

OSM Social Media Guidance

I. Purpose

This document provides guidance to OSM program and office staff seeking to establish and administer official OSM-sponsored social media sites. This guidance does not address the personal (i.e., non-official) use of social media.

II. Roles and Responsibilities:

DOI Office of Communications (DOI OCO). DOI OCO is the final approval authority for any DOI social media requests. DOI OCO has established a list of Terms of Service (TOS) agreements for use by DOI offices.

OSM Office of Communications (OC). Point of contact for social media at OSM. The OC will coordinate with the DOI OCO to gain approval for social media sites requested by OSM offices. OC will first review and approve these requests. The OC will provide recommendations and best practices to social media account holders on how to use social media tools successfully. The OC will maintain a list of all current OSM Official Social Media Sites on the OSM Internet website. For every social media account created, an “OSM” or “@OSM” must exist in front of the office name.

OSM Information Resources Office (IRO). Point of contact for security, records management, and privacy issues.

Regional Directors/Assistant Directors (RD/AD). The RD/AD, or his/her designee, will approve any social media request from his/her area and forward the approved request to OC for action.

OSM Requesting Office. The OSM Requesting Office asking for a social media site is responsible for creating, maintaining, and most importantly monitoring the social media site when the request has been approved. The OSM requesting office will also be responsible for adhering to OSM, DOI, and other Federal government requirements including this guidance document and the associated OSM social media policy directive. Note: The role “OSM Requesting Office” can also refer to a less formal entity such as an initiative, project, or working group.

Social Media Administrators. Administrators and their specific tasks are referred to throughout this document. Administrators will do the actual posting of social media content in concert with the OSM Requesting Office. This responsibility will constitute a collateral duty.

Supervisors. Supervisors will monitor social media activities by reviewing the social media sites administered by their employees as needed, but no less than quarterly.

III. Guidance Documents

1. The overarching and definitive guidance documents for all OSM social media users are the [OSM Social Media Policy Directive](#) and the [DOI Social Media Policy](#) (NOTE: Links to these and other documents referenced in this OSM Social Media Guidance are listed in Appendix 2). Any activities prohibited within the DOI policy are inherently prohibited by OSM. The DOI Social Media Policy also contains an extensive explanation of the government’s use of social media and applicable laws that must be followed. Additional guidance can be found in the [DOI Social Media Guidebook](#). OSM Offices requesting a social media site should be familiar with these documents.

2. Guidelines apply to all OSM employees (including temporary, seasonal, and contractors) posting to OSM social media sites. This guidance document does not restrict employees' use of personal, non-work related social media accounts when off duty. Employees, however, should be familiar with the [Ethics Guide for DOI Employees \(see section "Use of Computers and the Internet"\)](#).

3. **Terms of Service Agreements**

The General Services Administration (GSA) works with a variety of social media service providers and vendors to negotiate Terms of Service (TOS) agreements that are acceptable for government agencies. Only those TOS agreements made by DOI can be used by OSM. Currently, DOI has TOS agreements for its bureaus and agencies to use Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and YouTube. Other social media outlets may be added periodically to the DOI TOS agreements list. For current information, view the [DOI Social Media Guidebook](#).

IV. Process for Establishing a Social Media Platform

All social media sites representing OSM must be approved by the Chief of the OC prior to the creation of any social media accounts. Any social networking profiles or social media sites that have not been approved may be terminated. Managers and employees who are initiating social media sites will be responsible for content postings, monitoring, and analysis. OC will evaluate, register, and approve social media sites on a case by case basis. OC will also recommend specific social media platforms and methods as necessary.

1. **Steps Required to Request and Create a Social Media Site:**

- a. OSM Requesting Office completes the OSM Social Media Request Form (Appendix 3) and forwards to RD/AD for review.
- b. If approved, RD/AD forwards request form to OC.
- c. The OC creates a request with DOI using Apps.gov.
- d. DOI approves the request and sends confirmation to OC.
- e. OC notifies the requesting OSM office that their request has been approved.
- f. Requesting OSM office is now authorized to create the social media site.
- g. The administrator for the new site will send an email to the OC web content manager including the email, username, and password for the social media account.

2. **Course of Action for OSM Requesting Office:**

Please refer to the Social Media Registration Checklist (Appendix 4). Templates are available at the social media outlets to make site creation easier. As needed and time allows, OC staff may be available to help.

