south carolina
STATE LIBRARY

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE LIBRARY
Social Media Policy

Online social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn can be valuable tools for communicating with the public and employees. State Library departments are encouraged to study and deploy these new communications methods where appropriate.

State Library Departments

1. State Library units wishing to use a social media channel must receive prior approval from the Communications Director before launch. This includes any channel that will be managed by a State Library employee as part of their official duties.
2. Offices will submit to the Communications Director information about the service to be used, the intended audience, the type of content to be posted, and which employees will have the ability to manage the site. Site management rights are limited and closely monitored.
3. State Library social media sites make every effort to clearly identify their official status. Feed names will incorporate the program or unit's name or acronym whenever possible and will use the appropriate official logo if possible.
4. Some social media sites allow user comments. The State Library will consider carefully whether to allow comments before launching a social media initiative. However, if comments are allowed, user feedback should remain regardless of whether it is favorable or unfavorable to the agency. Comments will be deleted only if they are offensive, abusive, racially inflammatory, threatening or clearly off topic. Comments that endorse a political candidate, party or commercial product will be deleted.
5. When reposting or referencing a post on one of the State Library's online sites, provide a link to the original post.
6. Do not post or link to any materials that are defamatory, harassing or indecent.
7. Be mindful of functions that allow the organization to be a "fan" of an individual or cause. Consider whether such an action would imply support for a political cause.

State Library Employees

State Library employees should be sensitive to the fact that social networks and other online forums blur the distinction between an individual's official and personal identities.

1. If you publish content to any website outside of the State Library's official online presence and it has something to do with subjects associated with our agency, provide a disclaimer such as this:

"The postings are my own and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the South Carolina State Library."

2. Never use or reference your formal position when writing in a non-official capacity. Do not use your official email to establish a private social media presence.
3. Those with leadership responsibilities, by virtue of their position, must consider whether the personal thoughts they publish, even in clearly personal venues, may be misunderstood as expressing the position of the State Library. They should assume that those outside our agency will read what is written. Be aware of your State Library association in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a State Library employee or have a prominent position in which your association with the State Library is known to the general public, ensure your profile and related content (even if it is of a personal and not an official nature) is consistent with how you wish to present yourself as a professional, appropriate with the public trust associated with your position.
4. When writing in your official capacity, to not write anything that could appear to be legal advice. Legal issues should be handled through the agency's regular procedures to avoid conflicts and other ethical problems.
5. Emails and other correspondence conducted over personal social media channels that is official business of the agency should be preserved and retained in a manner similar to other official documents. If you receive an unsolicited official contact through your personal email or social media presence, forward a copy of the correspondence to your official email account and respond from that platform.
6. Remain focused on customers, existing commitments, and achieving the State Library's mission. Your use of social media tools should never interfere with your primary duties, with the exception of where it is a primary duty to use these tools to do your job.
7. Always pause before posting. Do not publish information in haste or without thinking carefully about the impact of the statement you are about to make.
8. To others online, there is no clear distinction between your work life and your personal life. Always be honest and respectful in both capacities.

Approved by the South Carolina Library Board 26 May 2010