Army Social Media: harnessing the power of networked communications
**Army Social Media: harnessing the power of networked communications**

**Performing Organization:**
Army Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, Online and Social Media Division, 1500 Pentagon, Washington, DC, 20301

**Distribution/Availability Statement:**
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

**Abstract:**

**Subject Terms:**

**Security Classification:**
- Report: unclassified
- Abstract: unclassified
- This Page: unclassified

**Limitation of Abstract:**
Same as Report (SAR)

**Number of Pages:**
21
• What IS social media?
Social Networking:
- Facebook
- MySpace
- Friendster

Content sharing:
- YouTube
- Flickr
- Vimeo
- Photobucket

Collaborating/ knowledge sharing:
- Wikis
- Message boards
- Forums
- Podcasts

Blogging:
- Blogger
- Wordpress
- Tumblr
- Twitter (micro-blogging)
What’s in a NUMBER?

Over **80 percent** of Americans use social media tools and Web sites monthly.

Social networking is now the **#1** activity on the web.

- Twitter: **54 Million** users
- Facebook: **400 million** users
- You Tube: **924 million** unique visitors each year

9/1/2011
• American teens sent an average of 3,146 texts a month in 2009
• That’s **10 text messages per hour** they are not in school or sleeping, according to research by The Nielsen Company.
Social Media became a key place to correct the record and provide information. Fort Hood was the most blogged and tweeted about topic of the week.

Updates were posted to the Army’s Twitter and Facebook accounts, resulting in over 20,000 responses and interactions.

Online support follows Hood shootings

Staff report
Posted: Friday Nov 6, 2003 19:17:02 EST

A flood of support is hitting the Army's social media sites in the wake of the shootings at Fort Hood, Texas.

"My prayers go out to the family and friends of the fallen heroes. It’s time we remember to pray for all our soldiers regardless of where they are," one person wrote on the Army’s Facebook page.

Another posted: "As a soldier, it’s like losing part of your family. I love the U.S. Army and this will be resolved. Pray for the wounded and killed. I thank them for their service, hooah."

SHARE YOUR MESSAGE:
Facebook
Twitter
Military Times forum
Education vs. Regulation

We need to educate our Soldiers about the appropriate use of social networking sites.

The two policies that apply to social networking today are Operations Security, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
• The Department of Defense Policy on social networking:
  – NIPRNET configured to allow access to social media
  – Restrictions should be temporary and commensurate with risk
  – Agencies outside of public affairs may use social media in an official capacity, but must coordinate with public affairs/operations security staff
## Social Media across DoD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services Social Media Comparison</th>
<th>Army</th>
<th>Marines</th>
<th>Air Force</th>
<th>Coast Guard</th>
<th>Navy</th>
<th>DoD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>185,689 fans</td>
<td>267,770 fans</td>
<td>36,798 fans</td>
<td>9,257 fans</td>
<td>88,243 fans</td>
<td>15,210 fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Tube</td>
<td>189,361 channel views</td>
<td>19,907 channel Views</td>
<td>82,241 channel views</td>
<td>261,035 channel views</td>
<td>13,034 channel views</td>
<td>19,995 channel views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>5,016 images</td>
<td>1,112 images (Marine Corps News)</td>
<td>1,397 images</td>
<td>719 images</td>
<td>3,006 images</td>
<td>1,767 images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>25,571 followers</td>
<td>7,927 followers</td>
<td>8,369 followers</td>
<td>7,185 followers</td>
<td>9,248 followers</td>
<td>4,279 followers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How would you improve Army training?

"We're just not there yet."

As the Army’s chief evangelist for social media, this is a response I get pretty often. Typically from organizations or individuals at the mid-to-senior level, or folks who have been doing their job for a long time. They’re willing to recognize the importance of social media, see the opportunities, but somehow also see themselves as a few steps away from the final cliff they think they need to jump off to start using new tools and tactics like social media.

It’s a response I received while trying to encourage social media at the Boring Army Class I find myself in this week. Now, if you’ve been in or around the Army for any point of time you’ll understand what I’m talking about. The U.S. Army truly is the best trained Army in the world. Sometimes in spite of ourselves.

In addition to having amazing, hands-on training and some of the best cadre and leaders you can find, we also have a finely-tuned teaching technique that is particularly prevalent around the Pentagon—I call it “teaching to the break.” It’s when some instructor feeds you PowerPoint from a fire hose for an hour and then asks for questions. Now, you know that right behind questions is a break. So, you know no one is dumb enough to ask any questions. And if they do, they’ll be harassed by their fellow students later.

It’s a teaching technique that has its merits—it exists for a reason. PowerPoint is a great teaching tool and when navigating certain topics and themes it can be a great way to provide information. But the technique of “teaching to the break” is one that is just screaming for some kind of social media/collaborative tools innovation.

One thing that I’ve noted in college classrooms and even within classrooms at the U.S. Military Academy is the use of chat functions during classroom time. Students are able to trade notes, questions and discussion points during class—all while the instructor stands at the front of the room and lectures (most likely using PowerPoint). For digital natives, it keeps them connected and allows the experiences and knowledge in the room to play a role—that’s particularly crucial for our military, where lessons learned often come from colleagues. College students are texting in class anyway—why not encourage them to engage on the topics of discussion?

A blog is a conversational web site, typically offering news or opinion on a certain topic.

Blogs should be written conversationally, and should be short – think op-ed length and e-mail tone.

