



Memorandum

Community Relations

DATE: May 20, 2009

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Shelley Hearn, Community Relations Manager (x8906)
Jenae Naumann, Assistant City Attorney (x8402)

THROUGH: Charlie Meyer, City Manager (x8884)

SUBJECT: Social Media

At the request of the Technology, Economic and Community Development Council Committee, staff would like to present to Council an update on the City of Tempe's use of social media as a means of reaching a broader audience and the *Social Computing Guidelines for Online Electronic Behavior* policy developed by the Social Media Subcommittee and the City Attorney's Office to inform and guide employees through the procedures and registration process for utilizing social media tools in the workplace.

At the May 28 Issue Review Session, staff will demonstrate a number of social media tools currently in use by departments and community partners and request Council approval of the social media policy.

See Attachment

Social Computing Guidelines for Online Electronic Behavior

Below are some guidelines for your online behavior as a City of Tempe employee that should be adhered to when creating or contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other kind of social media involving online publishing or discussion both on and off www.tempe.gov. If you are representing the City in social media, or if you are discussing City business-related issues in your personal use of social media platforms, you are required to understand and follow these guidelines, which may be modified as new technologies and social networking tools are developed.

When You Participate

Post meaningful, respectful comments. Do not make remarks that are off-topic or offensive.

If a response is appropriate, reply to comments quickly.

When disagreeing with the opinions of others, do so respectfully. Inappropriate or defamatory statements about others can subject you and the City to liability.

Use common sense in the amount of time that you spend participating, so that your online activities do not interfere with your work responsibilities. This activity should be judiciously used to help you in doing your job, not as a replacement for it. Talk with your supervisor so you both have a clear understanding about how much time can be spent on Internet blogs or other social networking, so that if there is an expectation of time limits on social media activities, you will know what it is.

Guidelines for Participation

Registration. You must register a request with the social media subcommittee prior to using social media to represent the City and/or to engage the public.

Use of Social Media. Access to third-party sites is allowed for updating and maintaining content regarding City business. Personal use is not allowed during work hours.

Be honest. If you are blogging about your work for the City, use your real name, identify that you work for the City, and be clear about your job. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, let others know.

Be careful. Do not publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private, secret, confidential or internal to the City without getting permission to do so first. Anything you write about or publish will be online for a long time, so think

before you write. Be considerate. Once you put your words out there online, you won't be able to take them back. Do not publish content that is harassing, offensive, intimidating, defamatory, discriminatory or pornographic.

Write what you know. If you publish to a website outside of the City's, use a disclaimer similar to "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the City of Tempe's positions or policies." If you are a manager or supervisor for the City, you should assume that your co-workers will read what you write, and you should be aware that any personal thoughts that are published could be misunderstood as expressing City policy. A public blog is not the appropriate place to communicate City policies to City workers.

Obey intellectual property laws. Be aware of and refrain from using and posting any brand, trademark, service mark, copyright, protected information without permission from the owner of such to do so. Do not provide confidential or proprietary information of the City or of a third party. Get approval from a third party before you reference them. When you do make a reference, link back to the source, if possible. Adhere to fair use requirements and do not quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work. Remember that you are personally responsible for your content, so if you have questions about posting something, contact the Tempe City Attorney's Office.

Public/Private Personas. In online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are not clear and distinct. By identifying yourself as a City of Tempe employee, you will create an impression of the City. Your online persona will also create a perception of you to others. Make sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with Tempe's values. Clearly identify when you are speaking as a representative of the City and when you are speaking as an individual for yourself and not on behalf of the City.

Off-duty Blogging, Online Behavior, and other Social Media activities. Even if your comments are not posted during work hours or sent from a City computer, your off-duty electronic comments and/or behavior have the potential (depending upon what is said or done) to cause employment problems for you such as disciplinary action or termination. If you break the law, you may also be personally liable. So, when engaging in social media activities and online postings, please consider the following:

- Would your words/conduct have a negative impact on the City of Tempe's reputation and/or its provision of services?
- Would your words/conduct have a negative impact on your own job performance or the job performance of other City employees? (Do not make negative comments about other workers or outside activities that could be construed as creating a hostile work environment for others).

- Would your words/conduct violate any of the City's policies?

