



COUNTY OF **SANTA BARBARA**

Office of the County Executive Officer

Strategic Communications Plan

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Introduction

The County of Santa Barbara should be congratulated for undertaking this process of reviewing the County's communications effectiveness and looking for recommendations which will help ensure improved understanding of its services, programs and issues. The goals of this Plan are to:

- Analyze existing communications programs and materials
- Assess the perception of the County's communications efforts among a variety of constituencies
- Identify opportunities to increase the effectiveness of communications processes and tools, and
- Recommend specific action steps that will enhance the County's future communications success

This report should be considered a blueprint for the County to refine its communications program into a formal part of its institutional structure and culture. This Plan is focused on implementation within the next three to five years.

Communications today is much more complex than in previous decades. Most of us are overloaded with information and therefore are much less likely to read in-depth articles or materials about government agencies or services; most are apt to be informed by visual images and by communications vehicles which reach us with messages specifically tailored to our needs and concerns. Further, the incredible diversity of Santa Barbara County and the complexity of County services make effective information programs extremely difficult. The County's challenge is to convey consistent messages which serve to explain the organization's purpose and reason for its decisions, both on an overarching level as well as on specific project/issue levels, to a variety of audiences.

Our efforts were made infinitely easier by the cooperation and openness of all those we worked with on this project. Members of the Board of Supervisors, staff, community members and media representatives were universally helpful, honest and willing to share their perceptions with our team. The office of the County Executive Officer, in particular, has done an exceptional job in broadening the County's visibility and communications initiatives in recent years, especially in light of having no public information officer position.

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Finally, it is important to note that the principles of communications – a two-way process of communicating and listening – have been viewed as major elements of business and are increasingly becoming not only a function of government, but an integral part. As Thomas Jefferson wrote, “If we think society not enlightened enough to exercise their control over government with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it away from them, but to inform them.”



Scott Summerfield

Principals
SAE Communications



Sheri Benninghoven, APR



Research Steps

Research was conducted using a proven process of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. One-on-one interviews were conducted by members of the SAE Communications team with a variety of individuals representing both internal County audiences as well as members of the community. The list of these participants is available as an appendix. It is important to note that no single person's opinions are quoted; it is the composite of all the voices heard that forms the basis of the recommendations in this Plan.

Further, an electronic online survey of County employees helped guide the internal communications portion of this Plan. The results of the employee survey are available as a separate document.

The research steps included:

- Several individual interviews with the County Executive Officer, the Assistant County Executive Officer responsible for communications and the Public Engagement Coordinator
- Individual interviews with Board of Supervisors and their staff
- Individual interviews with department and agency directors and senior staff
- Individual interviews with community leaders
- Individual interviews with news media representatives
- Online survey of employees (640 responses)
- Evaluation of County printed and electronic materials and Social Media content
- Analysis of media coverage
- Evaluation of the County's web site
- Evaluation of Social Media accounts



Research Results Overview

Individual Interviews: Board of Supervisors and Staff, County Management and Community Members

- There is a widespread perception that most County services are unknown to the vast majority of residents and that communication has not traditionally been a priority among the BOS or staff
- Social media has set an expectation of immediate two-way communication, and residents and business operators are increasingly demanding similar service from local government
- There are two distinct schools of thought re County communication: 1) attempt to inform all County residents and business operators about the full range of County services or 2) target communications specifically at those who “need to know” about individual services or programs
- Spanish media is an increasingly important news source for County residents, primarily in North County but increasingly in South County as well
- Virtually all public knowledge of BOS decisions is gained through the media
- There is a clear need for targeted communications programs for specific high-profile issues such as the North County Jail and mental health
- Daytime BOS meetings are difficult for many residents to attend/follow
- Social media initiatives/efforts are haphazard and uncoordinated
- There is considerable confusion between County and certain cities, such as Santa Barbara and Goleta, that have comprehensive communications programs
- County website is perceived as outdated, difficult to use, and inconsistent from department to department
- Opportunities exist to more broadly use the County’s CATV channel, along with video pieces that can be packaged in numerous ways

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- There is almost no pitching of news stories to the media
- There must be a focus on the changing nature of information distribution – mobile-centric, briefer, more visual
- Reporters require recaps immediately after BOS meetings since Granicus markers take about 24 hours to put in place
- The media generally find County staff helpful, but desire more pitching and packaging of stories
- Service-specific mobile applications such as CRM have the potential to bring an increased customer service/communication to residents and business operators
- Crisis/emergency communication has been largely neglected
- There is a strong desire for more information about BOS decisions directly from senior staff
- Lack of a Countywide intranet is a hindrance to consistent employee communication and camaraderie
- There are numerous “people” stories centered around County staff doing unusual/charitable/heroic things that can help put a face on the organization
- Front-line employees in particular are often out of the loop re County issues due to limited online access and “report to the curb” schedules
- Previous CEOs have not prioritized internal communication, and efforts by the current CEO have been widely appreciated; there is, however, a desire for more communication focused on important issues
- Many employees are unsure of their role or their department’s role during a crisis or emergency
- There is widespread agreement on the value of a Director of Communications or Public Information Officer in the CEO’s office, but there is also recognition that previous unsuccessful staffing of that role will be a hindrance that must be overcome
- Minimal staffing and budgeting for communications activities has been a detriment to the County effectively telling its story to important audiences
- Staff who have worked within, or are familiar with, other county organizations are very aware of the lack of funding for communications staffing/activities; sufficient budgeting at the BOS level will send a message that the County is committed to effective communication

- There is a need for regular, mandatory briefings among all County staff with communications responsibilities
- Very few staff have had any media interview training and most are ill-equipped to deliver the County's message in a changing media environment
- Staff has never seen the implementation of a thorough, integrated strategic communication program, and thus have no knowledge of how beneficial such a process can be for department operations
- There is a need to implement consistent sharing of all County media coverage with employees

Online Survey: County Employees

- Most employees consider overall County communication to be average to good; there was a similar response to intra- and inter-department communication
- A large majority of employees indicate that they get their news about BOS decisions and actions from co-workers, through external sources such as the news media, or not at all; less than a third indicate that they receive it through official County sources
- Social Media is greatly under-represented in the mix of sources for employees to receive County information
- Face-to-face communication is vastly preferred as the most efficient method of general communication
- Employees have a clear desire for more information in a number of subject areas
- Less than half of employees feel they receive news in a timely manner
- Email is widely considered to be the most efficient communications method for employee news distribution
- Survey participants represented a balanced mix of County work tenures
- Virtually all respondents have online access, with about 75% having mobile access



Situation Analysis

The research findings illuminated a number of issues or challenges facing the County and how it communicates with residents and others; the following are our major conclusions. The Tactics section of this Plan provides detailed recommendations on how to address these issues.

Opportunities

- County elected and appointed officials are in agreement that communicating with those served and with employees is a high priority
- Direct communications with residents and business owners via Social Media tools present a huge opportunity
- There is significant agreement across the organization that messaging and strategic communications is vitally needed
- Most managers agree that a full time senior communications professional housed in the office of the CEO is needed
- Various county offices receive numerous media calls inquiring about possible stories, ideas, events, issues
- A robust media landscape means numerous opportunities to generate coverage about County programs and services
- Local reporters and editors take a serious interest in County government

Challenges

- Communicating internally to all employees is a high priority for all; however, no consistent tools or channels are in place to ensure widespread information sharing
- There appears to be a lack of reliance on managers/supervisors at all levels to inform their direct reports

- There is no dedicated communications professional driving all County information programs, internally or externally
- Social Media is decentralized, with numerous channels and inconsistent updating of various department sites
- Decentralized communication efforts means no single individual takes ownership to drive strategies, especially across department lines
- County staff have full workloads and little ability to take on new communications assignments
- Funds available to support communications programs, including staff, are limited
- The decentralized nature of county government means each agency/department tends to operate very separately, creating a challenge to coordinated communications
- Departments with directly elected officials may not be compelled to coordinate with other departments/agencies
- The geographic, cultural, economic, societal, language and other differences among the incorporated v. unincorporated and among different areas of the county make for a challenging communications environment
- The website includes inconsistent graphic design and navigation and which can be confusing; some content is updated regularly and some infrequently
- Field employees are hard to reach with tools such as the Intranet, videos and emails
- Varied opinions exist about the accuracy of coverage in local media



Communication Goals

- Increase confidence in the programs and services offered by the County
- Raise public understanding of the role of the County to deliver a vast array of services and of the diligence of the County's efforts to make the best decisions possible
- Instill a sense of partnership between the County and those it serves
- Embark on a path that leads to direct and thusly improved communication flow between the County and residents
- Ensure employees understand the goals and priorities set by County management so their actions help bring about success; and to convey the deeply held belief that the employees of the agency are incredibly dedicated to serving the public and delivering high quality services



Communication Objectives

- Generate positive comments about the County's improved ability to connect with and communicate among at least 75 percent of those interviewed for this Plan in 24 months
- Generate a minimum of 12 news feature stories per year about the County/departments which deliver an important Key Message
- Generate a minimum of a 10 percent increase in the awareness of and reliance on County communications tools as a source of information about local government programs and services in 24 months
- Conduct a baseline user survey of web site visitors and re-conduct within 24 months; generate a minimum of a 20 percent increase in positive comments regarding usability/navigation
- Conduct a baseline user satisfaction survey of Nixle subscriber to establish a benchmark; generate a 20 percent increase in positive comments regarding content shared
- Generate a 50 percent increase in the number of Twitter and general County Facebook subscribers (followers/likes) in 24 months
- Generate a minimum 20 percent increase in the positive comments from employees within 24 months (reconduct the online employee survey)



Audiences

Residents

- Residents within distinct regions/boundary areas:
 - Within incorporated areas, specifically:
 - Santa Barbara, Lompoc, Carpinteria, Santa Maria, Goleta
 - Unincorporated areas, specifically:
 - Isla Vista, South County, North County
- Users of specific County services, such as mental health clients, low income families/individuals
- Spanish-speakers
- UCSB, City College students, faculty, staff

County of Santa Barbara

- Board of Supervisors, staffs
- County Executive Officer/Department Heads/Managers
- County employees
- County boards/commissions

Elected/appointed officials and staff of other government entities

- Cities
- Special districts



Organizational Key Messages

Key Messages convey to the public and other audiences the County’s goals, programs and services. Messages are the “big picture” explanations that the County wants all audiences to know; further, they provide the context for the individual initiatives, Department programs, etc. These are included in all comments to the media, written articles, speeches, presentations, web postings and all other communications from the County. The bullets under each message serve to explain or expand on the message, adding facts, anecdotes, etc. It is important to note that messages will not necessarily be used verbatim by staff or elected/appointed officials; each individual speaks with a unique voice, and the messages should be used as a guideline for communicating the most important thoughts about each issue (thus are not the same as “talking points”).

