Commissie Nieuwe Media Briefing

Office of Citizen Services, GSA

Social Media Terms of Service Agreements

October 5, 2009

General Background

▸ Effort started in summer 2008 – still ongoing

▸ Goal to negotiate standard agreements that all agencies could use (= less duplication)

▸ Address legal barriers for federal agencies who have business case to use tools

▸ Led by GSA's Office of Citizen Services and Office of General Counsel

▸ Coalition of agencies helped negotiate (incl White House)

▸ Picked most popular services, but a broad range (no favoritism)

▸ Focus on free services (these are no-cost agreements, not contracts)

GSA

Current Status

▶ Twenty-three agreements as of October 1, 2009

- **AddThis:** bookmarking and sharing

- **Blip.tv:** video sharing

- **Cooliris:** video and picture browsing

- **Dipity:** multimedia timelines

- **Disqus:** universal commenting & social discussion

- **Facebook:** social networking

- **Flickr:** photo sharing

- **FriendFeed:** social networking aggregator

- **IdeaScale:** voting and feedback

- **IntenseDebate:** social commenting

- **MixedInk:** collaborative writing

- **MySpace:** social networking

- **OpenCalais:** automated metadata

Current status (cont'd)

- **Scribd**: social publishing

- **Slideshare**: presentation sharing
- **Socrata**: data hosting (formerly Blist)
- **TubeMogul**: video analytics and distribution
- **TwitVid**: video sharing
- **UserVoice**: voting, customer & constituent feedback

- **Vimeo**: video sharing
- **Wikispaces**: collaboration
- **WordPress**: blogging
- **YouTube**: video sharing

▸ Ongoing discussions with other providers

▸ Agreements available on WebContent.gov (and on GSA FOIA webpage)

GSA

Process for other agencies to sign

▸ Agencies review each agreement, get concurrence from their lawyers, and sign the agreement.

▸ There's a different agreement for each provider, but similar issues are addressed in each agreement   (ie indemnification, advertising, etc)

▸ Goal is to create standard agreement for all agencies to sign – not efficient for dozens of agencies to negotiate their own agreements

▸ Cabinet departments are working through their point-of-contact so there's one agreement per department

GSA

Examples of agencies using social media

▶ USA.gov and GobiernoUSA.gov
  – Working on overall social media strategy
    • Facebook pages
    • Twitter profiles
    • U.S. Government YouTube Channel

▶ CDC
  – Using Twitter to inform public about H1N1/swine flu, peanut recall

▶ State Dept
  – Sec. Clinton writing blog and soliciting public comments

▶ White House
  – Facebook, Twitter pages
  – Using YouTube to broadcast President's weekly address

GSA

GSA's role

▶ Supports New Administration goals for greater transparency, collaboration, and participation

▶ Reinforces us as a thought leader, facilitator, and model for other agencies

▶ Allows us to share best practices with other agencies and showcase what other agencies are doing

▶ Can lead to more efficient way of doing business

GSA

Opportunities for government

▸ Use tools to help agencies accomplish missions -- so citizens can complete their top tasks

▸ Gives government tools to listen to our customers and take action to improve our business

▸ Helps us reach millions more people – to get into the mainstream

▸ Create communities of interest on social networks to share ideas, answer common questions, etc.

▸ Communicate with the public and government employees during national emergencies

GSA

Legal Issues addressed in the agreements

▸ **Indemnification and limited liability:** ensures liability is limited and covered by federal law

▸ **Jurisdiction and choice of law:** must be governed by federal law, not state laws

▸ **FOIA:** recognize that we adhere to FOIA

▸ **Intellectual property:** recognize that our content is public domain

▸ **Advertising:** allows for eliminating or minimizing advertising

▸ **Grandfather arrangements:** previous "click-through" agreements will be superseded by new agreements

▸ **Free Service:** providers will not charge for their services

GSA

Next Steps

▸ Continue to encourage other agencies to sign the agreements (those that have a business need to use these tools)

▸ Share examples of agencies that are using tools strategically and integrating them into day-to-day business ops

▸ Assist agencies to develop policies and guidelines (GSA CIO recently developed social media policy for agency)

▸ Continue to offer training, best practices, sharing tools:
  – Web Manager University (classes, webinars, New Media Talks)
  – WebContent.gov
  – Web Content Managers Forum

GSA

Making Government Easy with Social Media:
A Review of USA.gov & GobiernoUSA.gov Social Media Strategy

Social Media Overview
What is Social Media?

Social media refers to online services that enable individuals to publicly create, share, and discuss information

Social media services include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs

- Social networks such as Facebook and MySpace

- Video and photo sharing sites such as YouTube and Flickr

- Microblogging services such as Twitter

- Social bookmarking services such as Digg and Delicious

Social Media Overview
Why use Social Media?

