Social Media Business Case Guide

Science and Technology Directorate

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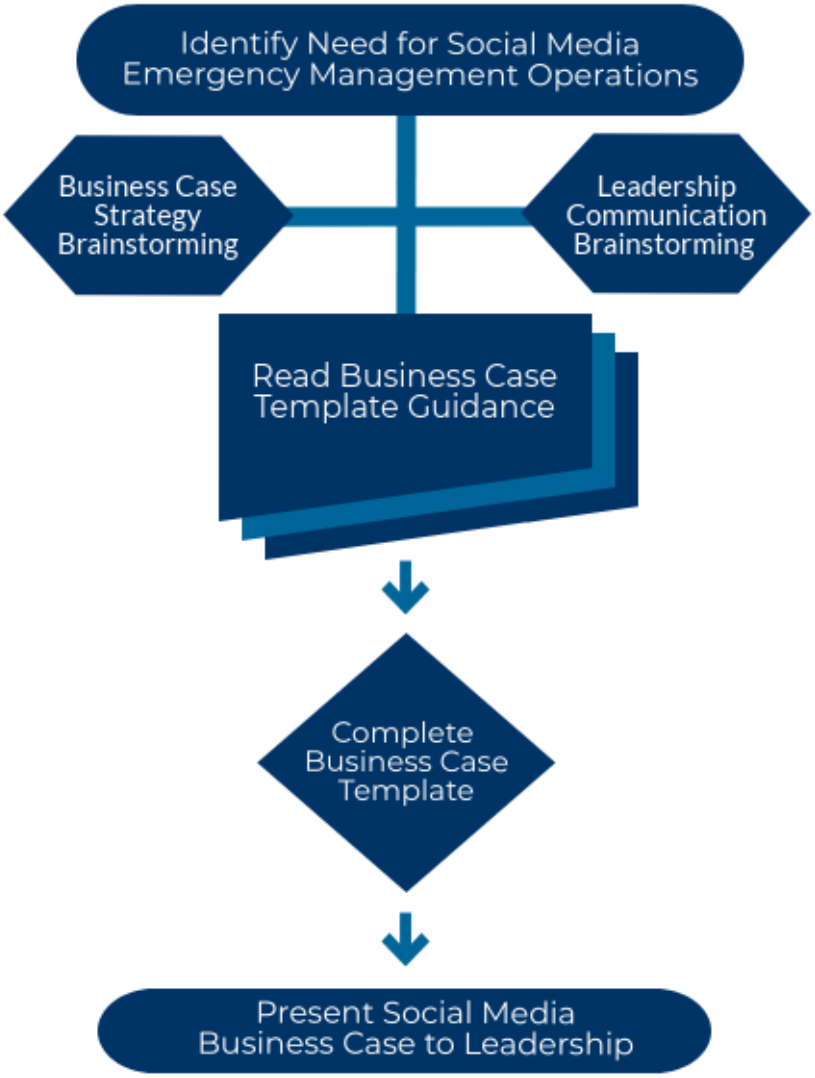
Building a Social Media Business Case

The purpose of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) Social Media Business Case Guide (Guide) is to provide step-by-step guidance on how to develop a Business Case for integrating the use of social media into emergency management operations. This Guide is intended for organizations that are considering implementing a social media emergency management (SMEM) program. This Guide includes two resource sections and instructions for one template, which guide the user through the process of developing a strong Business Case to share with their organization's decision makers to support SMEM adoption (Figure 1). References from successful SMEM practitioners and their best practices are included throughout this Guide. **Users are encouraged to download, complete, and/or modify the Business Case Template in a way that suits their organization's needs.** A blank Word version of the Business Case Template is available upon request at first.responder@hq.dhs.gov.



1.0 How to Prepare a Social Media Business Case

This step outlines the key components an agency should consider prior to developing and delivering a Business Case for SMEM operations to leadership. The following sections were designed to assist users to think critically about laws and policies, social media content, social media platforms, budget, and contingencies when integrating social media into operations. User considerations directly inform completion of the Social Media Business Case Template on page 13. **Users are encouraged to download, complete, and/or modify the Business Case Template in a way that suits their organization's needs.**

1.1 Defining Your Organization's Objectives

Defining a set of clear objectives is the first step to communicating the value of SMEM and successfully launching future operations. In the most effective SMEM programs, social media objectives formally align to an agency's mission and strategy to support Emergency Support Functions (ESFs).[1] For example, the City of Boulder, Colorado, references five social media objectives within their Social Media Plan, which supports their Communication Department's five-year strategic plan.[2] When crafting SMEM objectives, consider the following:

