and more people get their news, and by doing so, we're better serving our warfighters.

Social media is a powerful communication tool, but it goes beyond just using the tools. It is important to understand the tools and their overwhelming benefits and sometimes dangerous ramifications. It is also important to develop a strategy and execute that strategy while keeping operations security in mind.

I advise you to embrace social media, read through the regulations at the back of this handbook and develop a strong fundamental knowledge of these tools.

I asked the experts in my Online and Social Media Division to create this handbook to help you use these tools as effectively as possible. If you have any questions, contact them at ocpa.osmd@us.army.mil. Stay abreast of the latest things going on in social media by subscribing to our weekly 'Social Media Roundup' by sending a request to that email address.

Our Soldiers and their Family members are the strength of our nation. Nine years of persistent conflict have shaped our shared experiences, which can be told through the social media platforms to assist those new to our Army Family. This builds resiliency in the force and makes our Army strong. Soldiers have always been and always will be our greatest story tellers, and social media tools allow us to tell their story more effectively.

Best of luck as you push forward with your social media endeavors.

//original signed//
STEPHEN R. LANZA
MG, USA
Chief of Public Affairs

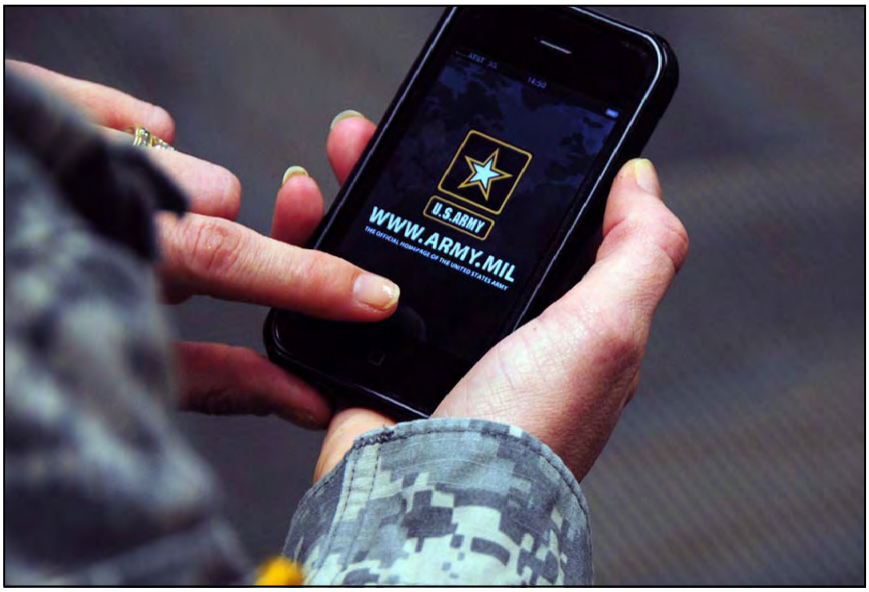
Social Media Summary

WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media represents a shift in the way we as a culture communicate. By using Internet-based platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube, social media provides new ways to connect, interact and learn. People no longer look for the news, the news find them. And in the world of social media, the perception of truth can be just as powerful as the truth itself. The Internet moves information quickly, whether for good or bad. Social media, with a variety of available platforms, can instantaneously connect users within a global network, making the transfer of information even more pervasive. Today, social media is so widespread and transparent that you may already be involved even if you are not actively participating. Social media is highly effective tool to use when reaching out to large communities and audiences. But with this substantial ability to connect with the masses, comes risks. Using social media to spread information is becoming the standard. More and more units are using social media to communicate, so it's more important that ever to understand the risks associated with using the various platforms.

ARMY SOCIAL MEDIA

The Army recognizes that social media has the ability to communicate with larger audiences faster and in new ways. It has become an important tool for Army messaging and outreach. The Army uses a variety of social media platforms designed to support a range of media from text, audio, pictures and videos; all of which is generated and maintained by organizations and individuals within the Army Family. The Army understands the risks associated social media and has worked hard to develop training to help Soldiers and family members use social media responsibly.



WHY USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

Soldiers have always been the Army's best and most effective messengers. Today, Army social media enables the Army Family around town, around the country and around the world to stay connected and spread the Army's key themes and messages. Every time a member of the Army Family joins Army social media, it increases the timely and transparent dissemination of information. It ensures that the Army's story is shared honestly and directly to Americans where they are and whenever they want to see, read or hear it. Social media allows every Soldier to be a part of the Army story. By starting a discussion on Facebook, or commenting on a Soldier's story on a blog, all Soldiers can contribute to the Army story. Social media is a cheap, effective and measureable form of communication. The Army uses social media to tell the Army's story, but it also uses social media to listen.

WHAT DOES THE DOD SAY ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA?

On February 25, 2010, the DoD issued a Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) providing guidelines for military use of social media and acknowledged "that Internet-based capabilities are integral to operations across the Department of Defense." DTM 09-026 Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities outlined how the NIPRNET should be configured to allow access to Internet-based capabilities across all DoD components. All service branches are using social media at different levels, but this DTM clearly indicates that use of social media in the DoD is authorized.

Social Media for Soldiers and Army Personnel

Members of the Army Family are experiencing a special time in their lives. They have a lot to share with Family, friends and others. Social media is an opportunity to instantly reach out and connect regardless of time, space or distance. The Army encourages members of the Army Family to use social media to connect and tell their stories, but it also advises everyone to do this in a safe and secure manner.

OPSEC AWARENESS

The primary concern when using social media is maintaining operations security. It's important to know that social media is a quickly evolving means of distributing information and that means OPSEC is more important than ever before. All Army leaders should communicate with their Soldiers about the risks of using social media and incorporate social media into their regular OPSEC training.