Messages should be revisited regularly to ensure they continue to represent the main issues that the community needs to know. Additional messages will need to be developed for every project, program or major incident that takes place. A Message Development/Delivery training program will allow County personnel to understand the role of a message and how to develop and deliver them.

The messages below serve to explain the County’s overall purpose and current initiatives. They are a first draft and will evolve during the coming months as the County refines its communications efforts. The final overall Key Message platform will also include detailed “proof points” under each message; these provide specific examples, statistics, and other information which support the messages.

County of Santa Barbara Organizational Key Messages - Draft

- **The County of Santa Barbara provides a very high level of services, from libraries to roads to health services to public safety and more.**
 - Proof points would include examples of actual awards, cutting-edge services, innovative technology, dedication of staff, etc.
 - Note awards won, kudos from residents, etc.
 - Note interesting or unusual types of services that are unknown or invisible to most County residents
- **The County of Santa Barbara manages its resources wisely and is financially conservative.**
 - Proof points would include references to improved budget expectations, reserves, operating efficiencies, etc.
 - Note actions taken during Great Recession
 - Note permanent structural changes
- **The residents of Santa Barbara County are well-served by a highly dedicated group of County employees.**
 - Proof points would include examples of high resident satisfaction figures, continuance of exemplary service with reduced staffing, flexibility in dealing with difficult budget situations, etc.
 - Note examples of employees going “above and beyond”
 - Note creativity in managing increased demands for service
- **The County of Santa Barbara is a major employer providing a large array of compensation levels and opportunities for those of varying educational levels.**
 - Proof points would include total number of jobs, range of job types, impact of salaries on regional economy, etc.
 - Note the opportunities available for those who have varying levels of education
 - Note interesting or unusual types of County jobs



External Communications Strategies


There are eight overarching communications strategies which emerged as the research, challenges, opportunities, goals and objectives were developed. The tactics to address each are contained in the next section.

1. **Department Public Information Team** - Leverage the communications resources and expertise within each County agency to benefit the County as a whole and to support all communications with residents through the creation of a department public information team.
2. **Strategic Counsel/Key Messages** - Institutionalize the role and importance of strategic communications planning and key messages throughout the organization.
3. **Media Relations** - Educate residents via an active media relations program to generate hard news about County priorities as well as feature stories that help to tell the County's story.
4. **Direct Communications Channels** - Increase awareness of County programs and services via pushed information channels as well as via the creation of a dialog with residents using Social Media tools.
5. **Visual Tools** - Generate confidence and engagement through visually-oriented stories about County employees and strategic use of video.
6. **Electronic Community Relations** - Create an electronic community relations program to communicate/connect with residents.
7. **Spanish-language Outreach** - Increase awareness among Spanish-speaking residents regarding County services via a media relations program and direct communications tools.
8. **Emergency Public Information Plan** - Ensure life- and property-saving information reaches those impacted during and after a natural or man-made disaster.




External Communications Tactics

The following series of tactics are aligned under each of the above-mentioned Communications Strategies. While ambitious, the implementation can occur in part with existing staff resources and a focused internal team approach. However, a later section of this Plan recommends creating a Public Information Office and a staffing structure.

While a list of priority tactics is included in a later section, this symbol  is used below to note the highest priority tactics, or those recommended for implementation in the first year following adoption of the Plan.

1. Leverage the communications resources and expertise within each County agency to benefit the County as a whole and to support all communications with residents through the creation of a department public information team.

It is vital that the senior communications manager for each County department, including those under the supervision of the CEO as well as those that are not, communicate regularly to share information, advise regarding communications strategies and jointly develop information efforts that cross departmental lines.

- ✓ **Form County Staff Public Information Team (“PIT Crew” – or similar name).**  This monthly meeting, led and staffed by the Assistant CEO responsible for communications/civic engagement, will serve as a central information sharing body, as well as help to develop communications strategies and help address controversial issues. Representatives from each County department/agency should form the PIT Crew (including those representing directly-elected officials). Communications-related training and annual workshops, such as “PIO Boot Camp,” would be held. The group would also share breaking news or major initiative information. The agenda for each month’s meeting would include the following:
 - Major issues impacting each department
 - Communications counsel on how to address departmental issues
 - Major actions from the Board of Supervisors – past and anticipated
 - Community relations challenges
 - Issues that cross departmental lines

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- Review, update of Master Editorial Calendar

Meetings can occasionally be training opportunities, such as crisis communications, key message development/delivery, media pitching, writing, presentation training, trends in new media/electronic communications, etc.

A key role for the PIT Crew will be to serve as the emergency communications organization. Therefore, periodic emergency drills or tabletop exercises would also be part of the training program. Another training element would address the tactics necessary both during an emergency but also during non-crisis periods, such as the following:

- Conducting press conferences
- Writing press releases
- Special event planning
- Social Media during a disaster

This body could also be responsible for implementation of major aspects of this Strategic Communications Plan, determining how best to move forward on the highest priority tactics.

- ✓ **Maintain a Master Editorial Calendar.** ♦ This tactic was recently created by County CEO staff as a method of planning for major events, decisions and issues across all departments. While “owned” by the Public Engagement Coordinator, the PIT Crew would review and update monthly as a regular agenda item. This is the best method to organizationally plan for and strategically monitor significant stories. Attention to each item can appear in all County communications channels, from Social Media to media briefings to community presentations to CSBTv programming.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	SBCO Story Grid : Jan-Jun 2015							
	January	February	March	April	May	June	General/Future	
PUBWRKS		*road needs assessment	*LCSD solar - 3 year. Tajiguas energy conv.	*Gibraltar Rd. repaving. *Road map.				*Drought updates. *Road usage fee - SB1077
GENSVCS	*New website	*TV Clinic *TV RFP to lease spaces	*North Branch jail docs/Visuals		*V Church/Comm unity Center	*Courthouse elevator reopen	*Vets Building/Event Rentals *Local Vendor Outreach - new manager	
ADMHS	*rebranding					*La Morada Ribbon Cutting	*Camino Del Remedio Alterations	
CSD							Cuyama Pool - Fall 2015/Summer 2016	
PH					Lompoc Health Care Center - remodel			

2. Institutionalize the role and importance of strategic communications planning/counsel and key messages throughout the organization.

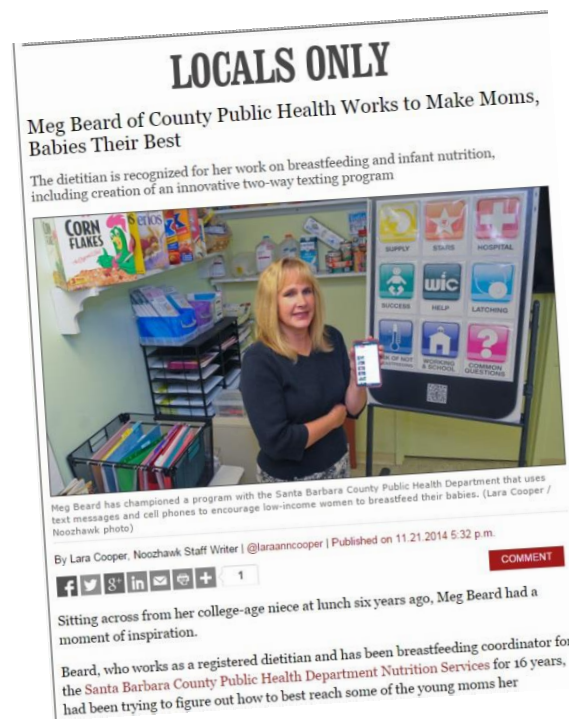
- ✓ **Conduct Key Message Development/Delivery Training for all County managers.** ♦ Message Development/Delivery Training should be conducted regularly for all employees who may serve as a media spokesperson or who present information to the Board/community, including department and division managers and all communications-related staff members. This training includes an introduction to the concept of key messages, elements of a key message, how to deliver messages, venues for message delivery, and other techniques. The training for all management team members should include what is and isn't newsworthy; on-camera interview techniques; how to control an interview (i.e., getting the County's messages delivered); how to develop strategic messages; trends in news coverage; how to generate media coverage of County issues; and other topics. Refresher training should be held on an annual basis, using real-world issues facing County staff as the basis for mock interview sessions. *Note: the first key message training for approximately 40 potential PIT Crew and other senior managers took place on Jan. 28.*
- ✓ **Build Key Message development into every project/issue.** ♦ Every project manager within each department must become proficient in preparing key messages regarding their programs. Further, every Board agenda item which might generate media interest or be of broad interest in the community should have a key message. Key messages, once approved, should be distributed to the entire management team, as well as to all employees when the topic is likely to generate broad interest. A "Message Vault" should be developed on the Intranet so that any time a question arises regarding a particular subject, the approved points can be accessed easily.
- ✓ **Conduct strategic communications training for management staff.** This highly-tailored training would involve helping all managers to understand the relationship between their areas of responsibility and the audiences affected by those programs. Each manager, with support from the office of the CEO, would eventually become responsible for including plans to reach targeted audiences with explanations of the County's activities (key messages) and the results. Components explained in the training include audiences, messages, strategies, and tactics. This training is typically a four-hour class and could begin with the PIT Crew.
- ✓ **Establish protocol for how the CEO or PIT Crew responds to a department issue or need.** A Communications Plan or Approach, which is a "mini" Plan, should be prepared for any project or issue which could generate media interest or which would be of interest to a somewhat broad group of residents, business owners or visitors. The brief document uses a bullet format to note audiences, messages, tactics, timeline, responsibilities and budget.
- ✓ **Share communications strategies developed by CEO/PIT Crew with managers.** More sharing of these strategies, events and planning materials will allow for the full team to be more completely aware of all issues, be prepared to assist, and be able to develop recommendations for additional communications strategies and tactics. It's imperative that increased sharing of information take place throughout the County, especially across department lines, to increase a sense of teamwork and to broaden the County's capabilities.

