Social Media and FRGs

Social Media Platforms

The Army has developed specific guidelines for the use of social media; FRGs are required to follow these guidelines. All information presented here can be found the Army Social Media Handbook, 2014.

Social media includes social networks, online communities, blogs, wikis and other online collaborative media. The Army identifies the following platforms as social media:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Flickr
- YouTube
- Google
- Blogs
- Pinterest
- Slideshare

Any social media platform used by FRGs must follow DA policies

The Army recognizes that social media is a large part of the virtual landscape and that it offers an opportunity to connect with Soldiers, Civilians and their Families in a way never before realized. For many FRGs they have become a large part of how leadership communicates with the FRG membership and keeps them informed. As the Army's social media presence has grown so has a need for Department of Army policies. Whether you realize it or not there are 100s if not 1000s of social media platforms that are considered Social Media.

Many platforms have different usage purposes. People are sharing, blogging, discussing, networking, gaming and publishing in the social media world. When leveraged properly they can be a great asset to an FRG, but the FRG needs to have a plan and strategy for how they will use the platforms available to them to have the greatest impact on their membership.

Social Media and the FRG Mission

The main mission of the FRG is to keep FRG members informed – social media has the capability to do this in a limited capacity.

Social Media CAN support:

- Orienting Families to the community
- Providing updates on community and social events
- Keeping Families connected
- Providing information on community resources
- Command messages on safety and generic topics

Social Media can NOT support

- Information on unit mission
- Information on deployments
- Personal Identifying Information
- Command messages on specific unit activities
- At Risk Family support

Army Social Media Policy

- Obtain command approval
- Categorize as a government page
- Branding across all social media platforms
- Acknowledgement of "official page"
- Must be updated regularly
- Contact information with military e-mail
- Must include posting guidelines
- Administrative training
- Registered through the US Army

Getting Started

- ❑ Develop a social media outreach plan
- ❑ Make sure you understand Army social media policies:

  www.slideshare.net/usarmysocialmedia
- ❑ Review other Army social media sites
- ❑ Identify who will be the site administrator(s)
- ❑ Develop standard operating procedures
- ❑ Develop a posting policy that is shared on the page
- ❑ Set up the site
- ❑ Register the site – www.army.mil/socialmedia
- ❑ Maintain the site – Post a minimum of every 30 days

Required Training

Site Administrators must take the following training in order to maintain social media sites for Army organizations:

- ✓ OPSEC for EOP Operators: https://iatraining.us.army.mil/

- ✓ DISA Social Networking:
  http://iase.disa.mil/eta/sns_v1/sn/launchPage.htm

Social Networking

Social Media and Operational Security (OPSEC)

Maintaining operational security on social media is critical to ensuring Soldier safety and mission assurance. As well, personal security needs to be considered. Site administrators are responsible for ensuring that all posted items on the social media site do not violate OPSEC or PERSEC. When a page allows for users to comment it can be a great way to network and share information, but it can also be a security risk. Information shared on social media sites should be information that is already known to the public. Consider posting meeting locations on a secured site such as vFRG and providing the link rather than broadcasting this information on unsecured sites.
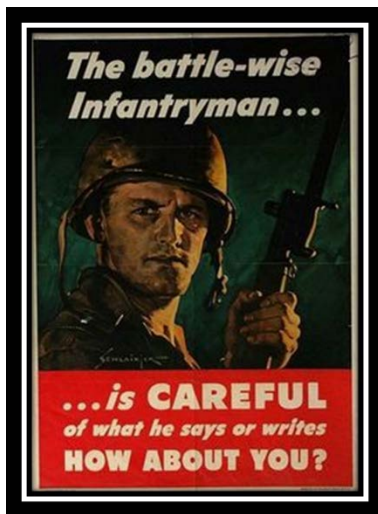
Operations security should ALWAYS be the primary concern when using social media

Communicate to users that posting sensitive information can be detrimental to Soldier safety

Monitor site for OPSEC regularly

Ensure information posted has no significant value to the enemy

Do not speculate on future missions

Authorized Postings

Authorized social media postings are to be information in nature as well as somewhat generic. It is important to remember that the enemy is able to piece together information gathered from various sites. The rule of thumb is if you wouldn't post it in your yard don't post it on social media.