JOINING SOCIAL NETWORKS

Soldiers will naturally seek out involvement in social media platforms if they haven't already. Social media helps individuals with similar interests connect and interact. Soldiers are authorized to use and belong to a variety of social media platforms as long as their involvement does not violate unit policy and the basic guidelines of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

LAY OUT THE GUIDELINES

Leaders must engage their Soldiers on social media use. All leaders must communicate social media expectations with their Soldiers. It is important to outline unit policy and make sure all Soldiers know what they can and cannot do when using various social media platforms.

FOLLOW THE UCMJ

Soldiers using social media must abide by the Uniform Code of Military Justice at all times. Commenting, posting, or linking to material that violates the UCMJ or basic rules of Soldier conduct is prohibited. Social media provides the opportunity for Soldiers to speak freely about what they're up to or what their interests are. However, Soldiers are subject to UCMJ even when off duty, so talking negatively about supervisors, or releasing sensitive information is punishable under the UCMJ. It's important that all Soldiers know that once they log on to a social media platform, they still represent the Army.

MAINTAINING OPSEC

Sharing what seems to be even trivial information online can be dangerous to loved ones and the fellow Soldiers in the unit -- and may even get them killed. America's enemies scour blogs, forums, chat rooms and personal websites to piece together information that can be used to harm the United States and its Soldiers. The adversary -- Al Qaeda and domestic terrorists and criminals for instance -- have made it clear they are looking.

> "Our adversaries are trolling social networks, blogs and forums, trying to find sensitive information they can use about our military goals and objectives. Therefore, it is imperative that all Soldiers and Family members understand the importance of practicing good operations security measures."
>
> **-Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston**

Social Media for Soldiers and Army Personnel (Cont.)

When using social media, avoid mentioning rank, unit locations, deployment dates, names, or equipment specifications and capabilities.

GEOTAGGING AND LOCATION -BASED SOCIAL NETWORKING

The Army is always working to protect itself against security breaches, but with new technologies come new risks. Today, more than ever, it is vitally important that Army leaders, Soldiers and Army civilians understand what kind of data they are broadcasting and what they can do to protect themselves and their families. Geotagging photos and using location-based social networking applications is growing in popularity, but in certain situations, exposing specific geographical location can be devastating to Army operations. Soldiers should never tag photos with geographical location when loading to photo sharing sites like Flickr and Picasa. Soldiers should not use location-based social networking applications when deployed, at training or while on duty at locations where presenting exact grid coordinates could damage Army operations. While Soldiers are engaged in Army operations, they should turn off the GPS function of their smartphones. Failure to do so could result in damage to the mission and may even put families at risk.

DO NOT VIOLATE COPYRIGHT AND TRADEMARK

Soldiers cannot include any copyrighted or trademarked material on their social media platforms. This includes embedding a song, or linking to unattributed artwork. Social media platforms exist to help individuals connect and express their personalities, but this should be done without using copyrighted material unless they are authorized to do so by the copyright or trademark owner.

SECURITY ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- Take a close look at all privacy settings. Set security options to allow visibility to “friends only.”
- Do not reveal sensitive information about yourself such as schedules and event locations.
- Ask, “What could the wrong person do with this information?” and “Could it compromise the safety of myself, my family or my unit?”
- Geotagging is a feature that reveals your location to other people within your network. Consider turning off the GPS function of your smartphone.
- Closely review photos before they go online. Make sure they do not give away sensitive information which could be dangerous if released.
- Make sure to talk to family about operations security and what can and cannot be posted.
- Videos can go viral quickly, make sure they don’t give away sensitive information.

Social Media Standards for Army Leaders

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR LEADERS

Social media has improved the way we connect and communicate as a culture, but it presents some interesting dilemmas for Army leaders.

ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

Social media is about connecting, so it's only natural that Army leaders may interact and function in the same social media spaces as their subordinates. How they connect and interact with their subordinates online is up to their discretion, but it is advised that the online relationship function in the same manner as the professional relationship.

SHOULD SOLDIERS "FOLLOW" THOSE IN THEIR COMMAND?

This is also left to the discretion of the Army leader. Ultimately, it depends on how that leader uses social media. If the leader is using social media as a way to receive command and unit information along with installation updates, then following members in a leader's command is appropriate. But if the leader is using social media as a way to keep in touch with family and friends, it may not make sense to follow people in the leader's chain of

LEADER CONDUCT ONLINE

When in a position of leadership, conduct online should be professional. By using social media, leaders are essentially providing a permanent record of what they say, so, if you wouldn't say it in front of a formation, don't say it online. If a leader comes across evidence of a Soldier violating command policy or the UCMJ on social media platforms, then that leader should respond in the same manner they would if they witnessed the infraction in any other environment.

SELF PROMOTION

Using rank, job, and/or responsibilities in order to promote oneself online for personal or financial gain is not appropriate. Such actions can damage the image of the Army and an individual command.

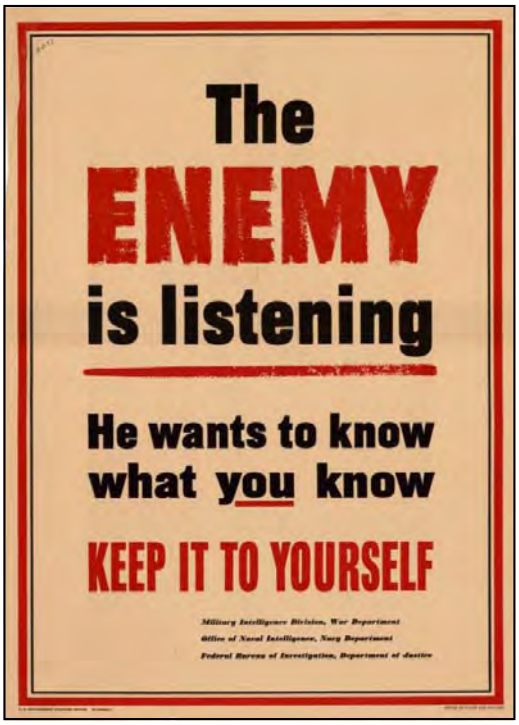
PAID SUBMISSIONS

Treat requests from non-governmental blogs for a blog post as a media request and coordinate with your public affairs officer. It is against Army regulations to accept compensation for such posts.

POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Everything a leader says and does is more visible and taken more seriously. Leaders have a greater responsibility to speak respectfully and intelligently about issues they don't intend to reflect on a command or the Army.

Checklist for Operations Security for Official Pages



- [ ] Designate members of your team responsible for posting content to the official online presence and make sure those individuals are current on all OPSEC training.
- [ ] Make sure all content is submitted to and approved by the commander or the organization's release authority.
- [ ] Make sure all content is posted in accordance with organization Public Affairs guidance and Army regulations.
- [ ] Monitor your social media presence and make sure external social media users are not posting sensitive information on your official presence. Monitor your Facebook wall and comments posted to your YouTube, Flickr and Blog presences.
- [ ] Produce training materials and conduct regular social media OPSEC training within your team and with other units in your organization.
- [ ] Distribute social media OPSEC training to the families of your Soldiers. It's important to keep them just as informed and up-to-date as the Soldiers in your unit.
- [ ] Be vigilant. Never become complacent when it comes to OPSEC. Check social media presences within your organization for OPSEC violations. Never stop working to protect OPSEC. Once the information is out there, you can't get it back.

Making dangerous social media posts safer

Dangerous	Safer
My Soldier is in XYZ at ABC Camp in ABC City, Afghanistan.	**My Soldier is deployed to Afghanistan.**
My Soldier will be leaving Kuwait and heading to Iraq in three days.	**My Soldier deployed this week.**
My Soldier is coming back at XYZ time on XYZ day.	**My Soldier will be home this summer.**
My family is back in Edwardsville, IL.	**I'm from the Midwest.**

Establishing and Maintaining Army Social Media Presences

MANAGING A SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Today, the Army understands that social media has increased the speed and transparency of information. It's determining which events make the news and it's setting agendas. More and more Army organizations are using social media for strategic online engagement. Social media is used in garrison environments, operational environments and in Family Readiness Groups. Developing a successful social media presence does not happen overnight. It is a detailed process that requires extensive planning and detailed execution. It all starts with stating the missions, messages and themes of an organization.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Once the direction of an organization is established, it's then possible to develop a social media communication strategy. This strategy must be detailed and provide input into all the social media platforms supported by an organization. Language should be conversational, fun and engaging. Asking questions is a good way to get people involved and encourage them to comment. The purpose of using social media platforms is to place your units messages in the social media space. Units should want to find a balance that keeps people coming back to the pages, but also gets the message out. This can be accomplished by mixing the doses of messages with items the audience may find interesting. In today's modernizing Army environment, social media plays an increasingly important role. Social media is not a fad, if the Army ignores it, it will not go away.

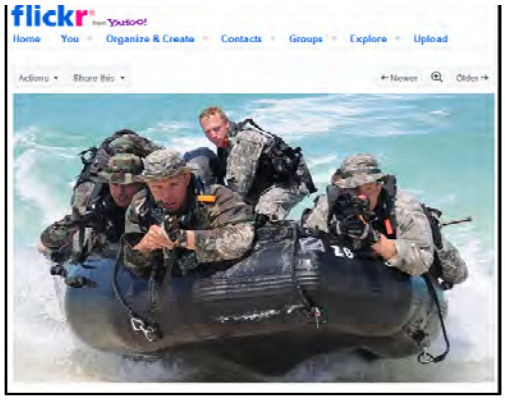
REGISTRATION

DTM 09-026 requires that all official social media presences be registered with the DoD. Since social media use is so prevalent in today's society, it's important to register and indicate that the presence is official. To register a social media presence with the Army, social media managers should visit: www.army.mil/socialmedia/. Registering on the Army's social media directory also provides other benefits. Once a site is approved, it appears on the Army social media directory. Ads that appear on Facebook are also removed from official Army Facebook presences. Registration ensures that a command presences are included in any USG/DoD Terms of Service (ToS) Agreements. Official use of social media platforms must be in compliance with Army public affairs policy. Content posted to an official social media presence must be either already in the public domain or must be approved for release by the commanding officer. Commands are ultimately responsible for content posted on their platforms.

MEASURMENT

Just 10 years ago, the success and reach of a news story could be measured by the size of a newspaper's circulation or the number of clicks on a website. Today, measurement is about more than just numbers. It's about trends and human feedback. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube allow for administrators to track views, impressions and comments. Many sites provide their own analytics tools. By using numbers in conjunction with comments and reader feedback, it's now easier than ever to determine how organizational messages are received and how the audience is responding to the content. Nearly all of the most popular social media platforms offer analytics tools for users. Some of these tools provide graphs and charts, but it ultimately depends on the platform. The different representations of information make for a richer and more depth statistical analysis. Using the analytics tools of each platform can help a unit demonstrate the usefulness of a social media platform, and even highlight the success of a specific social media campaign.

Establishing and Maintaining Army Social Media Presences (Cont.)



ENFORCE POSTING POLICY AND MONITOR COMMENTS

It's good to have a posting policy, but just because a posting policy is in place doesn't mean everyone is going to follow it. Make sure to review wall posts frequently and remove posts that violate the posting policy. Keep in mind that social media doesn't take a break for the weekend. In some instances, weekend activity on Facebook can be busier than the week, so watch the organization's wall every day, even on days off, holidays and weekends.

ENGAGE THE AUDIENCE

Social media is more than just a platform to push command messages, it's a social community. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter, help people bridge enormous geographical gaps to connect, talk and interact. Using social media can be incredibly valuable to a communication strategy, but it needs to be more than just a sounding board for organization messages. It's important to use social media to facilitate the conversation, engage the population and keep people interested in what's being discussed.

