Government and Social Media

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Social Media for Communicators Conference
March, 2008
The U.S. Government’s Official Web Portal

http://www.usa.gov
Government Policy Issues

Sample conversation between
government web manager
and legal counsel
Our Discussion Today

• Government examples of those leading the way

• Government opportunities and challenges

• Steps and resources to move ahead

• Working together across government
Government
Putting Social Media to Work

• Syndicated Web Feeds
• Blogs
• Wikis
• Multimedia: Video & Photo Sharing, Podcasting
• Social Networking Sites
• Social News Sites
• Mashups
• Widgets
• Virtual Worlds
Syndicated Web Feeds and Government

- USA.gov library of federal RSS feeds
  - [http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/Libraries/RSS_Library.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/Libraries/RSS_Library.shtml)

- Webcontent.gov offers RSS advice

- USGS guidance on creating RSS feeds
EPA RSS Feeds

http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/RSS

Government and Social Media
Sample RSS Reader

(Washington, D.C. - Feb. 1, 2008) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen L. Johnson on Monday, Feb. 4, will announce President Bush's proposed budget request for the agency for...
What You Can Do

• Use RSS reader

• Promote use of RSS

• Get regularly updated content out

• Link back to authoritative source

• Tie feeds to e-mail alerts

• Use your feeds and others in your websites
Go Further
Reach Across Government

http://www.noaawatch.gov/
http://www.disasterhelp.gov/news-feeds.shtm
Blogs -- So Why Blog in Government?

• Attracts new audiences for government information and service

• Puts a human face on government

• Opens up a conversation
Blogs and Government

- **20 Active Federal Agency Public-Facing Blogs**
  - [http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/News/blog.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/News/blog.shtml)

- **Elected Official Blogs at All Levels**

- **Webcontent.gov provides advice on government blogs**
Top Officials Speak

Dealing With Medicare

I suppose the compulsion I feel to get people's attention on the plight of the Medicare Trust Fund can be attributed to my current close association with it. Medicare is part of HHS and I'm also a Trustee.

This week, I released our budget proposal for the next five years. Medicare makes up 56 percent of the $737 billion we spend. I said at a news conference our proposal should be viewed as a stark warning. Medicare, on its current course, is just 11 years from going broke.

Eleven years is going to fly by. Here's a perspective builder. The Fourth of July last year seems like yesterday. In 20 times that time, left on autopilot, Medicare will be broke.

Systems as big and complex as Medicare don't turn on a dime. We need to start dealing with this.

I'm certainly not the first person to warn of this. Part of the problem is that the entire country has been desensitized, numbness caused, by a repeated cycle of alarms and inaction.

Dire warnings on Medicare insolvency have become a seasonal event in Washington.
Really Interesting Jobs

http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whatlike.voljournal
Topics of Great Public Interest

http://www.tsa.gov/blog

Government and Social Media
Really Interesting Information

Library of Congress Blog

Meanwhile, About Those Abraham Lincoln Inauguration Photos

Posted on: January 10th, 2008 by Matt Raymond

It was an entirely happy coincidence this week that we announced both the Flicker pilot project and an amazing photographic discovery on exactly the same day.

A trio of images, previously thought to have been picturing different events, have been confirmed to be photographs from Abraham Lincoln's second inauguration as president on March 4, 1865. Here's the parallel I like to draw:

A user of our Prints and Photographs Online Catalog raised questions about the images, which sent Library of Congress curator Carol Marie Johnson scurrying. Careful comparisons to the only other two known images from that event and meticulous combing through records led her to this discovery.

My point is that if we can uncover those kinds of treasures, thanks in part to our discerning Web users, imagine what might happen after setting loose hordes of eager researchers around the world...
Really Useful Information

[Website Image]

Help for Teachers

Amongst my group of friends, I am the oddball. This has a little to do with my taste in music, but more so that I am not a teacher. While it’s not ENTIRELY the case, it sure seems like all of my friends are teachers.

My best friend commands a tribe of 5th graders. My high school partner in crime teaches middle school English (a feat that deserves a medal—betting the awkward braces years and all). My college accomplice? 3rd grade. Next door neighbor/sandbox buddy? She’s also holding down the 5th grade. And finally, my roommate—kindergarten and first grade.

Because of these relationships, I am privy to the daily trials and tribulations that come with life when one educates the youth of America. Some of my favorites?

