



CORNERALLIANCE

Social Media for Government

— TOOLKIT —

Low-Cost, High-Impact Ways Government Organizations Can Use Social Media to Communicate Their Value and Increase Stakeholder Engagement



The evolution of communications

People are sharing and consuming information in fundamentally different ways than they were 10 years ago. Social media and mobile networks have revolutionized communications strategies and the way citizens interact with government. In today's flat budget environments, Government leaders are more incentivized than ever to find low-cost solutions to one of their most pressing needs--stakeholder outreach and engagement. In turn, social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and blogging have become increasingly more important aspects of outreach strategies.

The US Government has in large part embraced the social media phenomenon and actively encourages agencies to use social media tools to further their missions. The US Digital Service has good resources on DigitalGov and #socialgov movements. Some of the advantages are:

- Social media tools are low cost and have extremely large and diverse user bases
- Social media platforms are increasingly becoming more optimized for Government users (Facebook, for example, has a specific page type for Government agencies that eliminates advertising)
- Social media tools are replacing traditional sources as citizens' primary source of information



Developing an effective social media strategy

- Understand your audience; which tools do they use and why?
- Know your goals; what are you hoping to achieve by using social media?
- Develop a strategy; how are you going to use social media to achieve your goals?

Best Practices

Be appropriate and respectful

Know your agency's policies and guidelines

Be engaging and spark dialogue

Learn from the best



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facebook®



IS FACEBOOK
RIGHT
FOR YOU?

facebook[®] is right for you if...