Social media is becoming many people's primary source of news, opinion, and entertainment

- Because of widespread blogging, social networks, video sharing sites, and opportunities to comment on and rate online content, social media is now ubiquitous

- Research has proven that people are more compelled to act on information if it is transmitted through personal ties

- Making government information accessible via social media will enable people to share timely government information with the people who need it

- Social media provides constituent feedback and interaction which can be used to optimize government online offerings

Social Media Strategy Development

Social Media Strategy Development
Planning a Social Media Strategy

We used a strategic approach to address constituents via social media, thinking about our audience and objectives before choosing a technology

1.Define objectives
‣ We conducted stakeholder interviews to learn more about our own motivations to use social media and learn what we wanted to get out of it

2.Perform audience research
‣ We surveyed users and analyzed our existing traffic to learn about our constituents' objectives and needs

3.Identify best practices
‣ We looked at other organizations to see how they use social media to achieve their objectives

4.Develop a long term strategy
‣ We developed a scalable strategy that would accomplish our objectives, independent of technology, while fulfilling constituent needs

Social Media Strategy Development
Our Social Media Objectives

An extensive internal review process revealed a desire to use social media in order to:

- Put a human face on government
- Establish USA.gov & GobiernoUSA.gov as approachable sources of trusted information
- Create new channels to distribute existing content, news, and information
- Spread information virally
- Interact directly with constituents
- Encourage public engagement with government

Social Media Strategy Development
Social Media Preferences

Review of analytics and a survey of social media users indicated the following audience preferences:

- Interested in accessing government information via social media
- Credibility of government information on social media is critical
- Interested in having conversations with the government
- Interested in a variety of government information, including:
  - Emergency alerts
  - Social Security
  - Other government benefits
- Relevant and timely content is critical – the technology used to deliver it is secondary

Social Media Strategy Development
Social Media Best Practices
We examined a variety of social media outreach initiatives and identified the following best practices

Seek or create user interfaces that foster interaction:
▸ Interaction should be easy and intuitive
▸ Use branding elements to make it clear that users are interacting with an official source

Engage constituents:
▸ Comments left by constituents should be answered in a friendly and personal manner
▸ Establish clear guidelines for constituent engagement, and empower government representatives to interact with constituents

Solicit feedback and encourage sharing:
▸ Whenever possible, invite opinions and experiences from constituents to stimulate dialogue
▸ Provide links or buttons to share content and encourage users to do so with clear calls to action

Provide relevant and timely content:
▸ Use social media to listen to conversations and allow constituents to identify topics of interest
▸ Use existing content assets to initiate timely discussions

Dedicate resources:
▸ Social media success requires dedicated resources to own the conversation and optimize the program based on feedback

Conclusions

Define objectives

▸ Your social media efforts will not be sustainable if they do not yield useful results

Understand your audience

▸ Your audience is probably using some form of social media, but be sure to study their habits before deciding on a program or technology

▸ Constituents will ignore your efforts if they do not provide value, but they will reward you if you do

Develop a strategy

▸ Choose a technology and define tactics that accomplish your objectives while addressing constituent needs

Experiment and optimize

▸ There are some clear social media best practices, but understand that your goals and your audience are unique – you have to blaze the trail!

▸ Be aggressive, learn from experience, continually optimize, and have fun

Plan for success!

▸ Success means more conversations, develop a plan that can scale to handle them

So far…

▸ GovGab Blog

▸ 2 Facebook pages
  – www.facebook.com/USAgov (≈ 3100 fans)
  – www.facebook.com/GobiernoUSA.gov (≈800 fans)

▸ 2 Twitter pages
  – www.twitter.com/USAgov (≈12,000 followers)
  – www.twitter.com/GobiernoUSA (≈1,700 followers)

▸ Social Media Outreach Calendar (SMOC)

▸ RSS feeds

▸ News Aggregator

▸ Gadget Gallery

▸ Spanish-language Gadget

▸ U.S. Government Channel

▸ Training

▸ More on Connect with Government pages: http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Multimedia.shtml (English) &
  http://www.usa.gov/gobiernousa/Temas/Medios_Sociales.shtml (Spanish)

Next social media tasks

▸ Defining our brand

▸ Social Media Editorial Guidelines

▸ Social Media Optimization of our site

▸ USA.gov URL Shortener

▸ Ask the Government Program

▸ More training

Questions?

Contact information:

B. Leilani Martinez
U.S. General Services Administration
Office of Citizen Services and Communication
Bilingual Web Content Manager
Co-Manager, GobiernoUSA.gov
leilani.martinez@gsa.gov
202-208-5858

GSA