- Weekly battles to secure the “best” times on the lamination machine user schedule.
- Highly contested space on hallway bulletin boards

I had little insight or potential solutions to problems of this realm until recently.

Due to the frigid weather we’ve been experiencing lately, the kids have

http://blog.usa.gov/roller/

Government and Social Media
Putting a Human Face on Government

6 GovGab.gov Bloggers at USA.gov

- **Colleen** – Consumer information specialist → *Newbie bureaucrat*
- **Jake** – Frequently Asked Questions → *Rocker*
- **Joanne** – Web content manager → *Mom, lives on farm*
- **Nancy** – TV, print and radio PSAs → *Media whiz*
- **Sam** – Media specialist → *Southern belle, shopper*
- **Sommer** – Web content manager → *Midwesterner*
Are You Ready to Blog?

- **Issues to Consider**
  - Who can write/represent the agency?
  - Enough content of interest?
  - Long-term commitment?
  - What content? Who reviews?
  - Comments?

- Either way, communicate with bloggers
Government and Wikis

USA.gov

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
(Redirected from USA.gov)

USA.gov is the official web portal of the United States Government. It is designed to improve the public's interaction with the U.S. Government by quickly directing website visitors to the services or information they are seeking. USA.gov links to every Federal agency and to State, local, and tribal governments, and is the most comprehensive site in—and about—the U.S. Government. While the primary target audience of USA.gov is the American public, about 25 percent of USA.gov's visitors come from outside the United States.

Until January 2007, USA.gov was known as FirstGov.gov. The name was changed in response to user suggestions and telephone surveys.

USA.gov is part of the Office of Citizen Services and Communications in the General Services Administration (GSA), and includes the Spanish-language web portal to U.S. government services, GobIernoUSA.gov (formerly espanol.gov). The portals, which are funded by U.S. taxpayers and are offered as a public service, are a member of the Office of Citizen Services and Communication's family of websites that also includes pueblo.gsa.gov (the Federal Citizen Information Center), Kids.gov, ConsumerAction.gov, and WebContent.gov.

USA.gov receives more than 97 million visitors and GobIernoUSA.gov receives 1.5 million visitors. There are about 5 million links to USA.gov.

Contents

1 History
2 Structure
3 GobIernoUSA.gov
4 Web Best Practices
4.1 Interagency Committee on Government Information
4.2 Web Managers Advisory Council
5 Crisis Response Initiatives
6 A Model to Other Government Websites
7 Awards
8 External links

Government and Social Media
 Wikis and Government

• Wikis purpose is collaboration
  – Project management
  – Knowledge management

• Create a better work product across boundaries

• Government uses mostly enterprise wikis, restricted communities of practice
Federal Government Wikis

- GSA Collaborative Work Environment supports 20+ communities
  - [http://colab.cim3.net/cgi-bin/wiki.pl/](http://colab.cim3.net/cgi-bin/wiki.pl/)

- Intellipedia for 16 intelligence agencies

- U.S. Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit for Members of the Bar

- NASA wiki for object oriented data terminology
Are we ready for Govipedia?
Multimedia and Government
Video Sharing, Photo Sharing, Podcasting

- Government has lots of multimedia
- Underutilized and not coordinated
- Not reaching some users
- Not meeting expectations

http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Multimedia.shtml
Video Sharing And Government

If You Build It ….  

NO
Share Your Videos Where People Watch Videos

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muNJVe861no
Your Agency’s Name on YouTube

Government and Social Media
Uh Oh
Virginia Government and Social Media
Photo Sharing and Government

• LOTS of really cool photos in the public domain

• Federal photos

• State photos
Bring Your Photos to the People

Pets Made Easy (2007)

Here’s a great way to get answers. USA.gov is your official source for all the federal, state and local government information you need.

USA.gov: It works.
Audio and Podcasting and Government

Lots of public podcasting in government
Government Can be Presidential

President Bush on Tuesday said, “And so it’s an honor to be here to cut the ribbon for the new embassy. It’s an honor to be in front of people who’ve got compassion in their hearts, and efficiency on their minds, and willing to do the right thing to get to save lives. And it’s an honor to be in a great friend and ally, Rwanda.”