OSM offices are responsible for establishing, publishing and updating their pages on social media sites via the designated administrators. Although administrators are not required to obtain approval on items posted on a social media site, the OC will monitor content on all OSM social media sites to ensure:

- (1) A consistent message is being conveyed,
- (2) Adherence to DOI's Social Media Policy and OSM's Social Media Guidance, and
- (3) Consistent use of OSM logo and OSM branding is represented. Branding information will be provided by OC.

OC also retains the ability to modify social media sites or direct the offices/agencies to modify content based on best practices.

Note for Facebook only: Ads need to be removed from Federal government Facebook pages. Please contact the OC for details.

Access to Social Media Account

Social media accounts will only be authorized for the use of OSM offices, not individuals. *Note: OSM is not responsible for any social media pages or instances created by its employees for personal use; those activities are already covered in the [Ethics Guide for DOI Employees](#).*

3. Records Management

Records management requirements for social media technologies are similar to any other information system and shall be in conformance with existing policy. National Archives Records Administration (NARA) is in the process of developing specific guidelines for social media. Until these guidelines are available, OSM will proceed according to the [NARA Bulletin 2011-02](#).

In accordance with the DOI Social Media Guidebook, OSM should only post information on social media sites that is publicly available on the primary website; this will include all videos, images, and photographs uploaded to an OSM social media site. Because this action creates duplicate information, the social media site posting likely is not considered a Federal record. Additional guidance regarding records management of comments provided by the public will be available shortly.

4. Data Management

IRO will provide guidance on backing up social media sites and data.

5. Privacy Guidance

OSM's privacy guidance will be updated stating no personally identifiable information (PII) may be requested or collected from the use of social media sites. Privacy impact assessments (PIA) will be conducted periodically by the Information Resources Office Privacy Officer.

6. Security Risk Assessment

Security risk assessments specifically focused on social media services will be completed and documented on a routine basis by the Information Resources Office as outlined by DOI. The assessment will be emailed to the OC and to each Social Media Site Administrator.

7. Comments by the Public/OSM Responses

The purpose of OSM social media sites is to provide information and promote interaction between OSM and the public. The ability to accept comments and respond to them appropriately is vital to a successful OSM social media site. Without interaction, information could be dispersed through websites or news releases. Users and visitors to OSM social media sites will be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between OSM and the public, and that certain restrictions will be placed on users' comments and feedback.

Site administrators will add a disclaimer to each social media site describing the process for submitting official comments to OSM. This disclaimer must emphasize that comments submitted

on social media sites are informal and unofficial. The disclaimer will also inform the public how to submit official comments.

Referred to as “Citizen Conduct,” the following information must be displayed on the social media site as content or as a link (for example, in the “General Information” field of the page). This notification will indicate that comments or responses made by the public containing any of the following forms of content will not be tolerated and will be removed:

- Comments not typically related to the particular item being commented upon;
- Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
- Profane language or content;
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Solicitations of commerce;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

The OSM Requesting Office will be responsible for monitoring comments on the social media site.

It is recommended that content removed based on these guidelines be retained for Federal record-keeping purposes at least temporarily until the office no longer feels it is necessary. Reference the [NARA Bulletin 2011-02](#) for more information.

8. **Social Media Posting by OSM Employees as Site Administrators**

Posting of content on official OSM social media sites will be performed by the site administrator. Site administrators must adhere to the regulations regarding web posting on Internet sites, specifically:

- Use every effort to keep interactions factual and accurate and not the opinion of the person posting;
- Only state information on social media sites that is official and intended for the public to view. Do not post any information that may be considered FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (FOUO), Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU), Classified, or Confidential;
- Protect privacy and permissions. Never display employee or constituent personal identifiable information (PII);
- Do not place advertisements or endorse products or services;
- Provide links to credible sources of information only;
- Do not place links on social media sites to sources that are unrelated to OSM official programs and services;
- Publicly correct any information OSM has communicated that is later found to be in error;
- Never represent yourself when posting content. While using OSM-approved social media sites, you are functioning as a Federal government employee/ representative of OSM not as a private citizen;
- Adhere to the [DOI Social Media Response Chart](#) when you respond to the public;

- Answer specific inquiries posted from the public in a timely manner. If you refer a question or issue to another staff member or manager for a response, monitor the request to ensure timely response to the public;
- Use appropriate and polite behavior when addressing the public. Do not engage in arguments or debates;
- Do not comment on negative opinions by the public if the opinions do not have any reflection on the bureau;
- Do not delete negative comments or opinions provided by the public unless they violate the above Citizen Conduct;
- Strive for transparency and openness in all interactions with the public;
- Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties; refer those questions to the appropriate OSM staff;
- Respect the rules of the venue; and
- IN BRIEF – If you have to think about whether or not the content you are about to post is appropriate for public consumption, do not post it.