- ✓ Pride and support for service, units, specialties and service member
- ✓ Generalizations about service or duty
- ✓ General status of the location of a unit
- ✓ Any other information already in the public domain from credible sources
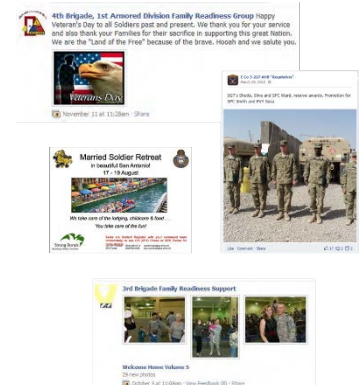
Social Media by the Generation

Millennials

- Digital Natives
- 89% usage rate
- 75% Facebook
- 37% Twitter
- Self-Promotion
- Networking
- Anxiety
- Interface real and virtual

Generation X

- Digital Adapters
- 78% usage rate
- 63% Facebook
- 25% Twitter
- Social
- Research
- Pleasure
- Connect real and virtual

Baby Boomers

- Digital Immigrants
- 60% usage rate
- 40% Facebook
- 12% Twitter
- Family
- Connectedness
- Nostalgia
- Separate real and virtual

It is important to understand generational difference when it comes to the use of social media.

Right now the Army has millennials, generation X, and Baby Boomers in its ranks. Each generation comes with a different set of skills and ways they use technology. While millenials are digital natives, having grown up always knowing technology, baby boomers are considered digital immigrants, who have to learn the rules and ways of social media in order to use it effectively and be technologically savvy.

All generations have a presence on social media, but even the millennials do not have a 100% usage rate on the most popular social media site, Facebook. This means that social media cannot be the only form of communication or outreach that an FRG does for its membership – traditional forms of communication including telephonic and letters are still needed, accepted, and appreciated.

While more millenials are on twitter, the most tweets come from baby boomers. Generation X uses twitter as a way to remain informed about events while baby boomers have complete conversations on twitter. Millennials are using twitter as a form of self-promotion, which is how they utilize most social media. Millennials are more likely to have a broad network of both people they know in real life as well as those they have only connected with virtually. They are more likely to go to their social network to get questions answered than any other generation. Generation X uses social media to be social with friends and family, they will use social media as a starting point for more in

depth research, but will turn to more traditional tools, such as research journals, media outlets etc. to get questions answered. Baby boomers, on the other hand are using social media to be connected to family, in particular children and grandchildren who may not live nearby.

Millennials indicate that social media and the constant connectedness creates anxiety – they are afraid if they aren't constantly checking their various accounts that they will miss something, while generation X indicates that social media is pleasurable and baby boomers find it nostalgic as they connect with old friends and post throw back pictures.

Ultimately, millennials are able to interface their real world with their virtual world – to them there is no difference – the virtual allows more people to be involved and interact with one another and they can move seamlessly between to the two. Generation X uses social media to connect to their real world friends and family while they are apart, but the two are not completely interfaced, while baby boomers continue to have a separate real world and virtual life – they do not feel the need to post everything they do, check in, or live stream to feel connected.

Information on Generational Use of Social Media gathered from the following sources:

Ahmad, I. (2015). The Generational Content Gap: How Different generation Consume Content Online. Social Media Today.

Loechner, J. (2014). Generational Social Media Behaviors. Research Brief from the Center for Media Research

Generational Differences Chart. www.wmfc.org/uplads/GenerationalDifferencesChart.pdf

Important Links

Army FRG:

https://www.armyfrg.org

Branding:

http://www.army.mil/create

Army Facebook rules of engagement:

https://www.facebook.com/USarmy/info

http://www.defense.gov/socialmedia/user-agreement.aspx

YouTube Government Presence Instructions:

forum.webcontent.gov/?page=TOS_YouTube

Disclaimer Example:

On.fb.me/eulvUR

Example social media strategy:

Goo.gl/3Tmw0

Handbooks, Additional Training, Guidance/Policy:

www.slideshare.net/usarmysocialmedia

Site Registration:

www.army.mil/social-media

Training:

OPSEC for EOP Operators: https://iatraining.us.army.mil/

DISA Social Networking: http://iase.disa.mil/eta/sns_v1/sn/launchPage.htm

Submission Guidelines:

http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/rv5_downloads/socialmedia/Registration_Checklist.pdf