LISTEN TO THE AUDIENCE

By watching the wall on a Facebook site, or by reading the comments on a blog post, social media managers can get a feel for what the online community wants to hear about. Sometimes, it's useful to talk to an audience directly. Ask for feedback and suggestions, and then act on that feedback. A social media presence accomplishes very little if the online audience is not interested in what's being said. Listening to an audience can mean the difference between maintaining a successful social media presence or an irrelevant one.

MIX IT UP

Balance the "fun" with the "medicine." It's important to put out command messages and organizational information, but it's also good to keep the page entertaining enough for people to want to follow it. Don't be afraid to have fun by posting interesting links or asking trivia questions. Try posting a photo of the day, or asking a weekly question. Social media is social, so it's important that social media managers don't fall into the trap of talking at their audience.

ANSWER QUESTIONS

Social media communities grow quickly, so it's important to note that once a social media presence grows to a certain size, the population will use it as a resource and possibly ask questions. It's important to spend time responding to questions asked in social media platforms. The community will value this interaction and the one-on-

PROMOTE ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCES

It's important to tell the social media community that you're out there. Attach links to social media platforms at the bottom of press releases and after official emails from your office. The more you get the word about out a social media presence, the faster the community that follows it will grow.

POST CONTENT TO SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS OFTEN

A static social media presence is ineffective. Static pages are boring and visitors to the page lose interest quickly. If content on the page is not regularly updated, people will stop coming by to view the page. Carefully select links to stories, unit videos and photos related to the organization's mission. Social media platforms are designed to support various forms of content, take advantage of that. Once information is cleared by a release authority, post it. Social media moves information quicker than ever, so don't wait for a press release. If the information is there, use it.

BUILD A COMMUNITY

A large social media following doesn't happen over night, so relax and execute the social media strategy. The better an organization is at providing good information and engaging its social media audience, the faster the following will grow.

Using Social Media for Crisis Communications

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Using social media to communicate with stakeholders during a crisis has proven to be an especially effective due to its speed, reach and direct access. In recent crisis, social media has helped distribute command information to key audiences and media while also providing a means for dialogue among the affected and interested parties.

YOU CAN'T FORCE TRUST

The best course of action is to leverage already existing social presences. It is important to have a regularly updated channel of communication open between the organization and the key audiences before the crisis hits so they not only know where to find you online, but know that they can trust the information they get.

MONITOR CONTENT POSTED BY USERS

Monitor social media sites so the command understands what information the users need. Staff appropriately to answer questions as best as possible and ensure that your audience knows the organization is listening to them and are actively engaged in the crisis.

POST CLEARED INFORMATION AS IT COMES IN

When a crisis hits, there's no need to wait for a formal press release. When you have solid information that an organization's audiences want to know, post it. If the organization needs to put out updated information at a later time be sure to post it as well, but playing it too cautious and waiting for everything to play out will damage the organization's credibility

USE MOBILE DEVICES

Keep your social presences up to date by using mobile devices. The myriad of mobile devices available today allow you to update social sites without being tied to your computer at a desk. Crisis happen all the time, so be prepared. Whether the installation is on lock-down, you're waiting out a storm, or you're at a remote site at the scene, mobile devices allow you to share quick updates immediately. Make sure to ensure your mobile devices are continuously charged. Be creative in finding power solutions that work for your situation.

ANSWER QUESTIONS

Answer questions as often as possible. Avoid just posting information on a social media presence. Be prepared to receive questions. Respond back as quickly as possible through the most appropriate means of communication.

MONITOR CONVERSATIONS

Listen to what the audience is talking about and be prepared to engage. This is the best way to stop rumors before they run rampant. Use search engines and other monitoring tools to track discussion on the topic.

Using Social Media for Crisis Communications (Cont.)

SHARE INFORMATION

Share critical information with a network of trusted social media sites, such as other Army command sites, government and official non-governmental sites like the American Red Cross. The social media community is large and it's possible to reach a lot of people through an extended network in the social media space.

ENCOURAGE PEOPLE ON THE SCENE TO SEND INFO

Organizations can do this by having individuals on the scene ether use their personal accounts or feed you information to post on the official command social sites. No matter how the information is submitted, the command site should promote this content when appropriate.

PROMOTE SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCES

Make sure to advertise the organization's social media presences on outgoing press releases, e-mail signatures, links on the home page and in conversations with reporters. The social media presence isn't helpful if people don't know about it, so the organization should be aggressive when sending out information. Make sure the public knows that the organization's social media presences are a good resource for information.

ANALYZE RESULTS

Once the crisis is over, analyze what happened. Evaluate metrics and track user feedback. It's important to evaluate how a social media presence performs during a crisis so adjustments can be made for the future.

Checklists for Establishing an Official Social Media Presence

PRIOR TO ESTABLISHING AN OFFICIAL SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE, CONSIDER THESE ITEMS

☐ **Study Army social media policy and read Army resources**

- Before you get started with social media, it's important to understand Army social media policy. Army social media resources can be found at: www.slideshare.net/usarmysocialmedia.

☐ **Determine your goals**

- What do you want to achieve/communicate? It could include distributing command information, connecting to a community, building espirit de corps, etc.

☐ **Determine your audience**

- Identify the audience you intend to communicate with. This can include Soldiers, Army Families, Veterans, civilians and the general public. Don't forget, your audience will also include stakeholders, politicians, community leaders and adversaries or enemies.

☐ **Research and select social media platforms**

- Identify the social media platforms that will be suit the needs of your organization. Not all platforms will work for some organizations, so make sure you understand what can be achieved with each platform. Look at what other organizations are doing to get ideas.

☐ **Select your name and branding**

- Read the Army's SOP for naming social media platforms. The SOP provides detailed naming and branding procedures. Check out this site for more: www.usarmybrandportal.com.

