

POLICY/ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE/ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

SECTION: COMMUNICATIONS	REFERENCE NUMBER: 505.03
SUBJECT: SOCIAL MEDIA	INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 07-14-2010
TITLE: SOCIAL MEDIA	LAST REVISION DATE:

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

I. Overview

As the use of social and business networking sites become more prevalent, it is necessary to provide guidelines, which are intended to govern both employees who are posting on behalf of the City of Denton, as well as citizens' postings and comments. Social Networking Web sites will be referenced several times in this directive, so, it's necessary to first provide a definition.

Social Networking Web site: A site, which provides a social component to the communications process. These sites create two-way communication, engaging both the City and its citizens. These sites include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, LinkedIn, Flickr, Photobucket, and YouTube.

Social Networking tools serve as a quick and easy way to obtain public opinion and keep our citizens updated and informed. Social networking benefits include the following:

- A. Ability to build trust, build relationships, and establish open lines of communication.
- B. Ability to allow the City of Denton to be proactive and not reactive to citizens needs and concerns.
- C. Ability to drive traffic to the City's Web site and to keep citizens updated and informed.
- D. Ability to create better overall brand awareness for the City of Denton.
- E. Ability to engage citizens, introduce new services, publicize upcoming events, reach a new demographic, and more.

Social Networking may be added as a communication component of your department's strategic plan. Social Networking is not designed to replace your current avenues of public communication, but rather it should enhance them. The Public Communications Office (PCO) can help you evaluate Social Networking as a tool for your department and discuss the options to best meet your needs.

- o In adding Social Networking to your department's strategic plan, the following should be evaluated:
 - 1. How will you use Social Networking?
 - 2. Who will be responsible for posting/moderating site content?
 - 3. How you will advertise/market your department's Social Networking presence?

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II. Department Guidelines

If your department has already established a Social Networking Web site, or plans to establish a site in the future, please be aware of the following guidelines. All content, including external hyperlinks, is subject to review by the Public Communications Office (PCO) to ensure consistency with City policies and procedures, correct style and grammar, and accuracy using the Communication Style Guide. Please familiarize yourself, and your staff, with the following guidelines.

- A. Create a Social Networking Web site for your department *only* if you can **regularly publish** content that is informative, interesting, and necessary. Regularly published content ensures your fans/followers will stay tuned-in to the information your department is posting.
- B. The attached Request Form must be completed for new and existing sites. Forms must be submitted and approved by your department director prior to creation of the site. Existing sites must still be approved in order to continue and re-establish in accordance with these guidelines.
- C. By establishing a Social Networking presence, the primary purpose is to provide a source of information for citizens.
- D. Repetitive comments are discouraged.
- E. Social Networking Web Sites established by the City of Denton are not for political or solicitation purposes. See appendix A. Such comments will be removed by the site moderator.
- F. Use Social Networking Web sites as a way to be proactive. Keep in mind, these sites result in two-way communication. Be prepared to encounter both positive and negative citizen feedback and respond appropriately.

III. Rules for Posting and Comments

A link to Denton Online (at www.DentonOnline.com) shall be provided on your department's Social Networking Web site(s) – place the link in the Info., About Us, Contact Us, Bio, or in another appropriate, easily accessible place. Denton Online is designed to serve as a hub for the various Social Networking tools employed by City of Denton departments. The section of these guidelines, which applies to the public, will be posted at www.DentonOnline.com.

Via Social Networking Web sites, the City of Denton wishes to promote effective communication. All comments are read on a regular basis and will remain posted if in keeping with the following rules:

- A. Responses to comments shall be limited to providing factual information. Moderators shall not argue with customers or post comments relating to City policies and practices. Moderators will not express opinions.
- B. Comments must be within the scope of the City's post, weblog, tweet, etc. New postings must be relevant, current, and appropriate.
- C. Keep comments short and to the point.