February 19, 2008

President Bush Participates in Joint Press Availability with President Kagame of Rwanda

President Bush on Tuesday said, “We had good discussions on a variety of subjects. It’s really meaningful for us to see people who have endured such suffering respond with such hope. We really do want to congratulate you and the people in Rwanda for the remarkable recovery you have made. And I assure you, you have a steady friend in the United States. I appreciate the opportunity to visit with your cabinet, as well. It’s important for my fellow citizens to know that I’m dealing with a responsible leader, not only here at home but in the region.”

February 19, 2008

Government and Social Media
Government Can be Cool

Government and Social Media
So, We’re Not All NASA

http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/Libraries/Podcasts.shtml

Government and Social Media
Podcasting
More Untapped Opportunity

- Start where you are already recording
- Get your podcasts to the listeners (iTunes government category)
- Consider more: What lends itself to this format/frequency
Podcasting Resources

- Webcontent.gov
  - helps government web managers

http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/technology/podcasting.shtml
Multimedia Content
Unleash What You Have & Create More

http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Multimedia.shtml

Government and Social Media
Social Networking & Government
Create and Join Social Networking Groups
Build Your Own?
NASA Community Building Site

Welcome to CoLab
The NASA CoLab program develops and supports online and offline communities collaborating with NASA.

With the involvement of many NASA centers, CoLab provides frameworks for partnership projects between the nation’s space program and talented, creative, tech-savvy communities. In addition to getting people more interested and involved with the space program, CoLab provides a way for individuals to actually contribute to NASA.

CoLab is already in action with a vibrant, active community in the virtual world of Second Life, a virtual learning community with interactive content.

CoLab projects just around the corner include CosmosCode and an event and group collaboration site, Web2.0 style, where scientists and engineers from NASA will collaborate with talented and interested individuals.

http://www.nasacolab.org/groups_directory

Government and Social Media
Social News Sites and Government

Is government content eye-catching, fun, engaging, and useful enough to become viral?
Encourage Your Visitors to Share
Neutral, Inclusive, Comprehensive

Government and Social Media
De.liciou.us Rank – New Metrics?

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Boss to Web Manager

What the heck are mash ups?

A really important question...because government has the data
USGS Spatial Data Mash Up with Maps and APIs

NASA-related Data Mashups on Astrolicio.us

Astrolicio.us - A continuous mashup for astronomy and space researchers and hobbyists. Get the latest photos from the Hubble Space Telescope, the latest astronomy reports from news sources, and the most popular stories from the space category of Digg. We also list the top astronomy videos from Google and YouTube and we list sites tagged with astronomy from delicious.us. Save This Page to delicious.us

Astronomy Video

- **Satellite Shot Down: How It Will Work**
  A new computer model shows a missile fired at an errant U.S. spy satellite will intercept it and target with much of the rubble falling out and burning up upon re-entering the Earth's atmosphere.

- **A Second Earth in Our Solar System**
  It could be that there are objects of Earth-mass in the Oort cloud (a band of debris surrounding our planetary system) but they would be frozen at these distances. They would look like a frozen Earth. So all we need to do is pull one of these bodies into our orbit, defrost it, and start populating, Earth 2, here I come!

- **Columbia Laboratory Installed on Space Station**
  Installation of the Columbia Laboratory on the International Space Station by the Shuttle Atlantis

- **Future Tests**
  A section of the International Space Station is featured in this image photographed by the STS-122 crew aboard space shuttle Atlantis while docked with the station. The blackness of space and Earth's shadow provide the backdrop for the scene.

- **Milestones In Space Photography [Hot Seat]**
  Gallery includes: 1st view of earth from moon (1966), 1st full view of earth ("blue marble" shot, 1972), 1st view of Martian surface, 1st photo of sun (1948), 1st color photo of surface of Venus...

- **Handmade Models in Milky Way**
  Rocky planets, possibly with conditions suitable for life, may be more common than previously thought in our Solar System, a study has found.

