

Montana State Library Commission

Draft Social Media Staff Policy

Purpose: The Montana State Library (MSL) is committed to using current social media. Use of this technology meets a critical business need by providing a venue for shared information resources with our patrons and partners and by providing a means for meaningful two-way communication between patrons, other library users and library staff. This policy governs staff use of these tools for professional purposes.

Scope: Appropriate use of the Internet by MSL staff is governed by the MSL Internet Services policy. This policy augments that policy. Social media or web 2.0 technology includes any web applications, both hosted and online, which facilitate an environment for library staff, library users and library partners to share information and opinions about library related subjects or issues. Examples of social media that may be used by MSL include but are not limited to posts to community reviews and patron ratings, wikis, blogs, RSS feeds and social networking sites. Social media managed by MSL provides an online place to create and disseminate information on relevant library content and topics. Social media may be used to educate, discuss, build bodies of knowledge and/or to entertain.

Staff support and communication: Social media is intended to augment and, in some cases, replace existing forms of communication with our patrons and partners. Staff should look for opportunities to use web 2.0 technology as an effective and efficient communication tool. Any staff wishing to author a web 2.0 site that discusses the work performed at the State Library may do so with the approval of their supervisor. A staff that does so must be committed to maintaining current content and to reviewing and responding to comments.

Staff recognizes that posts and comments made in online forums do not serve as official communication of the State Library. The following disclaimer will be linked from all MSL blogs and wikis that MSL staff author or contribute to.

This wiki/blog/post does not represent official Montana State Library communications. Any links to external Internet sites do not constitute the Library's endorsement of the content of the sites or of their policies or products.

Staff is expected to use professional judgment to decide whether or not to include this disclaimer in emails and/or in other posts including posts on social media sites.

Appropriate content: MSL Staff is encouraged to use social media to communicate with our patrons and partners. Examples of appropriate content include but are not limited to:

- Notices of upcoming meetings and events
- Content of all press releases
- Policies and procedures
- Information and library services, trends or technology
- Communication between staff and the library community regarding MSL work and/or projects

- Frequently asked questions
- Training and continuing education opportunities

Photos: Photos are an important element of web 2.0 content. Staff is encouraged to share relevant photos. Staff wishing to share photos via social media that include persons' faces must first give those persons the opportunity to opt out if people do not want their photos shared. For example, meeting attendees should be given the option to opt-out by checking a "Do not post" option presented on a meeting sign-in sheet.

Inappropriate content: Staff will not share personally identifiable information and/or patron information that is protected by library confidentiality. Additionally, staff will not share information that was collected with the assumption of confidentiality, proprietary information or information that is restricted by copyright, privacy, 3rd party licenses or other restrictions without proper permission and/or attribution.

User interaction: MSL managed social media tools are intended to facilitate communication. Comments, posts and messages are welcome. MSL reserves the right to monitor content before it is published on all of its web 2.0 sites and accounts, and to modify or remove any messages or postings that it deems, in its sole discretion, to be abusive, defamatory, in violation of copyright, trademark right or other intellectual property right of any third party, or otherwise inappropriate for the service. Examples of content that will be removed by site authors or administrators include but are not limited to:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Copyrighted or plagiarized material
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam

Authors will reply to comments in a timely manner when a response is deemed appropriate based on the professional judgement of MSL staff. Certain comments that warrant official follow-up will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be responded to by the State Librarian or designee.

Hosted applications: MSL will host social media sites authored solely by MSL staff whether intended for internal or public use. Staff who receive approval from their supervisor will make a request to the web manager for a new blog or wiki be created. Blogs and wikis will have a common look and feel and will all have functionality designed to encourage user feedback.

Security of hosted web 2.0 applications is of critical importance to MSL. Applications reside on MSL web servers. These servers are routinely updated with the latest patches and virus protection. Additional information about MSL web security is available upon request.

Because these blogs and wikis will only reside on the state network, for network security purposes only MSL staff may serve as authors.

Online applications: MSL staff frequently work with non MSL employees to create content and to manage shared communications. In this case these web 2.0 tools are better utilized when on non MSL servers. MSL staff may contribute to wikis/blogs that are hosted on public servers, but they must recognize that due to security concerns and the complexity of different software that IT staff at MSL cannot assist MSL staff with non-MSL wikis/blogs. Whenever possible and appropriate MSL staff will attempt to give these blogs/wikis a feel that is similar to MSL hosted applications.

MSL staff who wish to create professional MSL social media accounts including but not limited to Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter are expected to obtain approval from their supervisors. Personal web 2.0 accounts do not require supervisor approval.

Staff are encouraged to maintain separate personal and professional accounts. That said, staff must be aware that, in the online environment, the lines between public and private are blurred. Staff must be aware of how content shared through social media will be perceived by our patrons, partners, co-workers and supervisors. Professional judgment must be used to determine whether or not content is appropriate for either setting.

Privacy and retention: Content of both internal and public social media sites are an effective form of communication but should not be misconstrued as private even if limited to a specific audience. Upon request MSL may turn over the contents of internal blogs and wikis.

Like email, posts to social media sites may constitute agency records. MSL will follow guidance from state Records Management regarding retention of social media content.