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- D. Do not include personally identifiable information within your comment, such as addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, or other sensitive information.
- E. Do not represent yourself as another person.
- F. Responses must be civil. They must not contain malicious, offensive, threatening, profane, or insulting language. Above all else, respect others. No references to the personality of other participants or individuals, or attacks on individual character will be permitted.
- G. Any links to other Web sites or pages must be in accordance with the City's Linking Policy.
- H. Self-promotion and personal advertising are not allowed.
- I. To ensure reader clarity, please re-read your posts and/or comments, and check for grammar and spelling errors, before submitting.

IV. Rules for Public Users

- A. Anonymous comments will not be accepted. Depending on the functionality of the site, users must be registered to post comments.
- B. Users cannot represent themselves as another person.
- C. User comments must be civil. They must not include the following:
 - 1. Profane language or content.
 - 2. Content 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.
 - 3. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
 - 4. Threats of violence.
 - 5. Solicitation for political or charitable purposes.
 - 6. Solicitations of commerce.
 - 7. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
 - 8. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
 - 9. Content that violates proprietary information of any other party.
- D. Failure to comply with these rules shall result in the removal of the comment and being barred from accessing the City's Social Networking sites.

V. Moderator

- A. Any department establishing a Social Networking account shall first establish the position of site moderator who shall have responsibility for operating and maintaining the site. If the department is engaging in more than one Social Networking site, a moderator for each site

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may be required. Site moderators should be very knowledgeable about their departments, the City of Denton in general, and have good communication skills.

- B. Site moderators should be trained to post regular, important information (which is applicable to the general public) including responding to or referring inquiries when necessary.
- C. Moderators should report to a manager or director when an issue about a citizen's comment or question is outside the moderator's realm of knowledge.
- D. Moderators are responsible for ensuring information given is accurate.
- E. Moderators shall never misrepresent themselves using a false name when acting on behalf of the City of Denton.
- F. Moderators shall be accountable and responsible for the content their department submits.
- G. Comments shall be deleted if they violate the rules for public comment set forth herein.
- H. To ensure reader clarity, moderators should re-read their posts and comments, prior to submitting. Also, check for grammar and spelling errors.

VI. Procedures

- A. A Request Form must be completed for new and existing sites. Forms must be submitted and approved by your department director prior to creation of the site. Existing sites must still be approved in order to continue and re-established in accordance with these guidelines.
- B. City of Denton social networking sites shall be established only on City-owned computers.
- C. Sites shall be created with a generic user id (or e-mail address), such as library@cityofdenton.com. This type of e-mail address can easily be set up through Technology Services. Do not set up accounts using personal or City e-mail address. (See Appendix A.)
- D. Facebook Pages:
 - 1. Establish a Fan Page for the department not a Friend or Group Page. Please refer to Appendix B. This will allow the moderator to better control the message in an area designated specifically for organizations.
 - 2. Examples for Facebook page details will be supplied by PCO. To obtain an example, contact PCO.
- E. Use the official City Logo and the department's **official** department marker. PCO will assist in creating a graphic that will fulfill this requirement.
- F. For each Social Networking Web site the department joins, password information shall be stored in a safe place (accessible by other staff, if necessary) and submitted to the City of Denton Web site/Graphics Administrator in the PCO.
- G. When establishing Social Networking Web sites for a department, use the following format: **cityofdentondepartment** for Facebook sites and Denton department for Twitter sites. For

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example, facebook.com/cityofdentonplanning or twitter.com/dentonplanning. When setting up a name for a site other than Facebook or Twitter, please call the Public Communications Office for appropriate naming structure. If a Social Network site that doesn't follow this format has all ready been created for a department, create a new site. Site names must immediately and clearly identify the department to the public. Contact PCO for more information. (See Appendix B.)