Failure to adhere to these rules may result in the OC revoking the employee's access to social media sites as well as termination of a social media site, after the OC consults with the RD/AD.

9. **Social Media Posting by OSM Employees as Subject Matter Experts in an Official Role**

When responding to public comments or inquiries, there may be times when the site administrator asks an OSM employee to comment on a posting. Typically this would occur if a specific employee is a subject matter expert in fielding a particular question or comment. When that situation occurs, the employee must remember (s)he represents OSM and is using his/her official office social media site. The above posting restrictions will apply.

Should an employee see a posting that (s)he believes requires a response, the appropriate action is to notify the administrator for the social media site in question and possibly suggest a suitable response. NOTE: If you are not the site administrator, it is not your role to respond unless advised to do so. When posting information relevant to OSM, employees will always use the official office social media account and never any personal social media accounts.

In addition, as an OSM employee, if it is your responsibility to review and comment on other organizations' social media sites (public or private), that task is guided by your supervisor and is not the subject of this guidance document other than to remind you that you represent OSM and the U.S. Government in all of your postings.

10. **Social Media Posting by an OSM Employee as a Member of the Public**

As previously stated, this guidance document is not meant to cover employees' personal use of social media. Other references cover that information, such as the [Ethics Guide for DOI Employees](#). DOI OCO advises employees to keep content on their personal Facebook pages separate from content on their OSM office page. However, you may choose to "like" an OSM office page from your personal Facebook page.

Personal accounts should not be established with government email addresses, employ the use of government logos, be used to conduct official business, release official agency information, or be used for any other official communication related to the employee's government job or activities. That is the purpose of the official OSM social media sites.

For additional information or questions regarding these Guidelines, please contact:

OSM Office of Communications

Phone: 202-208-2565

Email: nturner@osmre.gov

Appendix 1- Social Media Glossary

The following glossary is an attempt to provide definitions for common social media terms. Since technology changes rapidly, terms will be added and removed as necessary. Please note that terms identified here are not all available to OSM Social Media sites.

Bit.ly: A popular free URL-shortening service that provides statistics for the links users share online. Use it to condense long URLs and make them easier to share on social networks like Twitter. DOI has a Terms of Service agreement with Bit.ly, and OSM is only authorized to use this URL shortener. www.bitly.com

Blog: A word that was created from the words “Web log.” Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Blogger: A popular free weblog publishing tool. www.blogger.com

Chat: Any kind of communication over the Internet, but traditionally describes one-to-one communication through a text-based chat client commonly called an instant messaging application.

Comment: A response that is often provided as an answer or reaction to a blog post or message on a social network. Comments are a primary form of two-way communication on the social web.

Crowdsourcing: A combination of the words crowd and outsourcing, it refers to asking a question via social media and collecting answers from your various communities and users. The term has become popular with businesses, authors and journalists as shorthand for the trend of leveraging the mass collaboration enabled by Web 2.0 technologies to achieve business goals.

Discussion Boards: A web application for holding discussions and posting user generated content. The term may refer to the entire community or to a specific sub-forum dealing with a distinct topic. Messages within these sub-forums are then displayed either in chronological order or as threaded discussions. Discussion boards, also known as bulletin boards, are one of the old forms of collaboration on the web.

Facebook: A social networking website. Users can create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages and profile updates. It is the world’s largest social network and enables users to post and share information publicly through status updates, RSS feeds, photos, videos, or hyperlinks. www.facebook.com.

Flickr: A social networking website used for online photo sharing. The service allows users to store photos online and then share them with others through profiles, groups and other methods. www.flickr.com.

Follow: A term used to describe how one receives information from social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Forum: An online discussion site (also known as a message board). It is the modern equivalent of a traditional bulletin board, and the technological evolution of the dial-up bulletin board system.

Hashtag: Because Twitter provided no easy way to group Tweets or add extra data, the Twitter community came up with its own way: hashtags. A hashtag is similar to other web tags; it helps to add a Tweet to a particular category. Hashtags have the “hash” or “pound” symbol (#) preceding the tag, for example: #socialmedia, #marketing, or #hashtag.