1. What are you hoping to accomplish through the use of social media (e.g., engage in two-way conversation to address negative feedback, social media monitoring to dispel rumors)?
2. Do your goals change for non-emergency operations and emergency operations?
3. Are organizations in your region integrating social media into emergency management (EM) operations? If so, what are their key lessons learned and best practices?
4. How can your social media strategy support the achievement of larger agency plan objectives (e.g., Emergency Public Information Plan, Incident Action Plans (IAPs), Crisis Communications Plan, (CCP) and/or related strategies)?
5. Who else from your organization needs to be involved in the development of social media objectives (e.g., key decision makers, contacts from other departments)?
6. Where would you house the objectives if your Social Media Business Plan is approved? Would they be part of an existing agency-wide strategy? Or a separate Social Media Plan?

Example Objectives

Example SMEM objectives from practitioners are included below. For additional instructions on crafting powerful objectives, leverage the S.M.A.R.T.[3] approach:

- Over the next year, establish a flexible social media program to share information with the public on immediate threats.

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[1] DHS S&T Social Media Working Group for Emergency Services and Disaster Management (SMWG). "Countering False Information on Social Media in Disasters and Emergencies." March 2018, https://bit.ly/2uFGS2R. Accessed 5 June 2018.

[2] "City of Boulder Social Media Guide." *City of Boulder*, 3 March 2017, https://bit.ly/2I3J71f. Accessed 5 June 2018.

[3] Doran, G. T. (1981). "There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives." Management Review. AMA FORUM. 70 (11): 35–36. SMART goals are, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound.

- During the next three unplanned incidents, improve response and enhance situational awareness by monitoring social media throughout the entire incident.
- Over the next year, monitor public sentiment on Twitter each quarter to identify opportunities to improve community engagement.

1.2 Laws and Policies

While laws, policies, and requirements differ significantly across municipalities and organizations, there are common considerations to take into account to address legal and policy risks. For example, many agencies choose to use archiving tools, which mitigates concerns regarding record requests and other legal requirements. For legal considerations related to the use of SMEM digital volunteers, see the S&T Digital Volunteer Program Guide (Section 1.3), available at https://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology. When researching relevant laws and policies, consider the following:

1. Which agency policies may affect your social media strategy and operations? What are potential ways to address those risks?
2. Which local laws may affect your social media strategy and operations? What are potential ways to address those risks?
3. Which state laws may affect your social media strategy and operations? What are potential ways to address those risks?
4. How will your agency manage security, records retention and guidelines for staff?
5. When should you engage your agency's legal counsel as part of planning?

Developing a Social Media Policy

Publicly accessible social media policies can help organizations protect against liability risks. In general, effective social media policies focus on who does what (roles and responsibilities), what can and cannot be done (legal compliance), and objectives for SMEM. Examples of state and local social media policies, inclusive of best practices, are included below for reference.

Social Media Policy Examples		
Organization	**Policy**	**Social Media Policy Best Practices**
City of North Port, Florida	Terms of Use Policy[4]	- Guidance on moderation of content - Clear community guidelines for each social media platform the city uses - Transparently displayed on their website
Orange County, Florida Sheriff's Department	Social Media Policy[5]	- Differentiates between primary and secondary accounts - Clear content standards and procedures for removing content

[4] City of North Port. *Social Media Terms of Use*. 2018, https://bit.ly/2JN8ri1. Accessed 4 June 2018.
[5] Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department. "Policy 1055: Orange County SD Policy Manual." 6 July 2017, https://bit.ly/1Lz36Qg. Accessed 4 June 2018.

Social Media Policy Examples		
Organization	**Policy**	**Social Media Policy Best Practices**
State of Michigan	Social Media Standard[6]	- Clear procedures for the creation and management of accounts - Explicit security and contingency guidelines, including regular account self-auditing

1.3 Social Media Platform Selection

While use of certain social media platforms may work very well for agency A, the same platforms may not be best for agency B. Therefore, social media advocates should only pursue platforms that support their objectives. Prior to selecting social media platform(s), consider the following:

1. What populations within your community are a priority to reach through social media?
2. What is the platform's unique value in meeting your established objectives?
3. Do other departments within your agency or neighboring jurisdictions use this social media platform? If yes, do they have established processes for using this social media platform?
4. In what ways can you leverage existing uses and/or processes to expand platform adoption? (e.g., departments agree to amplify each other's messages on Facebook or re-tweet on Twitter)
5. What types of content (e.g., text, photo, video) will your agency share?
6. Will you or a colleague manage the platforms, or will you use a content manager (e.g. Sprout Social, Hootsuite)?