- **Titanic Suite: Luxury Suite On Board the Earth, NASA**

Digg on Space

Astronomy News

The feed providing these headlines is not available.
EPA -- Google Maps Mashup

EPA Region 9 Office via BART/MUNI, Montgomery Station

1. Exit the BART/Transbay Station at the Market St/Montgomery St
2. Head south on Van Ness Ave
3. Turn right at Howard St
4. Turn left at 7th St
5. End at 75 Howl St

Government and Social Media
EPA -- Microsoft Virtual Earth Mashup
USA Search Mashup

Search “national park service”

FAQ database

Forms.gov

Spotlight

Search Results from MSN

Categorization by Vivisimo

Images from NPS

Government and Social Media
Widgets, Gadgets, Pipes and Government

Huge Opportunity
Widgets -- FBI

Add FBI Links to Your Site

Add links to FBI content by incorporating the modules below into your own website. The four modules contain links to pages within the fbi.gov site that are updated frequently or on an ongoing basis.

To add a module to your own site, simply copy the code beneath the desired module and paste it into your blog or website's code editing field. The code, which employs i-frame tags, will deliver the module(s) to your site.

Wanted By the FBI

- Most Wanted Fugitives
- Most Wanted Terrorists
- Top Ten Fugitives
- Featured Fugitives

FBI News

http://www.fbi.gov/widgets.htm

Government and Social Media
Widgets – Veterans Affairs

Widgets

Widgets are pre-built web applications which allow you to add various functional components to your web site. WebPilot allows you to determine which widgets, if any, you would like to include in your web site. Listed below are short descriptions of some of the widgets currently available to WebPilot users with many more to follow.

Calendar

WebPilot users can add a customizable calendar to their web site. Some of the more popular features of the calendar widget are:

- The ability to track events in a web based calendar
- Categorizing and color coding of events
- Customizable colors, fonts, and size
- Built in security
- Dynamic online registration for events
- Holidays

If you would like to see more of this widget, click on the Calendar link.

Data Entry Form


Government and Social Media
Desktop Widgets – NASA, Census

Keep track of the latest planet discoveries on your desktop

Available for Mac OS X Dashboard and Yahoo! Widgets

USA.gov
Government and Social Media
Widgets and Government
What Can You Do?

• Embed others web widgets into your website

• Create widgets to expand reach & functionality

• Encourage developers to create widgets with your data

• Support your widgets
Virtual Worlds and Government

We have some pioneers
Experience NOAA’s Virtual Island

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=is8YX32GAYQ

Government and Social Media
CDC in Second Life
Hygeia Philo
NASA in Second Life

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kr3vXuxEPB8

Government and Social Media
Help Across Government

- Share space with others

- Federal Consortium for Virtual Worlds, National Defense University and 20+ agencies
  - [http://www.ndu.edu/irmc/fedconsortium.html](http://www.ndu.edu/irmc/fedconsortium.html)

- Real Life Government in Second Life: NOAA Sponsored Google Group
Putting it All Together
Government Policy Can’t Keep Pace with the Changes
Many Questions re: Web 2.0 in Government

- Lack of guidance on social media
- Privacy. No Permanent Cookies. COPPA.
- Accessibility. Section 508.
- FOIA
- Copyright. Official source.
- Records management

- Information architecture. Content management systems.
- IT Security. Unproven technology.
- Govt info on Non-Govt Servers
- Infrastructure support of Web 2.0
- Restricted access on govt servers
So What to Do?

• Use these technologies yourself

• Start where you can

• Use examples to show it can be done

• Develop interim policies. Borrow others. Keep flexible

• Proceed

• Think outside your organizational box
Think Outside the Organizational Box
Work Across Government for All

• Share Best Practices and Policies
• Share Tools, Data, Code
• Form and Join Communities
• Partner, partner, partner
Result

The public is better served
Be Ready

Government and Social Media
Be Ready

Nader Again: A Snare and a Delusion
Micah L. Sifry 02/25/2008 - 10:18am

Ralph Nader is running for president, again. But he has a problem: he doesn’t understand the web as well as the web understands him. Message to Ralph: it’s not the 1970s any more. It’s not even the 1990s any more.

1 comment | Read more ...

Primary Season Signals Adoption of Online Ads by Political Campaigns
Kate Kaye 02/25/2008 - 3:09am

Media coverage of 2008 presidential campaigning on the Web has been dominated by talk of social networking, blogs, viral video, and other tough-to-track social media phenomena. No campaign staffer worth his salt would deny the potential impact of an Obama supporter posting a link on her MySpace page to the candidate’s site. However, the fact is many of the campaigns have used a far more measurable online campaign method: paid display advertising.

http://www.techpresident.com/
Further Questions or Comments

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