3. Educate residents via an active and broad-based media relations program to generate hard news about County priorities as well as feature stories that help to tell the County's story.

Santa Barbara County is in a unique media market as compared to most other larger and smaller geographical regions in that there are several print, online and broadcast media outlets which circulate in the region. This traditional method of reaching those served by the County is still important and warrants a robust media relations program. That said, the shrinking news hole, fewer trained journalists and the real and perceived bias on the part of the media against government means that staff time and resources spent on media relations should be balanced with the County's increased capability to push content directly to residents via Social Media and other online tools.

- ✓ **Conduct a Media Fracture[®] session to match story ideas with key media targets.** ♦ The Media Fracture is a group brainstorming session envisioned to be a function of the PIT Crew to creatively develop a variety of story ideas which support Countywide and departmental goals and drawn from the Master Editorial Calendar. Further, a list of media outlets, both traditional and non-traditional – including local, regional, national and international – is developed and the story ideas are matched with media outlets into a matrix that becomes a Media Pitching Calendar. Various Crew members would be responsible for pitching different outlets. This process utilizes staff resources efficiently and maintains the County's credibility by ensuring that the right story is developed for the right media contact. Pitching training would be provided prior to implementation. See a sample Fracture matrix as an appendix.
- ✓ **Prioritize, focus pitching efforts.** Story pitching should support the major County goals for each fiscal year, and BOS goals should drive story angles. Setting feature story placement objectives for each staff member who pitches to the media should be incorporated into performance reviews. Pitching requires understanding how outlets wish to be pitched, preparing the pitch script and supporting materials and identifying topic experts from among the County staff, making the pitch and following up, and coordinating with the reporter during the story preparation. A goal of 12 feature stories per year per for the full PIT Crew would be ambitious but attainable.

EXAMPLE: The County CEO's office pitched the employee of the month recipient to Noozhawk; see the story at right.



- ✓ **Conduct group media briefings.** ♦ Complex public policy issues that take months or years to address are challenging for the media to cover. A group media briefing is an ideal tool which requires the County to focus on its messages and strategic objectives regarding large issues, and which enable the media to fully understand and explore the issue without being on deadline. These should be used extensively on subjects such as the North County Jail, budget updates, mental health services, animal services issues, infrastructure, pension reform, county workforce issues, and others.

EXAMPLE: Santa Barbara County ADMHS SB82 media background session. ADMHS recently used this tool to provide an overview of how SB82 funds will be used in the coming year to provide a variety of expanded or new services.

- ✓ **Broadly share feature story pitch results.** ♦ Sharing or leveraging feature stories about Santa Barbara County can give much greater visibility than the single appearance of a great piece. Target audiences include Supervisors, all County department managers, community leaders, business leaders, County board/commission members and other opinion leaders. Ways of distributing include posting to Twitter/Facebook or other social media outlets, adding a link to Department website, and sending via email to key audiences, especially employees, etc. Obtaining media outlet permission to reproduce stories is advised.

EXAMPLE: Santa Barbara County ADMHS. County staff recently placed a feature in the Santa Barbara News-Press and shared the story with Department management.



- ✓ **Centralize press release distribution method; address issues of consistency of content, writing quality, format, etc.** Distribution of County press releases occurs on a somewhat inconsistent basis. Recommend distributing via one or two primary Social Media channels, likely Facebook and Twitter, as well as the County website. Facebook is preferred in order to create engagement by users (with auto posting to Twitter). Inviting comment and engagement is vital to help people understand their County government; one-way information flow is vital.
- ✓ **Develop a system to balance press release distribution across all departments.** We have observed in both traditional media releases and in Social Media posts a distribution imbalance that makes prioritizing a challenge for local editors. Spreading content out will diminish the chance that the County actually competes with itself for coverage. Implementation protocol to be developed by the PIT Crew.
- ✓ **Prepare op-ed stories.** ♦ Preparing op-ed stories on local, regional, and statewide topics and placed with print and online outlets can be a very effective method of increasing the County’s visibility and educating the public on issues before they become highly controversial. These pieces should focus on broad topics which impact many residents and/or business owners, and touch on a variety of sides to any given issue. Opinion or guest columns are generally pitched to the op-ed page editor and are offered exclusively to that publication as a means of generating interest. They can also appear on the County’s website once they have appeared in print and can be “pushed” electronically to various opinion leader databases and through Social Media. These would be authored by various County department heads or the CEO.
- ✓ **Implement a written media policy.** A written media relations policy should be developed and adopted. It should state when to issue press releases; identify how media calls should be dealt with; who should and should not respond; who to go to for assistance; how inquiries relating to legal and personnel issues should be handled; etc. This will help to avoid possible difficulties and will help maintain consistency.
- ✓ **Prepare easy-to-read summary of BOS agenda items and actions.** ♦ A brief summary should be prepared of major BOS agenda items and the resulting action for use by the news media, to post on the City’s website, for posting to Social Media channel and to send to community leaders via a “push” e-Notify email program.

EXAMPLE: Ventura County issues an “Agenda Alert” to help reporters get a sense of the significant items on each BOS agenda.



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800 So. Victoria Ave., Hall of Administration, Ventura, CA 93009
<http://www.ventura.org>

Agenda Alert
NOTEWORTHY ITEM(S)

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County Executive Officer

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January 13, 2015

Environmental Health Division's Mobile Device Apps
Agenda Item: #44 Time Certain at 10:00 a.m.

The Environmental Health Division inspects about 4,000 retail food facilities throughout Ventura County, and monitors ocean water quality at many beaches along the coastline. To provide the public with easier access to the inspection results, the EHD developed the *VC Safe Diner* and *VC Safe Beaches* mobile apps. The *VC Safe Diner* app is currently available and the *VC Safe Beaches* app will be available in the next few weeks.

VC Safe Diner

The *VC Safe Diner* app allows users to view the following information on their mobile devices:

- Locations of permitted food facilities near the user's current location.
- View the permit status of the facility (open or closed).
- View the most recent inspection reports on a certain facility. (Displayed within 24 hours of completion.)
- File a complaint about unsanitary conditions or improper food handling.

VC Safe Beaches

The *VC Safe Beaches* app allows users to review ocean water quality sampling results from various beaches along the County coastline, identifying where contact with the ocean water should be avoided. (The most recent sample results posted within 48 hours of collection.)

(Background documents attached.)

- ✓ **Create Electronic Media Room on the website.** Media representatives use websites to gather information; in fact, research shows this is the first place most reporters start when writing a story. While the County's website does offer a single point of contact for most department releases, it's imperative that all releases by departments be listed in this area (reporters tend not to care about organizational hierarchy, they just want easy access to all releases).

The Media Room needs to be a one-stop-shop for journalists needing information about the County and each department, including an archive of news releases (in keyword-searchable format) and should be planned for use during both day-to-day and emergency situations. A Media Room should include links to background information on a variety of projects, Q&As and fact sheets on key County issues, high- and low-resolution still and video images (including b-roll for TV broadcast use), graphics, maps, etc. Links can also be provided to other resources which are of use to the media in emergencies. Once the Media Room and other new features are activated, they should be promoted to reporters and assignment editors and feedback should be sought for ongoing enhancement.

4. Increase awareness of County programs and services and engage directly with residents via pushed information channels, especially Social Media tools and an improved County website.

✓ **Narrow and regularly update County Social Media tools.** ♦ The County's Social Media presence is best described as a shotgun approach. There are presently:

- 17 Facebook pages
- 9 Twitter accounts
- 7 You Tube channels
- 2 Flickr accounts

It would behoove the County to narrow and focus the number of Social Media outlets and collaborate on the content to ensure the content is updated regularly. At any given time, the various County Facebook accounts have content posted within the past few hours up to 18 months previously. Twitter content ranges from daily updates to years old. Further, while increasing, the total number of those who engage regularly with County Social Media channels is quite low. Combined and more frequent updates will result in more users who rely on the County as a source of information.

Further, it is recommended that the County's Facebook page be the primary Social Media tool with reposting to Twitter handled automatically. Targeting Facebook allows for much more engagement and commentary, thereby enabling residents to enter into an electronic relationship vs. a one-way flow of information.

The main County Facebook page should be the posting site for all departments that either do not have enough content to maintain their own site and/or adequate staff to post on a regular basis. Larger, more active departments should maintain their independent site if they can post 3-4 times per week.

Social Media presents an wonderful opportunity to humanize County government. Poking fun at government, jargon, rules, etc. is a way to help the public engage with their government.