☐ **Draft content strategy**

- After identifying your audiences, selecting the platforms and approving branding, begin drafting a posting strategy. This helps refine your organization's social media goals. For an example of a social media strategy, go to this website: http://slidesha.re/hlovpN

☐ **Determine site management strategy**

- Identify social media managers on your team. Make sure contingency plans are in place to allow for other members to fill in on established duties if necessary.

☐ **Develop policies and training**

- The social media team is responsible for developing organization-specific social media policies to include posting and commenting policies. Also make sure to develop training materials to help educate and train individuals in your command about social media and its uses. To view the Army's social media training resource, visit: www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia.

Checklists for Establishing an Official Social Media Presence (Cont.)

REQUIREMENTS FOR AN OFFICIAL PUBLIC FACING COMMAND SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE (THIS MEANS A PUBLIC SITE, NOT ONE BEHIND A FIREWALL)

- ☐ **Commanding officer or Public Affairs Officer approval**

  - A presence must be approved by the release authority before it can be registered. Delegation of Authority-Approval of External Official Presences: http://slidesha.re/chQWAs

- ☐ **The point of contact must include a valid .mil address when submitting for approval**

- ☐ **The presence must have a URL to an official Army website**

  - Your command's website or the Army.mil if your organization does not have a website

- ☐ **The presence must post disclaimer text**

  - The disclaimer identifies the page as an official Army social media presence and disclaims any endorsement. An example can be found here: http://on.fb.me/eulvUR.

- ☐ **The presence must be clearly identified as "official"**

  - Site must identify that the presence is "official" somewhere on the page. An example can be found in the left-hand column of the Army's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/USarmy.

- ☐ **The presence must be unlocked and open to the public**

  - This mostly applies to Twitter, but also means that "private" Facebook groups should not be registered on the Army's social media directory. All official presences are open to the public.

- ☐ **Only official presences on Facebook can be registered and should be labeled as "Organization-Government"**

  - The use of Facebook Profile, Community and Group pages for official purposes violates the government's terms of service agreement with Facebook.

- ☐ **Submit the social media presence for approval and registration to www.army.mil/socialmedia/.**

- ☐ **Set default view of your Facebook wall to show posts by only your organization.**

- ☐ **Make sure YouTube channels are set up as a government presence. Step-by-step instructions can be found at this website:** https://forum.webcontent.gov/?page=TOS_YouTube

Army Branding

USING ARMY BRANDING

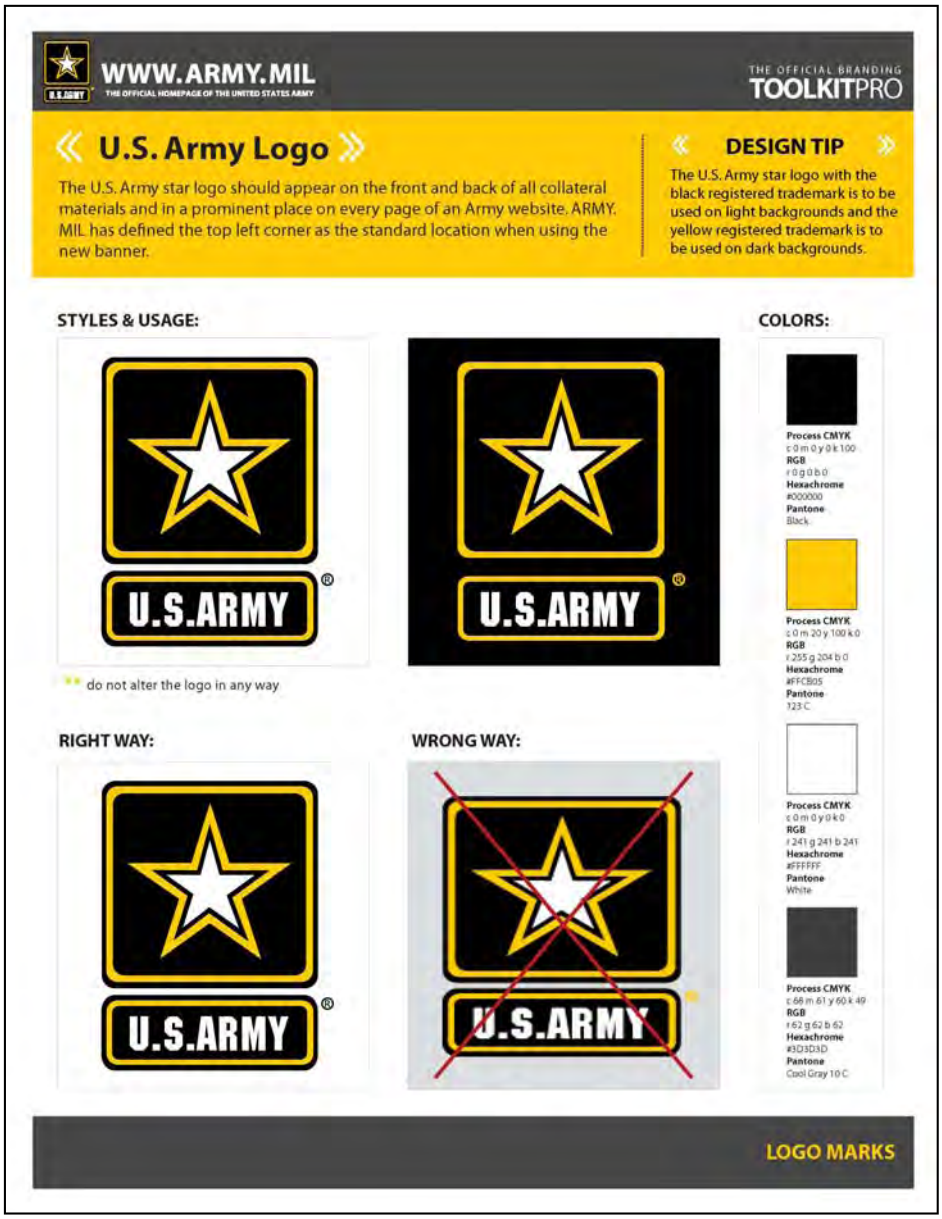
A Brand is not just a logo or an emblem. It's an organization's identity. So when using Army branding on social media sites, it's important to use the correct images. A brand represents the organization through distinctive visual elements, which uphold the integrity of the brand when used consistently and correctly across all communications.

