

	Social Media Policy	
	Effective Date	Revision Date(s)
	April 25, 2014	
Approved _____	Jared Miller, City Manager	

City of San Marcos Social Media Policy

1.0 Purpose:

- 1.1 The City of San Marcos (the City), in an ongoing effort to maintain effective communication and transparency with community members (employees, vendors, citizens and other members of the public), uses social media outlets as a way to deliver information about the City’s mission, programs, services and brand identity.
- 1.2 This purpose of this policy is assist in reducing or eliminating the associated risks of using social media such as leaks of proprietary or otherwise protected or confidential information, misrepresentation, propagation of rumors and negative publicity.
- 1.3 This policy sets guidelines for use of social media to ensure timely, accurate and appropriate use of those outlets to deliver clear, concise and consistent messages on behalf of the City and to establish standards and expectations of social media, use among employees and others covered by this policy.
- 1.4 This policy applies to any pre-existing or proposed social media web sites and online accounts created by City employees during the course and scope of their employment and the terms at which the public is encouraged to interact with the City in social media.

2.0 Benefits of social media:

- 2.1 Promote transparency of City government and services.
- 2.2 Provide timely information to all audiences.
- 2.3 Establish one-on-one connection with residents and persons interested in San Marcos.
- 2.3 Send time-sensitive information to residents and media quickly.

- 2.4 Create additional marketing/promotional channel to increase awareness of City messages.
- 2.5 Reach additional demographics and audiences.

3.0 Social Media in Use by the City:

- 3.1 Social media: web sites and applications used for social networking.
- 3.2 Facebook: Facebook is a free-access social networking website that is operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc.
<https://www.facebook.com/CityofSanMarcos>
- 3.3 Twitter: Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read other users' updates known as tweets which answer the question "what are you doing?"
<https://twitter.com/CityofSanMarcos>
- 3.4 YouTube is a free social media video-sharing website and may be used for posting City-produced videos approved by Directors, Department Managers or Communications Department.
<http://www.youtube.com/cityofsanmarcos>.
- 3.5 RSS (Really Simple Syndication Feed) allows user subscriptions to specific feeds from the City web site. City RSS feeds may be found at <http://www.sanmarcostx.gov/index.aspx?page=601>
- 3.6 Other Social Media as approved by the Communications Department in coordination with Information Technology.

4.0 Employee Use:

- 4.1 All social media accounts will be set up by the Communications Department in coordination with Information Technology to ensure consistency of City brand and messaging. All postings must support the City's mission, integrity and reputation.
- 4.2 Messaging on the City's Facebook/Twitter/YouTube RSS Feed social media accounts must be posted by authorized and trained Web Team members. The City will only use one social media account per platform.
- 4.3 The City social media postings by departments will be subject to approval and editing by the Communications Department.
- 4.4 The Communications Department will maintain a list of social media tools which are approved for use by City departments and staff and the login and password information for any pages owned by the City of San Marcos in one master list.
- 4.5 Employees are responsible for any content they publish in any social media outlet.

- 4.6 Social media postings must be in accordance with the City Employee Handbook, Web Policies and Information Technology policies.
- 4.7 Employees must adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies; including all policies pertaining to the use of computers, electronic communications, respectful workplace, City Records Management policies, proper business etiquette and any other applicable City policy or procedure.
- 4.8 Information Technology is responsible for archiving and retention of social media postings in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act.

5.0 Employee Sites

- 5.1 The City recognizes that many individual employees utilize social media outlets for their own personal use. This policy does not extend to individual employees sites, except that employees may be subject to disciplinary action for internet postings that could impair the public's confidence in the operation of City government or the performance of the individual employee.
- 5.2 Personal sites may not be designed in such a way as to cause users to believe the site is City-administered or endorsed by the City, including unauthorized use of City logos and trademarks. Connections with City-administered sites are permitted.