EXAMPLE: the White House's Tweet prior to the State of the Union speech regarding the President's brown suit hit a humorous and well-received note. [If this doesn't make sense, just Google #YesWeTan]

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Social Media user comparison to other public agencies (January 2015):

Santa Barbara County Government: 126 Likes on Facebook; 858 Followers on Twitter

Santa Barbara County Parks: 593 Likes on Facebook

Santa Barbara County Public Works: 166 Likes on Facebook

Santa Barbara County Project Clean Water: 29 Likes on Facebook

City of Goleta: 2,694 Likes on Facebook; 2,108 Followers on Twitter

City of Santa Clarita: 7,719 Likes on Facebook; 8,460 Followers on Twitter

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2015**

City of Goleta Official Government Page
City Hall · Government Organization

Timeline About Photos Reviews More

PEOPLE >

★★★★★
2,694 likes
117 visits

Doug Margerum, Denechek Jagunov and 6 others like this.

Post
Write something on this Page...

City of Goleta Official Government Page added 6 new photos.
Yesterday at 2:57pm · 🌐

Busy day at City Council today!

East Walker Canyon Vista by Gary Yim - Fall 2014 Photo Contest

City of Santa Clarita Government
Government Organization

Timeline About Email Updates Photo Contest More

PEOPLE >

★★★★★
7,719 likes
123 visits

City of Santa Clarita Government shared a link.
9 hrs · 🌐

APRIL 15-19, 2015
WALKER CANYON ROUTE TO MARSHALL
WALKER CANYON ROUTE TO MARSHALL
WALKER ROUTE

Old Town Marshall

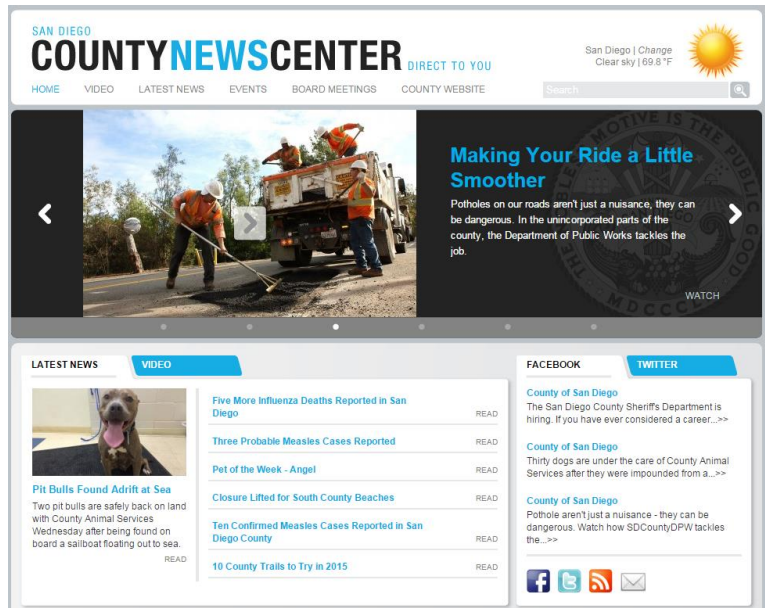
- ✓ **Use Social Media management tool.** ♦ Hootsuite is one of many tools referred to as a “Social Media Management System” or tool. It enables an agency to keep track and manage numerous social network channels. It can also enable the County to monitor what people are saying about it and help it to respond instantly. Measurement of Social Media performance across networks is also possible. While Santa Barbara County uses the free version now, there are benefits to using the paid version: up to 100 social networks can be managed in a single dashboard, with the ability to schedule up to 350 messages in advance to make planning easier. This would enable the County to establish user goals, monitor comments and schedule posts to various outlets.

Another benefit of a tool such as Hootsuite is the ability to implement a consistent posting pattern; posting numerous items in a single batch with days in between makes following the content very difficult. This narrowing and organizing would be an appropriate exercise for the PIT Crew.

- ✓ **Create a Social Media policy.** ♦ Another topic ideally addressed as a sub-committee of the PIT Crew is the creation of a workable, tailored Social Media policy. Topics to be addressed include how comments posted to sites are handled, links to County website, oversight, employee behavior/comments, enforcement, etc. Napa County’s Social Media policy is included as an appendix.
- ✓ **Empower County staff to photograph service delivery.** Creating an organization of employees empowered to occasionally snap a photo of their service delivery and sending to the Public Engagement Coordinator for posting on Social Media will not only positively engage and promote the work of employees, it turns the entire organization into a communications team that takes pride in showing what it does. Photos – which are highly effective at generating attention – would populate the website and Social Media tools.
- ✓ **Improve website navigation/functionality.** The County’s site navigation is generally average for a public agency of the size of Santa Barbara County. Increased content, more frequent refreshing of the home page headlines, more interactivity and more ability to more easily search/navigate to information would make the site meet the needs of a much larger array of residents and businesses. All County departments, regardless of their reporting relationship, should adopt a uniform web design.
- ✓ **Centralize website responsibility with the CEO.** Content is the most vital element of any communications program and the County website is the most strategic tool available to conveying consistent messages and information. Recommend centralizing this tool in the CEO’s office to ensure it is a channel for distribution of consistent information, along with media and community relations and other communications programs. *See section regarding organizational structure of communications functions.*
- ✓ **Centralize graphic design capability.** In order to provide consistent, improved and cohesive look/feel to County publications which have a large public distribution or which are of strategic importance, recommend creating or moving existing graphic design staff into the CEO’s office. *See section regarding organizational structure of communications functions.*
- ✓ **Provide content of interest to UCSB, city college students/faculty for distribution through their existing channels.** Students and faculty at UCSB and the two community colleges in the County are key audiences, especially during emergencies and regarding lifestyle or planning issues impacting their neighborhoods (especially Isla Vista). Rather than relying on the news media and/or

creating new channels, establishing relationships during non-crisis periods that enable the County to insert messages and content into existing tools is ideal.

- ✓ **Move toward “County News Center.”** As the public becomes more comfortable with gathering news they are interested in and the County becomes adept at strategically offering information that the public desires, an opportunity will present itself in the coming few years to create a “County News Channel.” San Diego County has adopted this approach and reports tremendous success with direct subscribers as well as extensive use of the site content by area news outlets. See appendix for description of this capability being implemented by the Ventura County CEO.



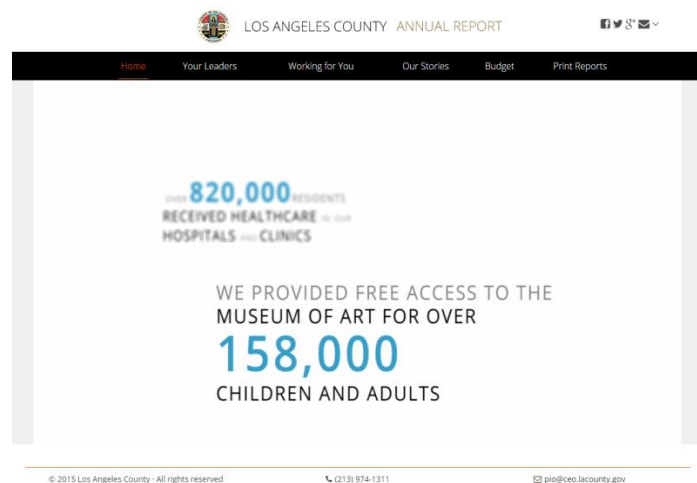
5. Generate confidence and engagement through visually-oriented stories about County employees and strategic use of video.

The County has an opportunity to generate greater awareness of County services by focusing on the people who carry out the services as well as those who receive services. This section of the Plan includes recommendations that increase the strategic use of video to highlight the work of County employees and those who access services, from restaurant visitors who appreciate public health to parks users who make reservations to someone who adopts a pet from Animal Services.

- ✓ **Broadly use video programming to tell County service-related stories.** Using existing video production staff, a significant increase in the number of short (2-3-minutes) video vignettes should be produced to highlight the array of services being delivered. The videos should populate all Social Media and web-based channels (Facebook, link via Twitter, website, YouTube, and others). The production quality should move from formal style to more informal, even handheld, via the use of mobile devices. This is the style that more and more citizens relate to via their own Social Media use and which will a) humanize the video clip and b) enable more productions to be completed without additional cost. Further, more storytelling can occur with simple slide-based “videos” that require less post-production work.

EXAMPLE: LA County Online Budget: <http://www.lacountyannualreport.com/2013/>

In issuing the report electronically, the County hoped to reach far more of the County’s 10.5 million residents.



EXAMPLE: CSAC You Tube video channel: See CSAC's Executive Director discuss the Governor's budget impact on counties.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzSw1Cb9NrA&feature=youtu.be>



- ✓ **Focus video programming on highest-priority County issues and stories.** ♦ Based on a review of programming lists and from feedback from nearly all departments in the County, it is appropriate to refocus the program content onto telling the most important strategic objectives of the BOS and various departments. Rather than a reactive approach to requests from departments, a video production calendar that supports the Master Editorial Calendar is preferred.

6. Establish a Community Relations program to communicate/connect with residents.

- ✓ **Create a user-defined database of residents to send targeted information.** Using a program such as e-Notify, the County should encourage users to subscribe to email distribution lists that can be used to send targeted geographic or topic-specific information. See appendix with list of topics available from the City of Santa Clarita as an example.

- ✓ **Establish “County 101” information series.** Consisting of a series of presentations that explain what the County does, this is a longer-term tactic that will generate a broad array of citizens in various parts of the County who have in-depth knowledge of issues, projects and operations. Envisioned to be held 1 to 2 times per year in the north and south parts of the County, the series would include subjects such as are included in the Yolo County example below.

*EXAMPLE: Yolo County Government 101: Yolo County previous offered a series of classes designed to involve and engage the public. Videos of the sessions can be viewed here:
<http://dctv.davismedia.org/node/37374>*

Yolo County Government 101

Submitted by [agsilva](#) on Thu, 04/26/2012 - 2:29pm



A series of public lectures with Q&A, offered by Yolo County officials describing, directly to the public, the services offered to residents.