- H. In the "About Us" or other appropriate section, include the words "Official City of Denton [Library, HR, Fire, etc.] Facebook/Twitter/YouTube Page."
- I. Include summaries of information and direct readers to www.cityofdenton.com (or the official City of Denton departmental Web site) for complete stories, press releases, articles, and more.
- J. Self-promotion and personal advertising are not allowed.
- K. Texas State Law and relevant City records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. Unless otherwise addressed in a specific social media standards document, the department maintaining a site shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a City server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible. Appropriate retention formats for specific social media tools are detailed in the Texas State Library Local Government Bulletins. Any questions regarding records retention should be directed to the City Secretary.

VII. Code of Conduct

Official and personal use of social networking is subject to Policy No. 109.01, Section V. - B. 30 regarding personal conduct.

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City of Denton Social Media Request Form

Name & Title: _____

Department: _____

Social Media Application(s) Requested:

Specific justification and reasons for creating an account that is separate from the City account:

Request must be approved and signed by Department Director and City Manager or designee prior to implementation. Please route request to Department Director first:

___ Approved ___ Denied Department Director _____

___ Approved ___ Denied City Manager _____

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Appendix A
Creating a Fan Page on Facebook

Preparation

1. When establishing a Facebook Fan Page for your department, use the following format: City of Denton [yourDepartment].
2. Have your logo/marker image ready for upload. Image should be clear when reduced to thumbnail. PCO will assist you in creating a single graphic to fill this requirement.
3. Request your generic department email address for your user ID.
4. Prepare your initial content to launch your Fan Page.

Fan Page Setup**Step 1:** Pick a category and name

Select *Category Brand, Product, or Organization*, then choose *Government* from the drop-down menu

Name of Page: City of Denton [yourDepartment]

Click "Create Page"

Step 2: Add profile picture

Click "upload a picture" near the top and upload your logo/department marker image.

Step 3: Add your content

Click "Add information to this Page" underneath the profile picture and enter as much basic and detailed information as you can. The more details you can add about who you are, what you do, and when and where customers can buy your products or your services, the more successful you will be.

Step 4: Make it rich and engaging

Like user profiles, Pages have multiple tabs. By default, your Page has a Wall tab for you and your fans to share content, an Info tab for you to share business information, and a Boxes tab for application modules. You can choose to devote entire tabs to several Facebook applications, such as Photos, News, and Events.

The more rich content you add, the more ways users can interact with it and spread that connection to their friends. Post photos of products, employees, and customers. List an event for your department. Write a note about upcoming promotions.

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Step 5: Publish

Click the "Publish this Page" link to share your Page with the world. Optimize your Page's performance by clicking the "Edit Page" link and setting a variety of controls. For instance, you can control the default landing tab for users who are not yet fans of your Page. You can also choose whether or not to allow fans to share Wall posts, photos, and more; allowing these will enrich your Page and increase its reach across Facebook.

Don't forget to become a fan of your own Page! Share it with friends by clicking the "Share" button in the lower left of the Wall or Info tab.

Step 6: Update regularly

Updating your Page regularly with fresh photos, upcoming events, and the latest promotions means your Page won't just look like a profile, it will feel like one. That is the key to keep users coming back. Facebook users are used to getting information sorted by what happened most recently. If you keep your Page active, which you can do through mobile integrations and applications, you'll find that your fans are more engaged and more interactive.

You can also send some or all of them messages by clicking "Send an Update to Fans" in the upper-left of your Page (under the profile picture). Updates are useful for sending out announcements like promotions, sales, or events.

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Appendix B
Naming Structure Exceptions

The rules set forth in this directive, in regard to naming structure for Social Networking Web sites, do not apply to the following:

- Denton Municipal Electric (DME)

- Keep Denton Beautiful (KDB)

While these entities clearly represent the City of Denton, they serve unique roles in the community. Per City ordinance, Denton Municipal Electric (DME) is a separate entity, and Keep Denton Beautiful (KDB) is a 501(c) 3. When selecting a name for a Social Networking Web site, these two groups should pick a name that immediately and clearly identifies the group to the public.