Example Social Media Platforms

Practitioners using social media successfully for emergency management stated Facebook and Twitter are the most valuable platforms for reaching citizens. For organizations starting a program from scratch, one or both of these platforms are the best place to start. For more information on widely used social media platforms and their potential value for emergency management, see the SMWG Report "From Concept to Reality: Operationalizing Social Media for Preparedness, Response, and Recovery."[7]

1.4 Focusing Content

Social media is a mechanism to actively engage with communities through content. Regardless of the format (e.g., posts, Tweets, live video), research suggests engagements should be consistent before, during and after an emergency. Steadily interacting with the public during routine (non-emergency) operations builds trust with citizens so that they turn to public safety

[6] State of Michigan. "State of Michigan Technical Standard 1340.00.130.03 SOCIAL MEDIA STANDARD." 14 June 2017, https://bit.ly/2tjr4Pl. Accessed 4 June 2018.
[7] DHS S&T Virtual Social Media Working Group (VSMWG). "From Concept to Reality: Operationalizing Social Media for Preparedness, Response, and Recovery." April 2016, https://bit.ly/2m4kHgo. Accessed 5 June 2018.

social media resources during an emergency or large-scale event. When crafting SMEM content, consider the following:

1. How will your objectives determine what types of information you want to communicate to your audience? Will you only share text, or will you include multimedia (e.g., photos, videos)?
2. What is the ideal tone for your agency's social media presence (e.g., formal/informal)?
3. Is your agency's primary responsibility to push information out or is it to engage with its audience? Or both?
4. How will your objectives determine the post frequency that makes sense for your organization?
5. What is the content approval process and who is part of the approval chain?

Example of Content and Post Frequency

Above all, the quality of content and consistency of posts are key to SMEM success. While strong content ties directly to agency objectives, organizations pointed to the following content examples during preparedness, response and recovery:

- Preparedness - Preparedness tips, humanizing stories, local community information.
- Response - Critical incident information, rumor control, live video updates.
- Recovery - Volunteer information, shelter locations, engaging photos of recovery efforts.

Additionally, the following are recommended posting schedules for common social media platforms:

- Facebook - One per day
- Twitter - Three per day
- YouTube - One per week
- Instagram - One per day

1.5 Measurement

Tracking and analyzing SMEM measures is essential for both initial and sustained leadership buy-in. Without measures in place, it is difficult to know and communicate what is working well and what is not. For objectives that are not easily tracked by metrics, many practitioners reference case studies and lessons learned as a way to share the impact of SMEM to leadership. Prior to selecting SMEM measures, consider the following:

1. What key performance indicators (KPIs) are your organization tracking to achieve related agency-wide objectives? Are there any KPIs you should consider using?
2. What data do you want to track each month, each quarter and each year in order to measure progress towards achieving your objectives (e.g., amplifiers, mentions, case studies)?
3. How often will your leadership request updates on progress against SMEM objectives?
4. What analytics tools will you use? See "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" (Section 2.2) for examples.

Example of Common Social Media Metrics

A best practice for measurement is to start small and develop more focused metrics over time. Most practitioners using social media platforms will measure visits, views, follows, link clicks, and post engagement (e.g., comments, mentions, likes, shares, impressions) to gauge effectiveness and identify improvements. For examples of tools that support measurement and analytics, see "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" (Section 2.2). Sprout Social and Buffer also provide industry best practices on measuring insights across common platforms.[8,9]

1.6 Creating a Budget

An organization's objectives, platforms, content decisions, and desired measurements will influence the allocation of resources for SMEM. While a SMEM program can be introduced and sustained with very limited resources, successful implementation requires a detailed evaluation of existing resources to identify needs prior to launch. Common social media costs and cost benefits are further outlined in "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" (Section 2.2). Prior to creating a budget, consider the following:

1. What are the staffing requirements to manage your chosen platforms and meet your objectives (e.g., 1 full-time employee (FTE) or 0.5 FTE)?
2. Does your organization have existing staff that would excel in managing social media platforms? Can those individuals shift roles or take on social media responsibilities part-time?

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[8] Jackson, Dominique. "All of the Social Media Metrics That Matter." *Sprout Social*, 2 April 2018, https://bit.ly/2wMkMeR. Accessed 5 June 2018.

[9] Lua, Alfred. "How to Use Facebook Insights and Analytics to Boost your Social Media Marketing Strategy." *Buffer Social*, 28 March 2017, https://bit.ly/2yq4xX8. Accessed 5 June 2018.

3. How much time can staff dedicate to social media each day and/or each week? Can existing staff share social media responsibilities?
4. Do you have the option of collaborating with digital volunteers? See the S&T Digital Volunteer Program Guide for additional guidance.
5. Will staff require additional devices or other resources to accomplish your objectives?
6. Will your agency support regular training and education on SMEM best practices? If so, what are the accompanying costs?