Episodes Include:
1: County Government
2: Land Use
3: Legal Services
4: Public Safety
5: Fiscal Services
6: Social Services

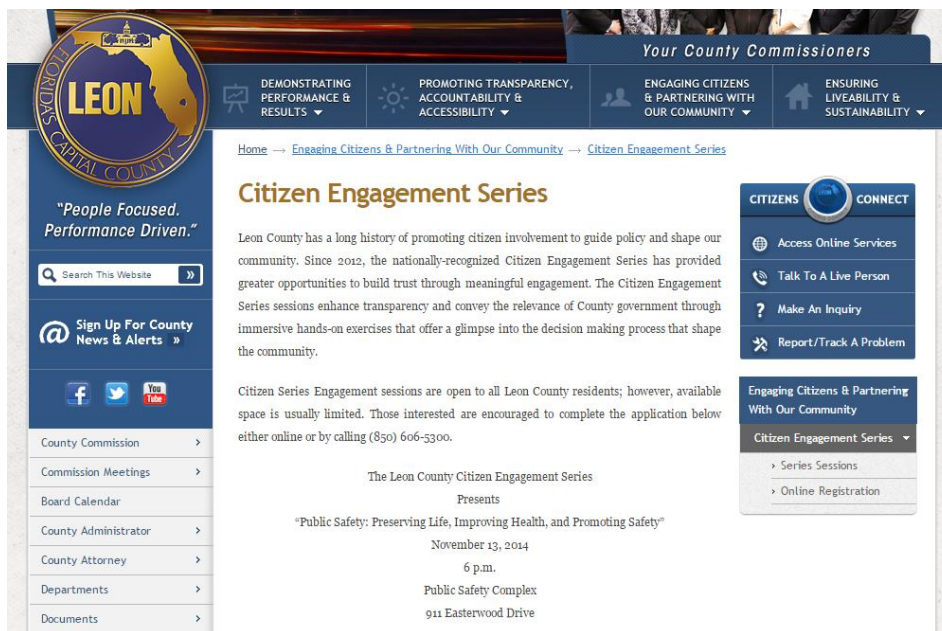
7: Public Health, Public Guardian
8: Water & Flood Control
9: County Library, Elections

Details ▾

Public Contact Info:

If you require information or would like to comment on the Resident's Academy (Yolo 101), you may contact Yolo County Human Resources, at 530-666-8426 or email margaret.raley@yolocounty.org.

Website: <http://www.yolocounty.org/Index.aspx?page=1532>

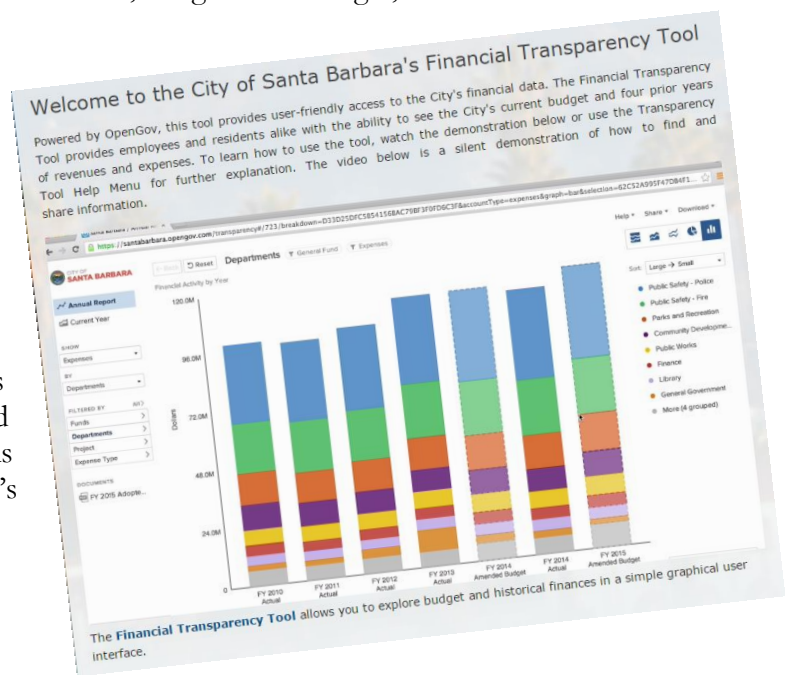


- ✓ **Video boards in lobbies of County building.** ♦ Placing video monitors in various County buildings with central programming would allow a significant dataset of information to be conveyed in a consistent manner.
- ✓ **Online surveys and “question of the week” to engage the public.** ♦ Fun and engaging tools exist to generate awareness and a sense of fun about local government, all while generating confidence in County governance. A variety of online surveys and series of inviting questions are wonderful, low-cost tools that get people excited about their local agency.
- ✓ **Actively promote a speakers bureau that focuses on current County goals and strategic objectives.** ♦ The County has an opportunity to spread consistent messages directly to key opinion leaders and activists by initiating appearances at community groups such as service clubs, homeowners associations, Neighborhood Watch, business groups, senior groups, etc. The implementation of this tactic has the opportunity of creating a sense of participation by managers who volunteer to speak at various service and community groups. A “Toastmasters” type of training program could be offered along with a “message of the quarter” with standard presentation materials offered by the CEO’s office. A quarterly meeting with the the CEO would also provide a method by which the CEO meets with key managers who volunteer to improve their speaking skills and who go out into their respective regionals to update opinion leaders regarding the most current County projects. This tool also allows for consistent storytelling to a broad array of opinion leaders and also is a method of jumpstarting an organization-wide discussion about the most important projects and issues to convey to the public.

- ✓ **Implement “Citizen Request Management” or CRM program to improve customer service and allow citizens to directly and easily request County services.** ♦ There are numerous CRM providers that can, at a very reasonable cost, provide a turn-key solution that would allow residents or business operators to review Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the County’s website or via mobile device that help to minimize the number of calls to County offices and the rerouting of these calls. In addition, requests for services can also be entered via the website or a mobile device app, with the request being routed to the email in-box of exactly the right person responsible for that service; requests that are received by walk-in customers, by phone or by fax can also easily be entered by staff. Automated responses will tell the requestor when to expect the service to be responded to, based on the current level of service. For example, if the backlog to fill potholes is currently two months, the person requesting the service would get an email or traditional mail response indicating this information.
- ✓ **Conduct user survey of website.** Research indicated that the website is viewed as adequate but is not reaching its broadest potential to inform and engage a variety of target audiences. Reorganization would increase the usefulness of the site. While departments have the ability to update the site individually, it’s imperative that they take seriously the need to provide updated information on a regular basis. This survey can be “pushed” to a targeted list of users and made available as an option from the site.

Tools such as Google analytics should be sharing with senior management/PIT Crew to identify where visitors originate, what pages they most often visit, navigation challenges, etc.

- ✓ **Improve transparency of the County’s financial and data-drive information.** Recommend contracting with a service such as opengov.com to provide transparent information regarding a large array of statistical and numerical information about County services. One of the significant findings of the research was the lack of staff time to prepare stats on County services; this tool required little staff time to establish and is refreshed monthly based on opengov’s programming.



7. Increase awareness among Spanish-speaking residents regarding County services via a media relations program and direct communications tools. Use similar tools, programs to reach low-income residents.

- ✓ **Increase awareness of Hispanic audience needs.** ♦ Research showed that there is a need for enhancement of communication with ethnically-diverse communities, most particularly Spanish-speakers and various sub-sets. Effective multi-cultural communication extends far beyond translation of existing documents. The Hispanic community, for example, has its own preferences for how members prefer to receive news, and the County must be willing to consider creating tools which are designed for a targeted ethnic audience. Lacking formal research into the effectiveness with which regional media serves area Hispanic audiences, recommend PIT Crew discussion of the best practices of existing County efforts.

- ✓ **Implement text-based information outreach program to Spanish or low-income residents.** Using as a model the successful program implemented by the Santa Barbara County Public Health Nutrition Services, a two-way text-based program of communicating County program and service information via texts has great potential of reaching Spanish or low-income residents.

- ✓ **Partner with Radio Bilingüe National Latino Public Radio to reach North County Spanish/Mixteco-speaking audiences.** The California-based Radio Bilingüe National Latino Public Radio Network will expand its non-commercial programming service to north Santa Barbara County in 2015. Radio Bilingüe will build a broadcast transmitter and air its programming in Spanish, English, Mixteco in Santa Maria, Guadalupe and Orcutt.

8. Ensure life- and property-saving information reaches those impacted during and after a natural or man-made disaster.

- ✓ **Annually Update Emergency Public Information Plan/Annex.** ♦ The County has an exceptionally robust and tailored Emergency Public Information Plan. It should be reviewed annually by the PIT Crew and public information function to ensure it incorporates any additional County information tools and channels. Social Media and traditional media should continue to be primary sources of information to residents.
- ✓ **Ensure use of 211 capability during an incident.** Ensuring that 211 operators have updated incident information and publicizing 211 as a source of emergency data are important functions of the emergency public information program. This is a proven method of answering calls from the public which typically minimizes calls to 911.
- ✓ **Embark on outreach program to Spanish-language populations regarding how to obtain emergency information.** Building on the work of California Concern, a group of local retired business people, and the Orfalea Foundation, ensure emergency information is transmitted to English- and Spanish-language radio stations. This effort would entail ensuring Spanish-language populations know what station to monitor during an incident.
- ✓ **Partner with Radio Bilingüe National Latino Public Radio.** The California-based Radio Bilingüe National Latino Public Radio Network will expand its non-commercial programming service to north Santa Barbara County in 2015. Radio Bilingüe will build a broadcast transmitter and air its programming in Spanish, English, Mixteco in Santa Maria, Guadalupe and Orcutt. Targeting this channel with emergency public information will help spread the word about preparedness as well as response during an incident.