STAYING ARMY STRONG

The U.S. Army Brand positioning conveys the heart and soul of the Brand in one statement. It's the core of the U.S. Army Brand and the underpinning of the U.S. Army's message of 'strength.' Army Strong is a unique brand of strength. Everyone is familiar with the tangible power of the U.S. Army: the Apaches, the Humvees, the weaponry, the push-ups. This campaign highlights the true strength of our Army — the strength that lies within each and every Soldier. It is harder to see, but it is this strength that makes the U.S. Army the preeminent land power on earth. So maintaining the same consistent branding across all Army sites (social media or otherwise) is vitally important.

BRANDING PORTAL

The U.S. Army Brand Portal (usarmybrandportal.com) provides Army brand elements such as Army logos, camouflage backgrounds, color palettes, typography, and released Army photography all in one place. The site also provides guidelines on how to use those elements together to ensure consistent Army branding. By visiting the site and getting the Army design elements and guidelines from the same place, people can ensure their use of Army branding is consistent with the Army's own designs.



UNIT INSIGNIA EXAMPLES (HTTP://WWW.TIOH.HQDA.PENTAGON.MIL/)

Social Media Case Studies

Social media in an operational environment

SOCIAL MEDIA IN COMBAT

Operational units are finding opportunities for strategic online engagement on several platforms. Many deployed units maintain Facebook pages, Flickr sites and YouTube channels.

CJTF-82

Combined Joint Task Force-82 in Afghanistan posted the video on the right to their YouTube channel of an air weapons team engaging and killing insurgents who were attacking a small patrol base in Paktia Province. While the Taliban claimed Americans had killed innocent civilians, this video allowed CJTF-82 to accurately portray the actual event to the media and the world.

GEN. ODIERNO

When it comes to using social media to compliment his outreach strategy, General Odierno has been an ambitious and enthusiastic leader. An early advocate, General Odierno maintains a Facebook page that is both vibrant and informative. During his multiple tours in Iraq, Facebook was a ready source of information and an opportunity for discussion for his Facebook followers and other interested readers. His page also provided updates from theater, keeping family members connected during deployments. Now that he is at Joint Forces Command, he continues to use his Facebook page.

CONNECTING FROM BATTLE

More and more commanders are seeing the value in using social media in combat. Social media can keep the public informed, it can keep Families connected and it can help address negative news stories and inaccurate reports.

Social Media Case Studies (Cont.)

Social media in a garrison environment

LT. GEN. HELMICK

Lt. Gen. Helmick at Fort Bragg has embraced social media, and his Facebook page is a good example of how to best use social media in a garrison environment. Lt. Gen. Helmick's Facebook page opens directly to his welcome page where he defines the purpose of the page and invites visitors to participate with him in discussions about Fort Bragg. His wall is populated with installation information and notifications about events and activities of interest to visitors to his page. The information is often supported with pictures and topic-specific video. Lt. Gen. Helmick often uses Facebook to solicit information from his visitors to help make Fort Bragg a better run installation. He asks for input on everything from the dining facility to traffic, and then he acts on those suggestions.

Social media in garrison crisis management

FORT HOOD SHOOTINGS

The 2009 crisis at Fort Hood illustrates the capability and capacity of social media to deliver news and information. After the shootings, people immediately went to the internet for information. People quickly turned to social media for information. Before the shootings, conversation surrounding Fort Hood was negligible, but on that day, mentions of Fort Hood skyrocketed on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook. Even the media was aware that much of the most up-to-date information about the events at Fort Hood, which was sometimes speculation, was being conveyed by social media.

During those immediate hours of the shootings, traditional press conferences were used not so much to inform the media about what was going on, but rather to clarify what was being communicated on other forums, mostly social media forums that were quickly blasting unconfirmed information. On that day, Fort Hood found itself in a crisis that was both sudden and overwhelming. Any garrison might face a similar situation at any moment. More and more garrison commanders are understanding the need for a dynamic social media program for crisis communication as well as for a variety of everyday uses.

Social Media Case Studies (Cont.)

Social media and Family readiness

SOCIAL MEDIA AND FAMILIES

Social media is becoming an increasingly important tool for keeping Families and Soldiers connected with each other. The images on the right are screenshots of the Family Readiness Group Facebook page for the 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division. This particular FRG page is full of information. It has announcements to keep Families up to date on activities of interest to them. Followers of the page are also very active. They often post additional information to the posted announcements. The interaction on this page, much like other FRG pages is dynamic, interesting and most of all informative. FRG Facebook pages have become the alternative to running from physical location to physical location trying to find out what's going on at an installation. FRG Facebook pages also include discussion sections where posts by the FRG and other individuals further advise each other about activities and information. The FRG, Soldiers and Families can also post photos to the pages. Ultimately, Social media is helping to keep families connected and that is vitally important to unit well being.

If you aren't comfortable placing the same information on a sign in your front yard, don't put it online.

WHAT CAN FAMILIES POST?

- Pride and support for service, units, specialties, and service member
- Generalizations about service or duty
- General status of the location of a unit ("operating in southern Afghanistan" as opposed to "operating in the village of Hajano Kali in Arghandab district in southern Afghanistan")
- Links to published articles about the unit or servicemember
- Any other information already in the public domain

Social Media Case Studies (Cont.)

Army leaders and social media use

LEADERS IN ACTION

The previous case studies illustrate how leaders around the Army have used social media in garrison and operational environments, but social media use goes much deeper than that. Social media is about the daily interactions and some of the highest ranking leaders have tapped into social media platforms to communicate with the population at large.