Insights: Facebook Insights provides Facebook Page owners and Facebook Platform developers with metrics around their content. By understanding and analyzing trends within user growth and demographics, consumption of content, and creation of content, Page owners and Platform developers are better equipped to improve their business with Facebook.

Instant Messaging (IM): A form of real-time direct text-based communication between two or more people. More advanced instant messaging software clients also allow enhanced modes of communication, such as live voice or video calling.

Like: An action that can be made by a Facebook user. Instead of writing a comment for a message or a status update, a Facebook user can click the “Like” button as a quick way to show approval and share the message. Like can also be used to “Like” a business or government Facebook page; this action will automatically add news posts to the user’s Facebook wall.

LinkedIn: A business-oriented social networking site. LinkedIn has more than 100 million registered users in more than 200 countries. www.linkedin.com.

Livestream: A live streaming video platform that allows users to view and broadcast video content using a camera and a computer through the internet. www.livestream.com.

Lurker: A person who reads online discussions on a message board, newsgroup, social network or other interactive system, but rarely or never participates in the discussion.

Mashup: A content mashup contains multiple types of media drawn from pre-existing sources to create a new work. Digital mashups allow individuals or businesses to create new content by combining multiple online content sources.

Media Sharing: Tools such as Flickr and YouTube are used to share files and host the storage of content.

MySpace: A social networking website owned by News Corporation. www.myspace.com.

News Reader: Enables users to aggregate articles from multiple websites into one place using RSS feeds. The purpose of these aggregators is to allow for a faster and more efficient consumption of information.

Permalink: An address or URL of a particular post within a blog or website.

Podcast: An audio or video blog. Podcasts take their name from having originally been designed for iPods, but you can also listen to podcasts on a desktop computer, or many other digital audio

players. It is a non-streamed webcast: a series of digital media files that are released episodically and often downloaded through an RSS feed.

Real-Time Search: The concept of searching for and finding information online as it is produced. Advancements in search technology, coupled with the growing use of social media, enable online activities to be queried as they occur, whereas a traditional web search crawls and indexes web pages periodically and returns results based on relevance to the search query.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication): A family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated works — such as blog entries, news headlines, audio and video — in a standardized format. An RSS document (which is called a “feed,” “web feed,” or “channel”) includes full or summarized text, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorship. Web feeds benefit publishers by letting them syndicate content automatically. They benefit readers who want to subscribe to timely updates from favored websites or to aggregate feeds from many sites into one place. RSS feeds can be read using software called an “RSS reader,” “feed reader,” or “aggregator,” which can be web-based, desktop-based or mobile-device-based.

Social Media Monitoring: A process of monitoring and responding to social media mentions related to a business or brand.

Social Networking: Social networking connects people who share similar interests. Social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter are used to publish content and provide interactions among users.

Streaming: A process of broadcasting media live over the Internet. It involves a video camera for the media, an encoder to digitize the content, a media publisher where the streams are made available to potential end-users, and a content delivery network to distribute and deliver the content. The media can then be viewed by end-users live.

Tags: Keywords that describe the content of a website, bookmark, photo or blog post. A user can assign multiple tags to the same online resource, and multiple people can assign different tags to the same resource. Tag-enabled web services include social book marking sites (such as Delicious), photo sharing sites (like Flickr) and blog tracking sites (like Technorati). Tags provide a useful way of organizing, retrieving and discovering information.

Twitter: A platform that allows users to share 140-character-long messages. Users can “follow” each other as a way of subscribing to each others’ messages. Additionally, users can use the @username command to direct a message towards another Twitter user. www.twitter.com

Twitter Search: A Twitter-operated search engine that finds Twitter messages and users in real time.

Video Blog (vlog): A blog that produces regular video content often around the same theme on a daily or weekly basis.

Web 2.0: Commonly associated with web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design and collaboration on the web. A Web 2.0 site (e.g.

Facebook) enables its users to interact with each other as contributors to the site's content, in contrast to websites where users are limited to the passive viewing of information.

Web Analytics: The measurement, collection, analysis, and reporting of web data for purposes of understanding and optimizing web usage.

Webcast: A media file distributed over the Internet using streaming media technology to distribute a single content source to many simultaneous listeners/viewers. A webcast may either be distributed live or on demand. Essentially, webcasting is "broadcasting" over the Internet.