Example of a SMEM Budget

"When you are first starting out on social media, you do not need a budget for fancy tools or additional staff. It is best to just log in and create your accounts. Facebook and Twitter are free and there is plenty you can do to reach your audience without additional resources. Once you have used the platforms for a while, you can use those experiences to justify a budget for Content Management Software (CMS) or additional support."[10] - SMEM Expert

[10] Personal Interview. 8 December 2017.

1.7 Develop a Contingency Plan

It is important to create a comprehensive SMEM Contingency Plan to think through what could go wrong and how to manage issues in advance. For common social media risks and barriers, see "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" (Section 2.1). When developing a Contingency Plan, consider the following:

1. What issues will your agency likely encounter when using social media? In what ways can your agency best prepare for those risks and barriers?
2. What fears do agency leadership express about using social media? In what ways can your agency best prepare for those risks and scenarios?
3. Can any of those risks and/or scenarios be mitigated or managed by a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)?
4. What can you replicate from your agency's existing crisis plan for social media?
5. Who will act as a backup point of contact (POC) to manage internal and/or external issues for designated social media staff?
6. How will additional social media POCs be trained? How frequently will POCs be trained and on what materials?
7. Which partner agencies can you rely on for assistance if an issue arises?

Tips for Pre-approved Content

Practitioners recommend developing pre-approved messaging (e.g., language, graphics, videos) for when issues arise to save time and reduce error. For example, the Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services (SacOES) created a Social Media Technique Checklist to help social media personnel more effectively manage public expectations for information.[11]

[11] Flynn, Mary Jo. "JIC Checklist." Slideshare, 2018, https://www.slideshare.net/mjflynn001/jic-checklist. Accessed 3 October 2018.

2.0 How to Communicate the Value of Social Media

This step assists users to communicate the value of SMEM to their leadership through the identification and consideration of common risks, costs and benefits in the following sections. User considerations should directly inform completion of the Social Media Business Case Template. **Users are encouraged to download, complete, and/or modify the Business Case Template in a way that suits their organization's needs.**

2.1 Common Social Media Barriers and Risks

The following table highlights: some common barriers and potential risks to SMEM operations; impact on SMEM operations; and the mitigation strategies to help avoid these barriers and lessen the risk in alphabetical order.

Barriers and Risks	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Information security	Hackers may gain access to systems and manipulate data, causing confusion.	Take measures to safeguard all passwords. Other best practices include: the use of strong validation procedures, robust passwords that vary among platforms, and two-factor authentication for all platforms. The City of Boston's public-facing Social Media Policy and Guidelines includes best practice security elements such as two-factor authentication guidelines, account recovery guidelines, and personal usage considerations.[12]
Lack of fiscal resources	Leadership is unwilling or unable to divert finances to social media activities.	Social media is free and getting started is low-cost. Aside from diverted man-hours, an extensive fiscal budget is not needed to run an effective social media program. For a list of common social media costs for consideration, see Section 2.2 of this Guide.
Lack of personnel resources	Leadership is unwilling or unable to divert staff to social media activities.	Part of the emergency management mission is to help share information to keep the public safe. Social media is one tool to meet your audience "where they are." Agencies that do not leverage all available tools, including social media, may be perceived as being ineffective. For a list of the common benefits and associated costs of personnel options, see Section 2.2 of this Guide.

[12] City of Boston. "Social Media Policy and Guidelines." *City of Boston*, 18 May 2017, https://bit.ly/2M2tdXr. Accessed 5 June 2018.

Barriers and Risks	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Post incorrect information	Sharing incorrect information could result in public panic and/or affect reputation.	Create pre-approved language, content guidelines and authentication for posting on social media before, during, and after an emergency to improve information sharing. Put a Contingency Plan in place for staff to leverage when things do not go according to the original plan. **The City of Brentwood, Tennessee's Social Media Policy includes best practice elements to mitigate inaccurate information, including procedures for managing content and message approval.** [13]
Public expectation of emergency support	Personnel will be unable to manage emergency requests via social media.	Use consistent messaging on all platforms stating the platforms are not manned 24/7 and point citizens to 9-1-1 during an emergency.
Public expectation of two-way dialogue	Personnel will be unable to manage two-way traffic and become overwhelmed.	Practitioners are not required to respond to every post. The key is to be consistent and set expectations for the platforms that are not manned 24/7. Some practitioners successfully managing two-way dialogue respond at a set time or under pre-approved conditions, while others are more informal. **The Lawrence, Kansas Police Department uses humor on Twitter as part of community policing initiatives, resulting in 100,000+ followers.** [14] If staff reaches maximum capacity, digital volunteers can act as surge support. For more information on using digital volunteers, see the S&T Digital Volunteer Program Guide (Section 1.0).