Online Conversations. Talk to your readers like you would speak to real people. Try to use content that is open-ended and that will invite a response. Encourage comments, but respect your audience. Do not use any slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any inappropriate conduct that would not be allowed in the workplace. Respect other people's privacy and avoid topics that are sensitive such as religion or politics. Also, an external blog or other online social media is not an appropriate place to vent your differences or disagreements with other City employees or raise complaints of harassment or discrimination.

Useful Information is Valuable. Your best chance for being read is if you provide useful information. Social communication from the City of Tempe should help our residents and co-workers, and it should further Tempe's reputation as a community with quality services, programs, and amenities. If it helps our residents solve their problems and/or understand the City of Tempe better, then it will add value. If you see misrepresentations made by others about the City, you can use your blog or someone else's to point that out, however, identify your affiliation with the City and provide the correct facts in a respectful manner.

Your Responsibility. What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social computing on behalf of the City of Tempe is not a right and it needs to be taken seriously and with respect. Know and follow these guidelines. Failure to do so could put your participation at risk. If you solicit public comment through blogs or other means you must review comments prior to posting to ensure there is no inappropriate or defamatory language. For any third-party sites, be sure to follow the terms and conditions of that site.

If You Make a Mistake. If you made a mistake, admit it. Quickly correct it. If you are posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post, but make it clear that you have done so.

Trust Your Instinct. If you are about to write something that makes you uncomfortable, sit back and think about whether you really want to hit the "send" button. If you can figure out what is bothering you, then you may be able to modify your proposed content. If you are still uncomfortable, get a second opinion from a co-worker, your supervisor or manager, or a lawyer in the City Attorney's Office. Since the decision about what to publish is yours, you also have the responsibility for it, so make sure you really want to say what you are going to write.

Moderation Responsibilities. The City of Tempe does not endorse or take responsibility for content posted by third parties. All content posted by registered users should be done in accordance with the accepted terms and conditions and a code of conduct policy.

- **City of Tempe Content.** The City does not moderate the content it publishes. Blog authors can post directly without approval as long as they follow the City's guidelines.
- **Registered Content.** Registered content does not need to be moderated before being published to the site. Registered content is directly published and content is moderated post publishing.
- **Anonymous Content.** The City reserves the right not to allow any non-registered content without regard to the substance of the content.

Terms of Use. If your department will be developing an internal social media tool rather than utilizing a third party provider, a "Terms of Use/Service Agreement" will need to be developed. Please contact the Information Technology Department or the City Attorney's Office for assistance.

Compliance with City Web Site Policies & Disclosures. All posted content, whether or not on a third party website must comply with city web site rules.

Priority of www.tempe.gov. The City's main website should be the primary source for information on city business, services, and events and should always contain the most current content. Content on third-party websites may link to the City website, and the City may link to third-party social media websites from selected areas of its site.

Social Media Registration

- A. After you have decided which social media tool[s] you want to use, submit your request and plan to the city's Social Media Subcommittee, headed by the Community Relations Manager.
- B. Your request/plan should provide answers to the following questions:
1. Contact Information: Who will be the primary content manager who is responsible for creating and updating content on either the internal or third-party site?
 2. Account Names/Branding: What account name do you want to use? *(The account name should reflect the City's name and convey an official status (e.g. Tempegov). Strive for consistency by using the same or similar account names on all the various social media accounts set up by or for your department or group.)*
 3. Purpose: What are you trying to accomplish? (e.g. "We hope to interest young adults in becoming life guards for the City". "We want to update citizens on public safety functions.")
 4. Scope: Will the City be posting content on its own site (www.tempe.gov) or on a third-party site?
 5. Audience: Who is the target audience? (e.g. Tempe residents, internal City employees, general Internet viewers, etc.)
 6. Terms of Use: Indicate that you have read the "Terms of Use" and "Privacy Policy" for the third-party site that you want to use. Identify any terms that are unclear or cause concern.
 7. Internal vs. External Providers: Explain how the determination to use either the internal or external provider was made. Was a fiscal evaluation made as to which type of provider would be the most cost-effective from a money, time, and resources standpoint?
 8. Internal Resources Required: What staff will be needed to develop and implement the program?
 9. Funding: If funding is needed for purchase, production, management, maintenance and support of the services, where will it come from?
 10. Timeframe: When will the program begin? How long will it be in effect? Will there be periodic reviews of its continued usefulness?