Furthermore, see previous section regarding communicating via text messages to Spanish-speaking residents.

- ✓ **Promote Nixle subscribers.** ♦ This tool has proven to be an exceptional method of alerting the public to a crisis or disaster. Increasing subscribers should be a high priority. This can be accomplished by adding a tag line to nearly all communications tool directing residents and business owners to subscribe and conducting special information campaigns.
- ✓ **Conduct tabletop and exercises for PIT Crew.** ♦ Annual one-day exercises should be conducted to ensure the County communications team understands how to respond and communicate during a disaster.
- ✓ **Nurture Countywide Emergency PIO Team: EPIC.** Recommend the PIT Crew and the office of the CEO support the existing Emergency Public Information Team. There is extensive support now and this should be continued.



Internal Communications Strategies

The following internal communications strategies are recommended to engage and inform employees.

1. **Develop a broad-based communications program** – Increase awareness among employees by implementing a variety of communications vehicles which reach employees via the most convenient tool possible.
2. **Create an engaging Intranet site** – Embark on an internal communications and education program to convey to all County employees their importance within the organization and organizational goals/programs through a robust Intranet.
3. **Research the feasibility of conducting a focused online, one-time employee engagement opportunity** – “Jamming Our Way to the Future: Engaging Employees for the Journey Ahead,” would attempt to involve employees at every level to participate in and suggest programs to make the County as effective as possible in its changing environment.



Internal Communications Tactics

1. Broad-based communications program - Increase awareness among employees by implementing a variety of communications vehicles which reach employees via the most convenient tool possible.

Formal internal communications programs allow all County employees to understand the goals and programs of the organization; see their role in the overall implementation of the programs; help accomplish the goals; and articulate the successes to family, friends, neighbors and other County employees. In effect, this allows them to serve as spokespersons for the County. The results of the employee survey showed a high level of satisfaction with the quantity, quality and sources of information currently provided to employees.

- ✓ **Schedule regular visits by the CEO to all employees.** ♦ It is recommended that the County Executive Officer conduct regular briefings in a “brown bag” setting by department or agency. In addition to organizational progress, attendees should have an opportunity to ask questions of the CEO.
- ✓ **Make consistent use of video messages by the CEO to all employees.** ♦ This communications vehicle produced when the CEO arrived was extremely well-received by employees. Front line supervisors should ensure all field employees know how to view the video.

EXAMPLE: “POLB in 3”. Check out an example here from the Port of Long Beach: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpiUj8GzWrA>
- ✓ **Use email more regularly to communicate with all staff.** ♦ The CEO’s office has periodically used the “all personnel” feature of email to make Countywide announcements; this should be continued and expanded. Employees report that they most prefer to receive emails regarding issues of importance facing the County. Email should be sent directly from the CEO’s email address.
- ✓ **Distribute special bulletins regarding major initiatives.** ♦ A special, new e-publication should be created just for County employees to provide breaking, urgent or significant news. The “Update” or similarly-named publication should be developed to educate all employees about major projects or issues that cross departmental lines and which will generate considerable community or media interest. The approved Key Messages for each item would be shared in this channel.

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- ✓ **Send BOS meeting summaries.** ♦ As with the tactic described above, this should be distributed to senior County managers, the media, community and opinion leaders and those who subscribe via the web site.

2. Create an engaging Intranet site - Embark on an internal communications and education program to convey to all County employees their importance within the organization and organizational goals/programs through a robust Intranet.

- ✓ **Create a new “vision” for the County Intranet.** ♦ The Intranet, when used properly and consistently, can be a vital internal communication link for all employees – both one-way and two-way information flow and engagement. Departmental, Countywide, benefits, new employee orientation and BOS information should all be included, along with employee profiles and exciting content. A few key elements should be considered as this is accomplished:
1. Make the Intranet essential
 2. Align with the County’s goals
 3. Provide consistent, reliable and fresh content
 4. Build ownership among all departments as the Intranet is visioned and programmed
 5. “Brand” it with a new name and spread the word: it’s the only site dedicated to all County employees
 6. Incorporate the use of the Intranet in all new employee hiring
 7. Sequence the roll-out of new sections and content

3. Research the feasibility of conducting a focused online, one-time event, “Jamming Our Way to the Future: Engaging Employees for the Journey Ahead,” which attempts to involve employees at every level to participate in and suggest programs to make the County as effective as possible in its changing environment.

- ✓ **Conduct Online “Jam” Session.** The goal of this effort is to engage employees in an important dialog about the future of County services and funding.
 - Individual managers would carry the “story” to be discussed with employees; develop “tool kit” for all supervisors
 - Ensure participation from all employees, those without computers, non-native English speaking employees, field employees, others
 - Create excitement and buzz about the ability of employees to register to participate (goal: 25% of employees register)
 - Require employees to read a “Vision Jam” paper prior to participation so they are knowledgeable about County issues
 - Focus employees to provide ideas and solutions during the jam, with a goal of generating 60 percent of participants who are actively engaged in the jam
 - Conduct the Jam: a 48-hour online forum window that will provide an unprecedented way to surface, cultivate, and discuss new ideas, to collaborate to develop these ideas and drive new kinds of innovation in the County
 - This is a proven tool used in a variety of predominantly high-tech corporations; more information and details to be provided should the County wish to pursue this effort



Public Information Program: Organizational Structure

Due to a variety of budget and personnel issues over the past several years, there is currently no unified communications organization which oversees all aspects of strategic communications planning, counsel and implementation. SAE is recommending that existing and new positions be gathered together to create a Public Information Office housed in the office of the County Executive Officer. See the proposed organizational chart below.

- ✓ **Establish Public Information Office.** Considering the geographic and demographic diversity of Santa Barbara County and the increasing need for the public to have confidence in their local government, it is clearly time to re-establish the County's Office of Public Information. See the proposal organizational structure below: recommend that a PIO position be created and that it be responsible for:
 - Strategic council
 - Civic engagement
 - PIT Crew leadership
 - Website content
 - Graphic design
 - Social Media
 - Emergency communications
 - Internal communications
 - Video production
 - CSBTV supervision

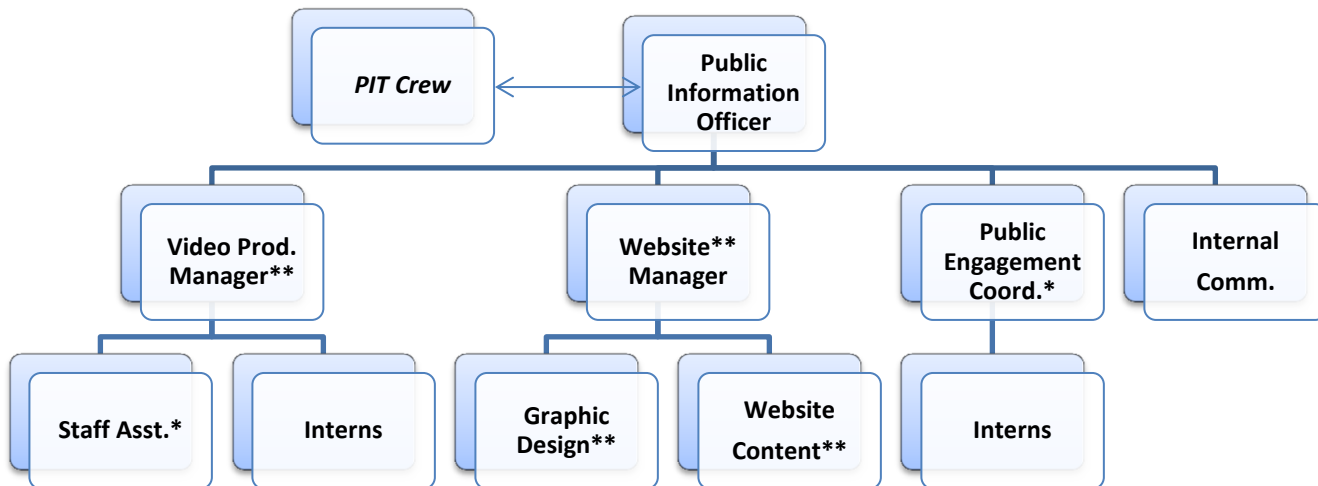
- ✓ **Create Public Information Officer position.** ♦ This position existed until a few years ago. Universally, those interviewed for this Plan expressed significant frustration that the County does not have a single senior manager responsible for overall strategic communications. The actual title for the position can vary.

- ✓ **Create position responsible for internal communications.** Reporting to the public information officer this position would take responsibility for writing, especially targeting internal audiences.

- ✓ **Unify website, graphic design, video production capability into the new Public Information Office.** Each of these functions should exist as part of a unified office that can drive all organizational communications. Former graphic design staff that now located in other offices should be united in the PIO or the function should be added. The CSBTV staff should move under the PIO. Responsibility for the website should rest with the PIO, moving from General Services.

- ✓ **Evaluate CSBTV, video production workload, production output.** ♦ Currently, CSBTV staff broadcast via Ch. 20 and online via Granicus the meetings of three public bodies (Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and the Montecito Planning Commission). Additionally, other organizations contract with the County to shoot/air their public meetings (Local Agency Formation Commission, Air Pollution Control District, etc.). Current staffing levels include the CSBTV manager and a staff assistant. These two individuals' primary product is the airing of the public meeting broadcasts. Further, approximately 10 to 15% of the Public Engagement Coordinator is devoted to producing 1-2 short video productions each month. The workload and output of the three individuals involved should be evaluated to maximize the County's capability to produce short video vignettes for distribution through Social Media channels (Facebook, YouTube, website).