[13] City of Brentwood, TN. "City of Brentwood Social Media Policy." December 2016, https://bit.ly/2MGizXI. Accessed 4 June 2018.
[14] Lawrence Police Department. "Lawrence Police." *Twitter*, December 2015, https://bit.ly/2K100yJ. Accessed 4 June 2018.

Barriers and Risks	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Public provides negative feedback	Social media allows one complaint to quickly gain momentum.	Review feedback regularly and respond in a genuine manner. Social media presents a unique opportunity to address concerns and better serve citizens, within reason. The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) uses Twitter to engage directly with user complaints to build relationships with riders and instill confidence in systems. In most cases, BART uses pre-approved language to provide additional information, admit mistakes, or solicit constructive feedback.[15]
Public records requests	Social media is considered public record nationwide. Agencies that cannot comply with state open records laws may be subject to lawsuits or other legal issues.	Use archiving tools to maintain a consistent record of social media communications in case there are ever questions about what your organizations has done and why. Refer to ArchiveSocial's list of records laws and regulations to determine which are applicable to your agency. For examples of tools that help support public records requests, see Section 2.2 of this Guide.[16]

2.2 Common Social Media Costs

The following table highlights common costs, cost benefits, associated risks, and best practices in alphabetical order by cost. Aside from personnel hours committed, launching and managing an effective SMEM program is a low-cost process.

Cost	Benefits	Associated Risks of Inaction	Suggested Tools and Best Practices
Devices	- Personnel are less likely to accidentally post personal content on professional devices - If using a portable device, dedicated personnel can provide near 24/7 content - Personnel can produce higher quality content	- Personnel have less flexibility to engage audiences - Less distinction between personnel's personal and professional social media platforms	- Camera (professional) - Laptop - Phone (smartphone) - Phone mount - Tablet - Tripod - If your agency does not have a device budget, consider technology grant options

[15] Bay Area Rapid Transit. "SFBART." *Twitter*, July 2008, https://bit.ly/2JSEWvn. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[16] ArchiveSocial. "Why Archive." *ArchiveSocial*, https://archivesocial.com/why-archive/. Accessed 5 June 2018.

Cost	Benefits	Associated Risks of Inaction	Suggested Tools and Best Practices
Hire New Personnel	- Personnel are focused solely on social media management to improve operations - Leadership can hand select a SMEM expert - Clear internal point of contact	- Shared resources are more prone to human error - Potential for higher training costs	- For relevant SMEM recruiting best practices, see the S&T Digital Volunteer Program Guide (Section 2.0)
Use Internal Personnel	- Personnel already understand organizational objectives and needs - Resources for personnel salaries have already been allocated	- May need to hire new personnel, which commits additional fiscal resources	- Leverage Digital Volunteers to act as surge support during emergencies - For more information on leveraging volunteers, see the S&T Digital Volunteer Program Guide (Section 1.0)
Social Media Analytics Tools	- Saves personnel time - Produce compelling metrics - Create automated, exportable reports on metrics - Centralized metrics on easy to read dashboards - Pool audience demographics	- Personnel must dedicate more time to data analytics	- BackTweets[17] (free) - Google Analytics[18] (free) - Hootsuite[19] - Mention[20] - TweetDeck[21] (free) - Try a trial or free version to demonstrate tool value
Social Media Archiving Tools	- Saves personnel time - Equips an agency to handle public records and other regulations - Continuous archiving and data management across accounts	- In the event of a public records request, personnel will dedicate more time to data collection - Personnel may be unable to reproduce all required social media data - Agencies may be subject to legal implications	- ArchiveSocial[22] - Page Freezer[23] - Smarsh[24] - Use ArchiveSocial's comprehensive state laws tracker to identify your state's regulations[25]

[17] *Backtweets*. Backtweets, 2012, http://backtweets.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[18] *Google Analytics Solutions.* Google Analytics, https://www.google.com/analytics/#?modal_active=none/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[19] *Hootsuite*. Hootsuite Inc., 2018, https://hootsuite.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[20] *Mention*. Mention, https://mention.com/en/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[21] *TweetDeck*. Twitter, https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[22] *ArchiveSocial*. ArchiveSocial, 2018, https://archivesocial.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[23] *PageFreezer*. PageFreezer Software Inc., 2018, https://www.pagefreezer.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[24] *Smarsh*. Smarsh Inc., 2018, https://www.smarsh.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[25] ArchiveSocial. "Why Archive." *ArchiveSocial*, https://archivesocial.com/why-archive/. Accessed 5 June 2018.