Webinar: Short for web-based seminar, a presentation, live meeting, training, or lecture that is transmitted over the Internet. It is typically one-way, from the speaker to the audience with limited audience interaction, such as in a webcast. A webinar can be collaborative and include polling and question & answer sessions to allow full participation between the audience and the presenter.

Web Publishing: Platforms are used to create, publish and reuse content. Blogging and microblogging tools (such as Twitter) provide constituents who follow these content sources with immediate updates for news, emergency and other content updates.

Wiki: A website that allows the easy creation and editing of any number of interlinked web pages via a web browser, enabling collaboration between users.

Wikipedia: A free, web-based, collaborative, multilingual encyclopedia project supported by the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation. Its articles have been written collaboratively by volunteers around the world, and almost all of its articles can be edited by anyone with access to the site. www.wikipedia.org.

YouTube: A video-sharing website where users can upload, share and view videos. It is the largest video sharing site in the world. All video posted to YouTube must be 508 compliant (captioned). www.youtube.com.

Appendix 2 – List of References

- Social Media Policy Directive – <http://www.osmre.gov/guidance/docs/directive975.pdf>
- OSM Social Media Checklist – http://www.osmre.gov/sm/sm_registration_checklist.pdf
- OSM Social Media Request Form – http://www.osmre.gov/sm/sm_request_form.pdf
- DOI Social Media Policy - <http://www.doi.gov/notices/Social-Media-Policy.cfm>
- DOI Social Media Guidance Handbook – <http://on.DOI.gov/SMBook>
- DOI Social Media Response Chart -
<http://oneinterior.doi.net/oneinterior/technology/dwc/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=117628>
- NARA Bulletin 2011-02 - <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2011/2011-02.html>
- DOI Employee Ethics Guide -
http://www.doi.gov/ethics/docs/Ethics_Guide_for_DOI_Employees_January_2010.doc
- OMB April 7, 2010 memorandum, Social Media, Web-Based Interactive Technologies, and the Paperwork Reduction Act.
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/inforeg/SocialMediaGuidance_04072010.pdf

Appendix 3 – Sample Social Media Request Form

OSM Social Media Request Form



1. Requesting Office: Fill out, save, email to RD/AD.
2. RD/AD: Approve with /s/ and submit to OC using submit button below.

Name of Requesting Office:

Location of Requesting Office:

Purpose/Objectives: What is the goal of this social media presence? What do you plan to achieve? (For example, Specific Topics, Competencies Addressed)

What social media type are you requesting?

- Twitter
 YouTube
 Flickr
 Facebook



Implementation and Maintenance:

OSM employee(s) requesting the social media account:

- Name
- Email
- Phone

If different, OSM employee(s) responsible for administering/maintaining this social media account (max 2).

- Name
- Email
- Phone

Account requestor's direct supervisor:

- Name
- Email
- Phone

I have read and agree to the OSM Social Media Guidance (Please initial) _____

I have read and agree to the OSM Social Media Checklist (Please initial) _____

I have read and agree to the DOI Social Media Policy (Please initial) _____

I have read and agree to the DOI Social Media Guidance (Please initial) _____

RD/AD Approval Signature:

Click Here to Submit this Form to OSM Office of Communications

Click Here to Print a Copy of this Form for your Records

Appendix 4 – Social Media Site Registration Checklist

- **The social media site must include a link to an official OSM website.**
- **The site should include a valid OSM email address.**
- **The site must be clearly identified as “official”.**
Site needs to clearly be identified as an “official” presence. However, the word “official” does not need to appear in the site name.
- **Requesting Naming Conventions.**
For every social media account created, an “OSM” or “@OSM” must exist in front of the office name. For instance, if the Assistant Director, Information Resources had a Facebook and Twitter account, the accounts would be: OSM Assistant Director, Finance and Administration (Facebook) and @ OSMADFA (Twitter). NOTE: The names “OSM” and “@OSM” are reserved for the OC Headquarters staff.
- **The site must be categorized as a government page.**
- **The site must post disclaimer text.**
The disclaimer text identifies the page as an official social media site and disclaims any endorsement. Refer to the standard text in the OSM Social Media Guidance document.
- **The site must have posting guidelines.**
Facebook pages must include "Posting Guidelines" under the "Info Tab." Refer to the standard text in the OSM Social Media Guidance document.
- **The site must adhere to security guidelines as required by the Information Resources Office.**