6.0 Prohibited Activity

- 6.1 Employees, other than those authorized by the Communications Department, are not permitted to:
 - 6.1.1 Create a social media account representing the City or a Department of the City.
 - 6.1.2 Use the City in or as part of their personal social media presence (in user names, contact information or addresses, including telephone and email).
 - 6.1.3 Use City logos, trademarks, proprietary graphics or photographs in personal social media accounts or activity.
 - 6.1.4 Use social media to provide misinformation about the City, fellow employees, or City policies and procedures.

7. Public Comment Policy

- 7.1 The public may share thoughts on City social media sites as they relate to the topics being discussed. Persons may be permanently

excluded from City social media pages if acting contrary to these rules.

- 7.2 Posted content must be relevant to the City.
- 7.3 Advertising or promotional announcements are not permitted.
- 7.4 Any comment using profane language or posting any information that could be considered disrespectful dialogue, obscene, harassing, libelous, defamatory or slanderous or attacks on individual character will not be allowed.
- 7.5 Comments must not be in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures; Postings for electoral campaign purposes will not be published.
- 7.6 Content will be removed that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.
- 7.7 Sexual content or links to sexual content are not permitted.
- 7.8 Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity is not permitted.
- 7.9 Users are legally responsible for what they write, and it must not breach any law, confidentiality or copyright or plagiarize material.
- 7.10 For their online safety, users are encouraged not to provide personally identifiable information within their comments, including addresses, telephone numbers or email addresses.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions apply:

CITY-Administered Site: any internet site, or portion of an internet site, with content controlled by CITY representatives as an official communication outlet of the CITY.

Comment: a message posted by site visitors, either in response to an existing topic or introducing a new topic. In general, the content of comments is controlled solely by the user, but often can be deleted, accepted or rejected prior to posting by the site administrator.

Connection: is any deliberate link between a user and a social media outlet, whether it is initiated by the individual or by the site moderator. Terms used by various sites to describe a Connection include friend, fan, follower or subscriber.

Employee: Any individual who performs services for the City of San Marcos. This includes, but is not limited to, permanent, part time or temporary, intern, Mayor or City Council Member, Board or Commission Member, vendor, contractor, or volunteer.

Plagiarized Material: private, personal material published without consent.

Profile: a self-description page, viewable by the public, set up when creating an account with a social media outlet.

Rogue Account: social media account not approved by the Director of Communications but which lead the public to believe they officially represent the City of San Marcos.

Really Simple Syndication Feed (RSS Feed): the de facto standard for the syndication of Internet content. Users of RSS content use software programs called "feed readers" or "feed aggregators." The user subscribes to a feed by entering a link to the feed into the reader program. The reader can then check the user's subscribed feeds to see if any of those feeds have new content since the last time checked, and if so, retrieve that content and present it to the user. City RSS feeds may be found at <http://www.sanmarcostx.gov/index.aspx?page=601> .

Site Administrator: the person approved by Director of Communications to be responsible for creation and maintenance of a City social media outlet. Site Administrator will be identified in the Account profile and their City e-mail address will be the one used. Site administration is a voluntary assignment in addition to regular duties and job assignments.

Social Media Outlet: technology-based mass communication tool, most often accessed through the Internet, or similar means, that encourage information-sharing among individuals or groups with a common interest.

Technology equipment: any equipment, hardware or software that is owned by CITY and assigned or available for use in the course of employment. These resources include the following: desktop and laptop/notebook computers, mobile computers, mobile data terminals, servers, and other electronic devices (including, but not limited to, radios, telephones, printers, scanners, digital storage or USB devices, mobile telephones, smart phones, digital cameras, copy machines, fax machines, pagers, plotters, and personal digital assistants) that are attached to and using City of San Marcos resources, including its network infrastructure, electronic data, databases

(and the applications they support) electronic mail, voice mail and access to the Internet.

Web Team: The Web Team is a group of City employees designated by departments and the Communications Department and trained to edit the City's web site and contribute to authorized social media platforms on the website.

The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content deemed in violation of the terms outlined in this policy. Any content removed based on these guidelines will be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

The City of San Marcos reserves the right to update these terms of use.