Proposed Public Information Office Organization Chart



* = Existing position in CEO's office

** = Existing position in other County departments



Program Evaluation

SAE Communications recommends the following evaluation activities be conducted to measure the effectiveness of ongoing County activities and behavior/perception changes among the County's key audiences:

- Media content analysis (analyze message delivery in articles, compare stories pitched with actual features, etc.) to measure effectiveness of the media relations program – periodically
- Readership survey of key publications – biannually
- Re-conduct the one-on-one interviews conducted for this project to determine a perceived change in communications effectiveness – biannually
- Re-conduct the resident survey to determine if objectives have been met – biannually
- Re-conduct the County employee survey to determine improvements in information flow – biannually
- Conduct a web site user satisfaction survey – biannually
- Conduct interviews with area PIOs to determine effectiveness of County relationship – annually
- Include communications-related performance measures for each department head and bureau chief; revise annually, tie to Strategic Communications Plan
- Quantity of feature stories per year; contain key messages



Priority Implementation Chart

<i>First Year – Recommended Priority Tactics</i>			
<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Tactic</i>	<i>One-Time</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
1. Dept. PIO Team	Form County Staff Public Information Team (PIT Crew)		☐
	Maintain a Master Editorial Calendar		☐
2. Strategic Counsel/ Key Messages	Conduct Key Message Development/Delivery Training		☐
	Build Key Message development into every project/issue		☐
3. Media Relations	Conduct a Media Fracture®	☐	
	Conduct group media briefings		☐
	Broadly share feature story pitch results		☐
	Prepare op-ed stories	☐	☐
	Prepare easy-to-read summary of Board agenda items and actions		☐
4. Direct Communications Channels	Narrow and regularly update County Social Media tools	☐	☐
	Use Social Media management tool	☐	☐
	Create a Social Media policy	☐	
5. Visual Communications Tools	Broadly use video programming to tell County service-related stories		☐
	Focus video programming on highest-priority County issues and stories		☐

6. Electronic Community Relations Program	Video boards in lobbies of County building	□
	Online surveys and “question of the week” to engage the public	□
	Actively promote a speakers bureau that focuses on current County goals, strategic objectives	□
	Implement “Citizen Request Management” or CRM program	□
7. Spanish-Language Outreach	Increase awareness of Hispanic audience needs	□
8. Emergency Public Information	Prepare Crisis Communications Plan tailored for Santa Barbara County	□
	Promote Nixle subscribers	□
	Conduct tabletop and exercises for PIT Crew	□
9. Internal Communications	Schedule regular visits by the CEO to all employees	□
	Make consistent use of video messages by the CEO to all employees	□
	Use email more regularly to communicate with all staff	□
	Send BOS meeting summaries	□



Appendix A – Interviewees

Peter Adam	Supervisor – 4 th District
Mike Allen	Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board
Renee Bahl	Assistant County Executive Officer
Steve Boelhouwer	Web Support Team Supervisor
Errin Briggs	Program Manager – Successor Agency
Bill Brown	Sheriff
Salud Carbajal	Supervisor – 1 st District
Kevin Drude	Deputy Director – Energy
Joyce Dudley	District Attorney
Michael Dyer	Fire Chief (Retired)
Doreen Farr	Supervisor – 3 rd District
Bob Geis	Auditor-Controller
Melinda Greene	Chief Deputy Clerk-Recorder
Harry Hagen	Treasurer – Tax Collector
Lyz Hoffman	Reporter – Santa Barbara Independent
Susan Klein-Rothschild	Deputy Director – Community Health
Steve Lavagnino	Supervisor – 5 th District
Erin Lennon	Reporter – Santa Maria Times
Jeff Lindgren	Operations Manager – Parks
Terri Maus-Nisich	Assistant County Executive Officer
Scott McGolpin	Public Works Director
Kathy McKee	EPIC
Mona Miyasato	County Executive Officer
Rai Montes De Oca	Public Defender
Silvio Motta	Cable Television Manager
Jeri Muth	Human Resources Director
Daniel Nielson	Social Services Director
Matt Pontes	General Services Director
Ryan Rockabrand	Director – Emergency Management
Ben Romo	Executive Director – First 5
Glenn Russell	Director – Planning and Development
David Sadecki	Fire Public Information Officer

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Mark Schleich
Jennifer Slayman
Beverly Taylor
Carrie Topliffe
Takashi Wada
Lael Wageneck
Mike Williams
Janet Wolf

Deputy Director – Resource Recovery and Waste Mgmt.
Assistant Director – General Services/IT
Chief Probation Officer (retired)
Child Support Services Director
Public Health Director
Public Engagement Coordinator
EPIC
Supervisor – 2nd District



Appendix B – Sample Media Fracture[®]

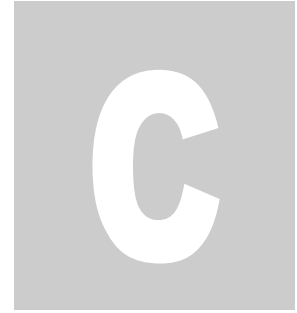
This matrix is the result of a Media Fracture[®] process. Various types of media outlets, such as daily newspapers, lifestyle magazines and Spanish-language radio stations, appear at the top of the matrix. Various story ideas, divided into subject matter, appear at the left side of the matrix. The Media Fracture process "wedded" the media outlets with the story ideas, recognizing that a story which is appropriate for one medium may be inappropriate for another (i.e. television's need for visuals, radio's need for ambient sound, etc.). The "x" in each matrix box indicates the suitability of pitching that specific story idea to that specific type of media outlet. The specific matrix included here is included solely as a visual sample.

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SLO BUDGET: Telling the City's Story Sample "Media Fracture"	<i>Media Outlet #1: daily or weekly print outlets</i>	<i>Media Outlet #2: regional broadcast outlets</i>	<i>Media Outlet #3: college newspapers</i>
Category #1			
Story idea #1	X		
Story idea #2		X	
Category #2			
Story idea #3			X
Story idea #4	X		
Story idea #5		X	
Category #3			
Story idea #6		X	
Story idea #7			X

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PRICE RADAR MEDIA FRACTURE	<i>Business Week</i>	<i>Associated Press</i>	<i>N.Y. Times</i>	<i>The Economist</i>	<i>PC Magazine</i>	<i>Walt Mossberg</i>	<i>O Magazine</i>	<i>United Inflight Mag.</i>	<i>Good Morning LA</i>
Trends/ Special Interest									
• <i>Celebrity as spokesperson</i>			X			X	X	X	X
• <i>Online auction growth</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• <i>Selling intelligence</i>	X			X	X	X			
• <i>Changing distribution channels</i>	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
• <i>Stimulating the collectibles market</i>		X		X			X		X
• <i>Enthusiast story</i>	X		X				X	X	X
• <i>Melding classifieds, auction, retail</i>	X		X	X		X	X		X
Company									
• <i>Advisors</i>	X			X	X	X			
• <i>Deals</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
• <i>Investors/funding</i>	X		X	X	X	X			
• <i>CEO successes</i>							X		
• <i>A year in the life</i>	X		X	X	X		X		
• <i>Auction vernacular</i>							X		
Technology									
• <i>HDC</i>	X	X		X	X	X			
• <i>“How’d they do that?”</i>	X		X	X	X	X			X
• <i>Significance of speed</i>					X		X		
Product									
• <i>Categorizing a behemoth</i>				X	X		X	X	
• <i>“Cyborg mindmeld”</i>	X		X	X	X				



Appendix C – e-Notify List of Topics: City of Santa Clarita

News and Information

- Building & Safety Information
- City Briefs Weekly Updates
- Economic Development / Enterprise Zone Information
- Film Office Updates
- General Updates
- Manufactured Home Park Information
- Message from the City Manager
- Message from the Mayor
- Press Release Summary (Weekly)
- Recreation Newsletter

SCVTV Morning Digest (clicking link will take you to SCVTV.com)

- Tourism Updates
- Transit Updates
- Website Updates

Public Meeting Notices

- Council Agendas
- All Public Meetings (Including Subcommittees and Other Meetings)
- Arts Commission
- Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission

- Planning Commission

Programs and Projects

- Camp Clarita
- Drug Free Youth In Town (DFYIT)
- Emergency Preparedness
- Family Education
- Green Santa Clarita (Environmental Services)
- Healthy Santa Clarita
- Hike Santa Clarita
- Human Services
- New Bid Opportunities

Santa Clarita 2020 (Major City Project Updates)

- Santa Clarita Public Library
- Seasons Brochure/Recreation Registration
- State of the City Invitation
- Teen Programs
- Volunteer Opportunities
- WorkSource Center
- West Creek/Tesoro Annexation
- Whittaker-Bermite Property Updates

Email Format

- html
- text



Appendix D – Ventura County News Channel Description

Ventura County News Channel (VCNC)

The primary goal of the Ventura County News Channel (VCNC) is to create a place where the public (and the media) can get County news.

Ventura County shares the greater Los Angeles-area media market with the counties of Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside. A geographic area of that size spreads media resources thin, forces them to concentrate on breaking news and increases the difficulty of attracting media coverage for “good” news and feature stories.

As a result, it follows that adequate media coverage in Ventura County during a widespread disaster – a major earthquake, for example – is highly unlikely. That is the purpose behind establishing the VCNC; it would allow County agencies to tell their stories without having to rely on mainstream media while providing a platform for emergency information during a disaster. The VCNC would also allow the County to post local breaking news that might not warrant coverage from regional, state or national media such as election results, major road closures or significant emergency incidents.

Ventura County News Channel would:

- Tell who we are
- Tell what we do
- Tell what we have accomplished
- Show where to find information

Multi-faceted approach:

- Current Website
- Social Media
- Videos
- Photography
- Feature Stories
- Webcasts
- Local Access TV Programming
- More?

Video

Create a dedicated video production team.