Cost	Benefits	Associated Risks of Inaction	Suggested Tools and Best Practices
Social Media Management Tools	- Saves personnel time - Able to create automated posts - Ensures consistent voice and message control - Able to monitor multiple platforms at once	- Personnel must dedicate more time to posting and support processes	- Buffer[26] - Facebook Business Manager[27] - Hootsuite[28] - HubSpot[29] - SocialPilot.co[30] - Sprout Social[31] - Trello[32] - TweetDeck[33] (free) - Try a trial or free version to demonstrate tool value
Social Media Visual Tools	- Produce high quality content and visuals that are engaging to audiences - Promotes strong brand recognition	- In a highly saturated environment, it lowers the chance of catching your audience's attention	- Adobe Creative Suite[34] - Canva[35] (free) - Periscope[36] - Piktochart[37] (free) - Pixabay[38] (free) - WordSwag[39] (free) - Try a trial or free version to demonstrate tool value
Training	- Ensures consistent voice and message control - Minimizes human error - All staff understand agency policies and procedures	- SMEM operations are more prone to inconsistency - Staff are more prone to human error	- For a list of relevant SMEM trainings, see the S&T Digital Volunteer Program Guide (Section 2.5)

2.3 Social Media Benefits

This section outlines the key benefits of implementing SMEM that practitioners identified, along with quotes from emergency management professionals. Many of the SMEM benefits

[26] *Buffer*. Buffer, https://buffer.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[27] *Facebook Business Manager*. Facebook, 2018, https://business.facebook.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018
[28] *Hootsuite*. Hootsuite Inc., 2018, https://hootsuite.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[29] *HubSpot*. HubSpot Inc., 2018, https://www.hubspot.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[30] *SocialPilot*. SocialPilot.co, 2018, https://www.socialpilot.co/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[31] *Sprout Social*. Sprout Social, Inc., 2018, https://sproutsocial.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[32] *Trello.* Atlassian, 2018, https://trello.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[33] *TweetDeck*. Twitter, https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[34] *Adobe Creative Suite*. Adobe, 2018, https://adobe.ly/2uI1YdJ. Accessed 17 July 2018.
[35] *Canva*. Canva, https://www.canva.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[36] *Periscope.* Twitter, https://www.periscope.tv/about. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[37] *Piktochart*. Piktochart, https://piktochart.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[38] *Pixabay*. Pixabay, https://pixabay.com/. Accessed 5 June 2018.
[39] *WordSwag*. Oringe Inc., http://wordswag.co/. Accessed 5 June 2018.

listed below are not easily captured by numbers, but they greatly improve emergency management operations.

1. **Expand your agency's reach to a large, more diverse audience.**
   "We use several channels to disseminate our overall message to different populations, including social media. We have been using social media since 2009 and continue to explore how best we can incorporate it into our emergency management practices. We use social media during blue sky days as part of External Affairs communications and public education campaigns. During emergencies, we use social media in combination with our websites to help citizens stay safe, provide relief and recovery resources, and share lessons learned on how best to be prepared."[40]

2. **Build trust with your audience and develop a reputation for your agency as a go-to resource.**
   "My agency does not just share stuff on social media during an emergency - we share the little stuff throughout the year, too. For example, one time my office was informed of a child with autism who was having a birthday party with very few guests. Our officers showed up and the mom sent us a photo. We shared it on Facebook and next thing I know, a famous radio host is talking about it and our followers shot up. Social media helps my office humanize our folks so that citizens are less apprehensive to work with them and turn to them. For me, social media comes down to first responders' safety. We do not rely on outside sources to shape the image of our organization."[41]

3. **Share information with your audience in real-time.**
   "I worked the [redacted] fires for two weeks and during that incident, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) used Facebook Livestream and other video resources to broadcast updates from the EOC and public meetings. Nearly 80,000 people followed the online broadcast for information. [The agency] chose not to keep up live broadcasting for recovery, but it was perfect for that audience during response. If individuals were unable to attend the public meeting, they could turn to the livestream, which also had American Sign Language (ASL) and Spanish audio translation."[42]

4. **Amplify your agency's or partner agency's messages through shares.**
   "In November 2017, a trooper was shot during the line of duty and, as a result, a blue alert went out across the state to speed in the apprehension of the individual. Our policy is to post those kinds of alerts on social media if it may affect the city, so we shared information posted from the Twitter of a neighboring jurisdiction. The media immediately picked up our tweet and stated the information came from our own office. Using social media, I was able to quickly clarify that the information was actually from the other county and point to their Facebook. The