CHIEF CAM

Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George W. Casey Jr. uses video to connect with the public. During his travels, Gen. Casey carries a flipcam and records interviews with Soldiers stationed around the world. He then posts these videos to YouTube.

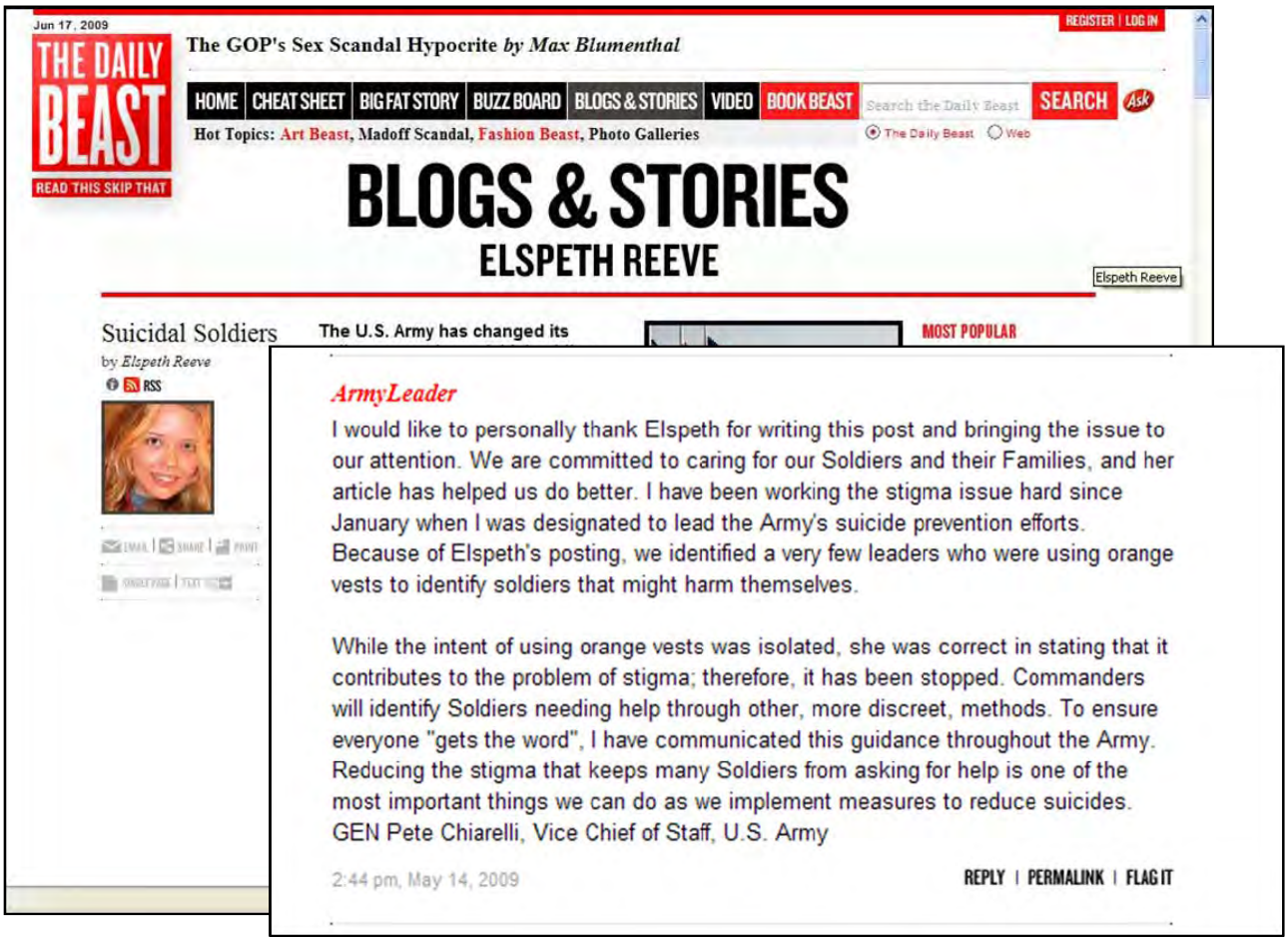
SMA ON FACEBOOK

Other Army leaders, like the Sgt. Maj. of the Army, Kenneth O. Preston use Facebook to distribute new Army guidance and information to Soldiers worldwide.

Social Media Case Studies (Cont.)

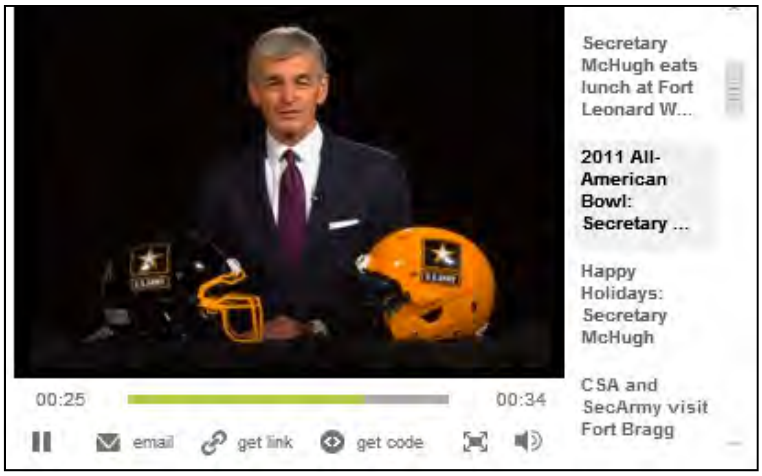
CONNECTING WITH THE PUBLIC

Maintaining a social media presence is not limited to simply engaging on your own platforms. Some Army leaders have taken it a step further. In the example below, when it came to the attention of Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Peter Chiarelli that a popular blog was reporting that Soldiers were wearing orange vests to identify them as suicidal, he was compelled to comment on the blog. By personally commenting on the blog, Gen. Chiarelli changed the narrative.