- The team would produce videos for VCNC. It could also produce programming for local access TV channels and videos for other agencies/departments for training purposes, events or use on social media. Costs could be billed back to departments if necessary.
- The team would have studio and remote capabilities and include pre-production work, filming, post-production, editing and distribution.
- “Featuring Ventura County” – a regular series of videos designed to spotlight County agencies and departments. Filmed on location, 3-5 minutes in length.
- The site would link to streaming meetings (e.g. Board of Supervisors) and archived videos.

Photography

- Use photographs to highlight “news briefs.” These would include awards, new equipment, ribbon cuttings, etc.
- Slide show – “Around the County” – illustrating the great diversity of landscapes, activities and resources in the County.
- An area could also be provided for user-generated photos that illustrate life in Ventura County.

Social Media

- Use appropriate social media platforms to inform and tell the County story. Could include a Facebook page and Instagram site for uploading photos and information.
- A Facebook page would be countywide and not intended to replace successful pages being used by other County departments. It could, however, share information from these pages while giving smaller agencies and departments an outlet for news and information.

Emergencies and Disasters

- In the case of a major disaster, local and/or Los Angeles media may be unable to disseminate timely, accurate local information. VCNC could be used as a central, trusted hub for local information. Depending on the type and scope of the emergency, information could be placed directly on VCNC, or the site could be used to direct residents to the appropriate source(s) for information.

Other

- Important links (cities, chambers of commerce, visitor and convention bureaus, etc.)
- Shared feeds (traffic, weather, etc.)
- County information (history, FAQs, statistics, historical landmarks, etc.)

For a similar program, visit the San Diego County News Center:

<http://www.countynewscenter.com/>



Appendix E – Napa County Social Media Policy

*Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on 9-13-11
Reso 2011-108*

NAPA COUNTY SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY

I. SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent standards for and ensure appropriate use of Napa County-sponsored Social Media sites for use by Napa County departments in reaching out to the public with the intended purpose of sharing and gathering information about the County.

For the purpose of this policy “Social Media” (and Social Networking) refers to technologies that allow County departments to share pertinent and important information over the Internet with the public.

This policy applies to all County-sponsored Social Media sites (“County Social Media sites”) and to all Napa County employees and approved volunteers, consultants, service providers and contractors performing business on behalf of a County agency/department. This policy is not intended to regulate the personal (non-work-related) activities of County employees, volunteers or contractors.

II. POLICY

A. Application of Related County Policies

All official Napa County presences on Social Media sites are subject to all related administrative policies, including, but not limited to, confidentiality, conflict of interest, general conduct and sexual harassment. Please refer to specific County and departmental policies that cover privacy and security of County technology assets (including data and information) and the Policy for Maintaining a Harassment and Discrimination Free Work Environment.

B. Front Page Requirements - Identification & Maintenance as a Napa County Site

To help distinguish County Social Media sites from non-professional (or personal) uses of these tools, County sites must state that they are maintained by Napa County and that they are subject to this Social Media Policy. Each site must have the standard County Privacy and Disclaimer Notice posted on its front page. [Refer to the County Privacy and Disclaimer Notice.]

C. Napa County's Official Website

Napa County's official Website at www.countyofnapa.org will remain the County's primary and predominant Internet presence.

D. Link back to Official County or Department Official Website

Content on County Social Media sites shall **not** be offered in lieu of official information on the County's official Website or a department's official Web pages. A County Social Media site shall contain a link back to the sponsoring department's official Website, where the announcement, press release, form(s), document(s), online services and/or other information relevant to the matter shall be posted.

E. Records Retention

County Social Media site posts that are prepared, owned, used or retained by the County (including its departments), will be archived and managed in accordance with the applicable County and Department records retention schedule.

Exception: Comments posted back to a County Social Media site are generally transitory in nature and are not considered to be records that are required under law to be kept, or necessary or convenient to the discharge of a public officer's duties, or made for the purpose of preserving its informational content for future reference. Comments are retained only until they have been removed and destroyed unless otherwise required by law to be retained (such as where the content is subject to litigation or potential litigation or pending Public Records Act requests). [For more information refer to the County Records Management Policy.]

F. Public Records Act Requests for Production

Posts on County Social Media sites that are prepared, owned, used or retained by the County, or its departments, may be considered public records subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act ("PRA" - Government Code §§ 6250 et. seq.). Any PRA requests for the production of posts on a County Social media site shall be referred to the County Counsel's Office for review and response.

Preparedness to Comply with PRA Requests: The posting Department must be prepared to respond to PRA requests and e-Discovery requests.

G. Comments Posted Back on Social Media Sites

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- 1) A primary purpose of Social Media sites is to welcome public comment on posted topics. Wherever appropriate and possible, the County encourages the solicitation of comments on Social Media sites. Where comments are not desirable or practical, the department should carefully consider both appropriate social media and other media tools. While the County welcomes public comment by email, letter, and phone, the receipt of public comments on a County Social Media site invites certain legal risks and administrative challenges.
- 2) The following requirements should be adhered to in using and managing a County Social Media site:
 - a. Posting of County Privacy and Disclaimer Notice: The standard County Privacy and Disclaimer Notice must be posted on the site's front page, detailing how posts and public comments may be subject to the Public Records Act or to discovery under pending litigation.
 - b. Daily Monitoring of Comments: The posting Department must dedicate sufficient resources and time on a daily basis to monitor for disallowed public comments as set forth in Section II. G.2) d. , "Disallowed Content" or to respond to requests or questions.
 - c. Disabling of Public Comments: There may be occasions where disabling of public comments on a Social Media site is desirable. In these instances, comments may be invited via email to a designated County department email address that is regularly monitored. Refer to the County's Social Media Best Practices for further guidance.
 - d. Disallowed Content: Users and visitors to County Social Media sites shall be notified that the intended purpose of the site(s) is to serve as a mechanism for communication between County departments and members of the public. A site that allows public comment shall inform visitors of the intended purpose of the site. The site must provide a clear statement of the discussion topic introduced for public comment so that the public is aware of the limited nature of the discussion and that inappropriate posts are subject to removal.

Napa County social media postings, articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:

- Profane language or content;
- 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;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
- 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;
 - Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party;
 - Comments not topically related to the particular social medium article/posting being commented upon.
 - **For site security, hypertext links in comments are prohibited.** Users may post only plain text links that they can copy and paste into a browser.
- 2) The following requirements should be adhered to in using and managing a County Social Media site:
 - 3) These guidelines on comments must be displayed to users (e.g. through the County Privacy and Disclaimer Notice) or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed must be retained and documented in accordance with the County’s Social Media Best Practices.

H. Content of Posts

- 1) Posts Represent the County: Employees, contractors, and other individuals authorized to use Social Media to communicate on behalf of a County department should be mindful that statements posted represent the County, including its elected officials. Therefore, employees, contractors and other authorized individuals should use discretion when posting.
- 2) Purpose of Posts: Posts should be designed to increase the public’s knowledge, trust and use of County departments, programs or services.
- 3) Posts for Official Business Only: Posts should always relate to work-related matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of the posting Department and should be consistent with the County’s public service mission. Only information authorized by this policy shall be posted. County staff authorized to use County Social Media sites must ensure that all information posted is professionally presented, accurate and appropriate for dissemination to the public.
- 4) County Branding: County Social Media sites must identify the department responsible for the information displayed, such as all descriptions, logos, and images, to name a few, representing the County services.
- 5) Protection and Non-Disclosure of Confidential/Sensitive Information: Confidential, sensitive, proprietary or non-public information must never be shared.

Information posted on County Social Media sites or links from those sites to County sites must not contain data or information that relates, or can be connected to, an individual or group of individuals containing specific health information (doctors, diagnoses, medication/prescriptions,

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etc), personally identifiable information (names with social security numbers, bank accounts) or information deemed to be sensitive in nature or protected by Federal, State, or County rules and regulations.

It is the responsibility of all County staff authorized to use County Social Media sites to ensure that information posted on these sites do not contain confidential, sensitive, proprietary or personal information.

- 6) **Copyright Laws:** Postings must respect copyright laws, and reference or cite sources appropriately. This includes, but is not limited to, quotes, images, documents, links, etc.
- 7) **No Political Advocacy or Private Commercial Activity:** Departments and their employees must not use County Social Media sites for advocacy of political purposes or to conduct private commercial activities.
- 8) **No Expectation of Privacy:** Users of County Social Media sites, including employees, are cautioned not to have any expectation of privacy as to any posting.
- 9) **Ongoing Monitoring and Updating of Sites:** Departments must monitor and maintain their sites, and delete or replace stale posted information in accordance with the County's Social Media Best Practices.
- 10) **Right to Remove Content:** The County reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.
- 11) **Disclaimer of Liability:** Users shall be informed on County Social Media sites that the County disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that the County deems inappropriate for posting, which cannot be removed in an expeditious and otherwise timely manner.

I. **Responsibilities of Departments and Information and Technology Services**

- 1) **Napa County Department Heads** are ultimately responsible and accountable for the management of department site(s) in a manner consistent with this policy and related policies and procedures, including the County's Social Media Best Practices. Department Heads must designate authorized Social Media administrators. Only authorized administrators may be permitted to respond, comment, or manage County Social Media sites. All such authorized administrators must sign and complete the Standard of Conduct Agreement. Employees who post to or respond to comments on a County Social Media site and who are not authorized as Social Media administrators may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 2) **Napa County Information Technology Services ("ITS")** is responsible for:
 - Jointly working with the CEO and County Counsel to develop and administer usage standards, guidelines and procedures, and training for all approved "Social Media" tools.

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- Providing guidelines and standards for the security and protection of County information and technology from destructive cyber incidents.

J. Related Documents

- County Privacy and Disclaimer Notice
- Social Media Use Policy - Acknowledgement Form
- County's Social Media Best Practices
- Records Management Policy

K. Enforcement

Violators of this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including employment termination, termination of agreements, denial of service, and/or legal penalties, both criminal and civil.

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