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[40] Personal Interview. 2 November 2017.
[41] Personal Interview. 24 January 2018.
[42] Personal Interview. 22 January 2018.

media verified the information and began pushing their message. Social media is a huge way to get the right information to the media, counter misinformation that pops up during an event, and amplify you or your partner's message."[43]

5. **Enable your agency to crowdsource information for both planned and unplanned events.**
   "We had a couple of cases where sharing and crowdsourcing information directly led to solving a crime. For example, one time a woman with dementia went missing on Super Bowl Sunday. She walked out of her facility and no one noticed. Our Police Department had been looking for over an hour, so we posted a description on Facebook. We received a lot of information from the community directly. A gentleman saw it and decided to take his dog for a walk to look around. Within minutes, he found her in his neighborhood and called it in. In our jurisdiction, there are thousands of forestry acres, various ponds, etc. Who knows what could have happened had we not posted on social media and resolved the issue quickly."[44]

6. **Control and set the tone of the dialogue with your audience.**
   "Our organization decided to rebrand all of our materials with a new logo and overall brand image. During that time, we decided to set the tone on our social media, as well. We are consistent, and citizens know what to expect from us over different platforms. On blue sky days, our tone is relaxed, we talk back and forth with people, and even make jokes. During an emergency, our tone is much more serious and we do not interact with everyone."[45]

7. **Combat misinformation and dispel rumors quickly.**
   "When a dam failed and there was an evacuation, someone that is known to cause problems over social media posted misinformation. The post linked to a National Weather Service (NWS) map that made it seem as though the entire county was under evacuation when it was not. As a result, 911 dispatch was flooded with calls about where residents should evacuate to, which inundated the EOC. I immediately grabbed another PIO and recorded a Facebook Live video, which squashed the rumors quickly. The media was watching our Facebook account and amplified our message almost verbatim. Our team was not monitoring social media during that event. If we had been, the misinformation would have been caught faster. Unfortunately, it took a 911 dispatcher getting involved. However, because we went through Facebook Live, the corrected information got picked up much quicker."[46]

8. **Aggregate and respond to both positive and constructive feedback. Social media is an opportunity to gain valuable feedback to better serve your community.**
   "Bad things happen and that is ok. My advice is to attack it head on over social media. For example, we had protests in front of City Hall. Instead of hiding, my team went out and took

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[43] Personal Interview. 27 November 2017.
[44] Personal Interview. 24 January 2018.
[45] Personal Interview. 27 November 2017.
[46] Personal Interview. 17 October 2017.

photos and posted what we heard, and what our response was to that. It became a unique opportunity to share our side of the story and address concerns. Social media is all about building credibility for your organization. These people are funding your agency, and social media gives them another venue to share feedback and hopefully get something done. If our stakeholders do not like how we are doing something, ok. We want to hear it and make some changes to serve them while also keeping them safe. We are not going to agree on everything, but it is not us versus them. It is just us."[47]

[47] Personal Interview. 24 January 2018.

3.0 Social Media Business Case Template Guidance

This step builds upon components from "How to Prepare a Social Media Business Case" and "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" to help users complete the Social Media Business Case Template. **Users are encouraged to download, complete, and/or modify the Business Case Template in a way that suits their organization's needs.** The completed template can be immediately shared with decision makers.

3.1 Introduction

The Introduction section of the Social Media Business Case Template should succinctly communicate to leadership how and why social media will benefit the organization. The introduction should be brief, but convey enough information to make a strong first impression.

3.2 Objectives

The Objectives section of the Social Media Business Case Template should outline both long-term and short-term SMEM objectives. Ideally, these objectives should align with the agency's larger strategy and demonstrate how social media can provide value. "How to Prepare a Social Media Business Case" (Section 1.1) directly informs completion of the Objectives section in the template.

Example Objective

Use Twitter to increase interactions with existing users in my jurisdiction by 10 percent by quarter four.

3.3 Proposal

The Proposal section of the Social Media Business Case Template should briefly outline the plan for SMEM implementation based on your objectives. "How to Prepare a Social Media Business Case" (Sections 1.1, 1.3, and 1.4) directly informs completion of the Proposal section in the template. Examples are provided below for reference.