Determine how you’re already being talked about in the blogosphere before you engage yourself.
TRADOC Uses the Army Live blog platform, a free service available to all commands interested in blogging.

Posts from across AAFES; links to other social media products.

U.S. Army Blog Roll

17FiB Live
1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team
4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division
Army & Air Force Exchange Service
Army Enterprise (AKO Blog)
Army Medical Corps Post
Army Technology Live
Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2)
Combined Arms Center Blog Library
Commander U.S. Army Pacific
Task Force Mountain
The TRICARE blog
TRADOC Live
U.S. Army Accessions Command
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Army Green Force Blog (AKO Blog)
U.S. Army Reserve
U.S. Army ROTC
U.S. Army Surgeon General’s Blog
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
Year of the NCO blog
Twitter
WWW.TWITTER.COM

Twitter is a micro-blogging tool that updates in 140 characters or less.

Updates are referred to as “Tweets.”
The U.S. contingent of HQ ARRC is implementing the use of Twitter as a tool to keep FRG members informed of key events and activities and to establish a system by which information can be quickly disseminated and “pulled” by FRG members as required. The intent is to make the FRG Twitter site a real-time info exchange page with data file postings to the US National page on the JHQ ARRC website.
YouTube is the #1 most popular video-sharing Web site.

- Watch, comment and share video clips.
- YouTube is the 2nd largest search engine, next to Google.

Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. George Casey spends a few minutes in an informal video chat with Soldiers. Gen. Casey has done nearly two dozen episodes, labeled, “Chief Cams.”
Flickr - photo sharing
WWW.FLICKR.COM

- Flickr is an online photo management sharing application

- A community of about 5,762 photos uploaded per minute

- View, comment, favorite, share and upload your photos

- Allows individuals to use and share official U.S. Army images
More than 400 million active users

Average user spends more than 55 minutes per day on Facebook

Largest demographic: 18-24

Fastest growing demographic: 35-54
Interactions (comments, wall posts, and “likes” to posts) have grown from an average of 1,000-1,500 per week to 3,000-4,000 per week.

- 121,287 = Total Fans on Jan 1
- Male = 54%  Female = 46%

**Top Cities**
- Chicago 3,549
- Atlanta 3,231
- Dallas 2,722

**Top Countries**
- United States 104,600
- Canada 3,176
- Germany 1,320
- United Kingdom 1,216

**Age demographics:**
- 13-17 14%
- 18-24 29%
- 25-34 24%
- 35-44 19%
- 45-54 9%
- 55+ 4%
Social Media for Command Information

Lieutenant General Frank Helmick: A note was sent last night to DPW—a recent pothole success story. "Really appreciate DPW’s road repair crew and want to send a thank you. Manchester Road had a huge pothole after rain last week and your crew marked the area for safety and had it repaired within a few days, knowing budget challenges I think this is amazing service." If you know of a pothole that needs fixed, call (910) 396-0321.

Bill Buckner, Paul D. Anne, Carlso Edgecomb, Lieutenant General Frank Helmick: was sent last night to DPW—a recent pothole success story. "Really appreciate DPW’s road repair crew and want to send a thank you. Manchester Road had a huge pothole after rain last week and your crew marked the area for safety and had it repaired within a few days, knowing budget challenges I think this is amazing service." If you know of a pothole that needs fixed, call (910) 396-0321.

Jim Hinnant: Sir—Just became a Fan. But then, I have always been one! ATN about an hour ago. Comment · like · Report

Timothy Howle: Sir, I am the Principal at Irwin Intermediate School on Fort Bragg and a retired Army Officer. I want to pass on my thanks for the great support I receive from COL Sizin, CSM Mohammed, and SGM Morrone. They truly help us have an outstanding partnership between the command, our school, and our families. Yesterday at 8:00pm · Report

Bill Weller: General, what is your position on Don’t Ask Don’t Tell? Yesterday at 9:43pm · Report

Nancy Gallagher: Sir, I don’t go to the Community Center (we don’t have one), and the Income Office is not on my daily route either. Is there another way to get critical safety concerns out to those signing in a race family winner? Yesterday at 9:59pm · Report

Mike Dillard: Coffee House letter. A like

Create an Ad

Sneak peek of Big Game Ad

Coca-Cola

Get a sneak peek at Coca-Cola’s Big Game ad when you give a virtual gift to Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Donate today!

NVHomes luxury for life

$8,000 Federal Tax Credit for First-Time Buyers! AND $6,500 Federal Tax Credit for Move-Up Buyers! Click Here to Learn More!

Mike Dillard Coffee House Letter Webcast. Find out..."
Talk to your family

Educate your spouse and family members on OPSEC, and PII.

Basic tips for social media include:

- Don’t friend anyone you don’t know on Facebook or social networking platforms
- Don’t post deployment information, when you’re going on vacation or when your spouse/parent will be away.
- Know how to set your privacy settings, and use them.
Resources

• U.S. Army on slide share:
  www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia

• OPSEC family portal on AKO:
  https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/594109

• CGSC social media 101 video series:
  http://www.youtube.com/user/USArmyCGSC
What we’re doing and why

1. Be present and relevant
2. Adapt our culture to accept social media as an enduring and effective source of information and place to communicate (access at work, real time, broad involvement at all levels).
3. Integrate social media into our training and education programs:
   - DINFOS, CGSC, SSC, SMA, PCC, EXCOM
   - Officer and NCO education system
   - Unit level training and education for Soldiers
4. Establish the institutional organizations and resourcing to sustain our effort and compete at meaningful speeds and scales.