REACHING OUT

Leaders across the Army understand that social media in a new way to connect with various Army audiences. By reaching out through video, Facebook and blogs, Army leaders are engaging a new population of individuals who scour social media platforms for news rather than traditional media outlets. Social media helps bring the news to the user rather than forcing Army leaders to wait for the user to come to them.



Social Media Resources

The Department of Defense and the Army have dozens of social media resources available for social media managers, Soldiers and their Families.

POLICY RESOURCES

- ☐ **DTM 09-026: Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities**
  (http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-09-026.pdf)

- ☐ **AKO Social Media Portal**
  (http://www.army.mil/suite/page/505262)

- ☐ **Delegation of Authority—Approval of External Official Presences**
  (http://www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia/delegation-of-authority-social-media-use)

- ☐ **Standardizing Official U.S. Army External Official Presences**
  (http://www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia/army-social-media-standard-operating-procedure-standardization)

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

- ☐ **Army Social Media on Slideshare**
  (http://www.slideshare.net/usarmysocialmedia)

- ☐ **Army Social Media Directory**
  (http://www.army.mil/socialmedia/)

- ☐ **DoD Social Media Hub**
  (http://socialmedia.defense.gov/)

- ☐ **STRATCOM Social Networking training**
  (http://www.stratcom.mil/snstraining/)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I get content on the Army's social media pages?

A: The Online and Social Media Division is always looking for content. You can email stories, photos or links to unit videos to ocpa.osmd@us.army.mil and we will work hard to feature them on our sites.

Q: What if my unit doesn't have money or enough people to manage a social media presence?

A: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and a variety of other social media platforms are free, so it is possible to have a social media team without a budget. Limited manpower does not limit your unit's ability to maintain a social media presence. Just keep it simple. Evaluate the platforms and determine which will work best for your manpower situation. It only takes one person to run a Facebook page and a Twitter account.

Q: Who can manage my unit's Facebook page

A: Currently, social media manager is not an Army military occupation specialty, so it is often viewed as an additional duty. Often times, public affairs specialists take the role of social media managers since much of the content loaded to social media sites is news and command information. But it doesn't necessarily have to work that way. If a Soldier is motivated and the commander approves his/her managing the site, anyone can run a social media site as long as they work closely with the unit's public affairs shop in accordance with DTM 09-026

Q: What happens if someone is impersonating me or someone in my unit?

A: Report the impersonation to the social media platform by clicking on the report button or emailing the platform directly. If the platform is unresponsive and the impersonation becomes a threat to reputation or personal safety contact the Online and Social Media Division and we will assist in getting the page or profile removed.

Q: Can I delete comments on my unit's Facebook wall?

A: Every registered social media presence in the Army is required to have a posting policy in place. This posting policy should indicate what can and cannot be posted to a Facebook wall. If users violate these terms on your unit's wall, you are entitled to delete the comment and block the user if necessary. Keep in mind that Facebook is about facilitating the conversation so stick to your posting policy, but don't delete comments just because they express negative opinions about your organization.

Q: How can I increase the number of individuals who follow my unit on Facebook and Twitter

A: Be creative. There is no surefire way to increase followers on Facebook and Twitter, different techniques work for different organizations so it's important to think outside the box. Ask your followers to participate in the conversation, respond to them directly and ask them what they expect out of your social media presence. Look at what other organizations are doing. If they launch a successful campaign on Facebook, feel free to use their example and tailor it to your unit. Social media is still evolving so there is a lot of room to be creative. Don't be afraid to experiment and have fun.

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Q: A family member has posted something to one of the social media presences that violates OPSEC. What do I do now?

A: The first thing you should do is engage that person in as discreet a manner as possible and ask them to remove the post immediately. Explain that information isn't appropriate for conversation online. If the person refuses or persists you have the option to block them or report them. This should be used as a last resort because it is difficult to undo and only shifts the problem to out of view – the person will more than likely continue to post inappropriate content somewhere else. In either case you should notify your command so that they are. informed of the OPSEC breech and

Q: I've never been on Facebook (Twitter, YouTube, etc). How do I get started?

A: First, know that you're not alone. Fortunately most social media platforms are relatively easy to use. The best way to get started is to find someone you know who is savvy with social media to show you the ropes. You can also start your own personal social media accounts so that you can familiarize yourself with how they work. The Online and Social Media Division maintain Social Media resources for Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs that are available on Slideshare (http://www.slideshare.net/usarmysocialmedia) and is a good place to start. If you have any questions that you can't find answers to you can always call the Online and Social Media Division or your local public affairs officer.

Q: I did some searching and found that this command already has a non-official Family Group on Facebook (Twitter, YouTube, etc.). What should I do?

A: Many commands have unofficial social media presences established by former Soldiers, veterans or just fans excited about that command. We do not have the right to remove these presences nor would we want to unless they portrayed themselves as an official presence. In the meantime, work with the command leadership to determine if you want to approach the page and/or simply monitor it and chime in when you have information to add. You may also want to contact the administrator and touch base. They may be eager to have your participation. Regardless, this should not stop you or the command from creating an official presence for the command and its families. These official presences are listed in the U.S. Army Social Media Directory (lists only command presences, not family readiness groups) which can be found at:
www.army.mil/media/socialmedia/ If you find an online presence that portrays itself as an official presence and the command is not sponsoring it, suggest that your command contact the administrator.

Q: I am turning over my duties as the social media manager. How should I transfer over our social media presence?

A: If you established your social media presences under a general command account, it will be very easy to simply turn over the login and passwords and teach the new social media manager how the platform works. If you have been using your personal account to relay information, you will need to introduce the new social media manager on the social platform to the audience. Make sure to give the new social media manager administrator privileges.

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