Platform	Objective	Audience	Anticipated Resource Hours
Twitter	Use Twitter to increase interactions with those in my jurisdiction on Twitter by 10 percent by quarter four	Anyone in the jurisdiction on Twitter	10 per week

Platform	Potential Content	Content Frequency	Responsibility
Twitter	Photos of first responders with a short tagline on activities	1 per week	John Smith, PIO
Twitter	Critical updates on the incident	At least 3-5 times per day or as needed	John Smith, PIO

3.4 Measurement

The Measurement section of the Social Media Business Case Template should define how the agency will track SMEM progress towards objectives via key performance metrics. Most practitioners create reports once per quarter or following a major event. If applicable, the user may also propose tools to improve metrics in the Tools column. "How to Prepare a Social Media Business Case" (Section 1.5) and "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" (Section 2.2) directly inform completion of the Measurement section in the template. Examples are provided below for reference.

Objective	Metric	Reporting	Tools	Cost
Use Twitter to increase interactions with those in my jurisdiction on Twitter by 10 percent by quarter four	Post engagement - comments, mentions, likes, shares	Once per quarter via one-pager	Twitter Analytics	Free

3.5 Value

The Value section of the Social Media Business Case Template should clearly demonstrate to leadership how SMEM benefits outweigh the costs and associated risks of inaction. "How to Prepare a Social Media Business Case" (Sections 1.2 and 1.6) and "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" (Sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) directly inform completion of the Value section in the template. Examples are provided below for reference.

Benefit	Associated Risks of Inaction	Cost
Respond to both positive and constructive feedback online in real-time	Unaware of constructive feedback, which could become a realized risk	Facebook and Twitter accounts - free
Quickly release and respond to messages across both Facebook and Twitter	Potential data management issues from limited staff resources	$240 for Hootsuite

3.6 Contingency Plan

The Contingency Plan section of the Social Media Business Case Template should outline a Social Media Contingency Plan to mitigate future risks and alleviate leadership concerns surrounding SMEM operations. It is a best practice to develop a Contingency Plan for **each** social media platform your agency will leverage. "How to Prepare a Social Media Business Case" (Sections 1.2 and 1.7) and "How to Communicate the Value of Social Media" (Sections 2.1) directly inform completion of the Contingency Plan in the template.

Social Media Business Case Template

[Organization]
[Date Prepared]

Introduction

In 1 paragraph, describe the agency's need(s) for social media in day to day operations.

In 1 paragraph, highlight the resources required to launch a SMEM program.

In 1 to 2 sentences, include any other information worth including (e.g., other agencies using social media in the region).

Objectives

The following table highlights [Organization or Team] long and short-term SMEM objectives, which align with [Organization]'s larger strategy. These objectives will be used as benchmarks to measure progress.

Objective One	Outline both long-term and short-term SMEM objectives.
Objective Two	
Objective Three	

Proposal

Briefly outline the plan for SMEM implementation based on your objectives.

Platform	Objective	Audience	Anticipated Resource Hours
List platform	List the objective the platform supports	Describe the intended audience	List anticipated resource hours to support the objective

Platform	Potential Content	Content Frequency	Responsible Resource
List platform	Describe potential content to be shared on the platform	List how frequently resources will share content	Identify the responsible resource

Measurement

Briefly define how the agency will track SMEM progress towards objectives via key performance metrics.

Objective	Metric	Reporting	Tools	Cost
List the objective the metric will measure	Describe the metric	List how frequently and through what mechanism you will report on the metric	List reporting tools, if applicable	List costs, if applicable

Value

Benefit	Associated Risks of Inaction	Cost
Describe the benefits of SMEM for your organization	Describe the risks of not using social media	List any potential costs associated with the benefit. Not every benefit will have a cost

Contingency Plan

The purpose of this Social Media Contingency Plan is to enable the sustained use of social media for emergency management operations during unforeseen disruptions. It is intended to serve as a central repository for information, tasks and procedures that would be necessary to conduct social media operations at [Organization].

Protective Measures

1. List protective measures taken to mitigate future risks (e.g., unique passwords with combinations of at least 6 letters and numbers)
2.
3.

Critical Resource Information

Account	List the platform account
Account Manager	Name the primary account manager
Account Manager Phone	List the account manager's phone number
Account Manager Email	List the account manager's email
Account Login	List the account's login name
Account Password	List the account's password
Backup Manager	List the backup account manager

Backup Manager Phone	List the backup manager's phone number
Backup Manager Email	List the backup manager's email

Risk Management

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation Strategy
Describe the potential risk (e.g., Facebook account is hacked and misinformation is spread)	Describe the risk impact (e.g., potential threat to public safety)	Determine risk likelihood (e.g., High, Medium, Low)	Describe the mitigation strategy (e.g., use strong passwords with two-factor authentication)

Additional Documentation:

Include links to any documents or guidelines (e.g., Crisis Communications Plan, SOPs) that provide guidance for SMEM operations when things do not go according to plan.