1 Your communications strategy includes various types of content: photos, videos, articles, statistics, etc.

2 You want to build and maintain interested groups of stakeholders

3 You want a one-stop-shop where your stakeholders can consume content and interact with your organization

Facebook Resources

Click the circles for further information

Intro to
FACEBOOK

Basic
FEATURES

Post
CONTENT

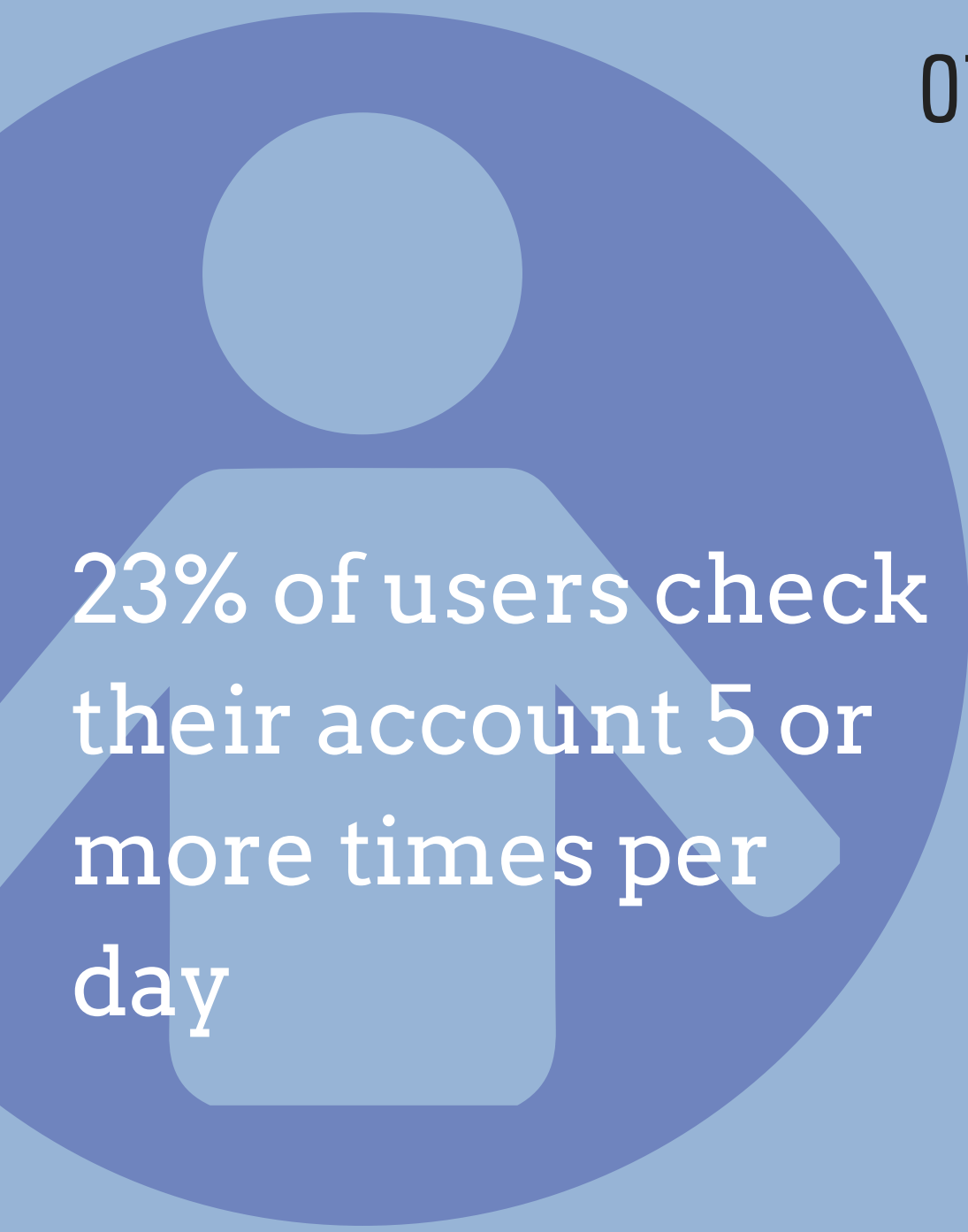
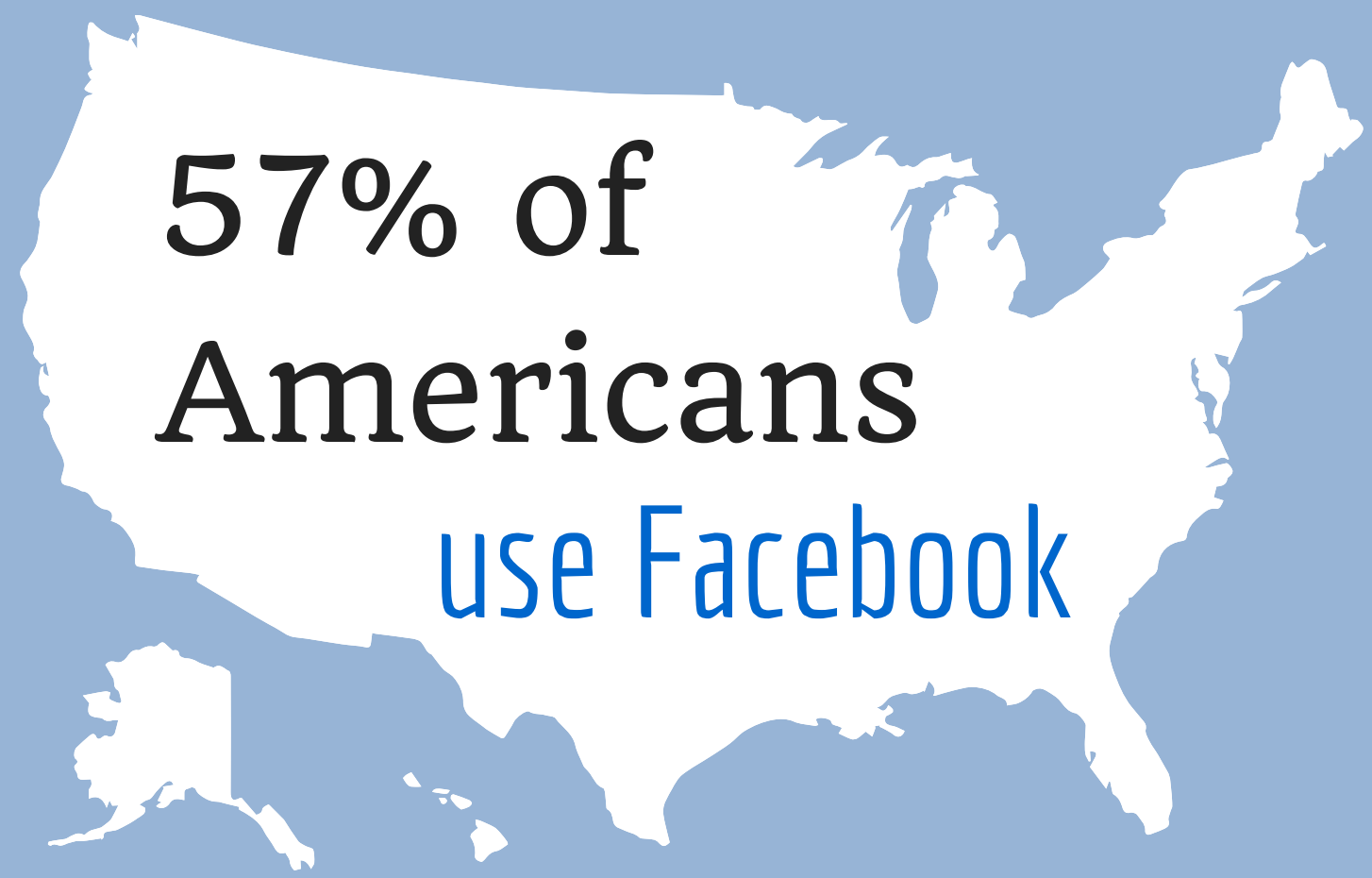
Use
INSIGHTS



WHY

FACEBOOK

One of the most flexible and robust social media platforms, Facebook is also one of the most widely used. 64 percent of users are active daily, making it a great platform to reach a large swatch of diverse stakeholders.



Facebook makes it easy for government leaders to engage in two-way conversations with audiences. Post surveys or statistics, share mission-specific information and program successes.





Facebook

— DOs & DON'Ts —



DO

- Be authentic and engaging
- Comment back!
- Post a variety of content related to your mission-space
- Share successes and progress
- Use relevant hashtags
- Integrate with other social media platforms
- Check your privacy and security settings
- Post "Calls to Action" and ask your audience to engage with you via other platforms

DON'T

- Post boring content
- Comment or "like" irrelevant or unrelated content
- Share content that is unrelated to your mission
- Be dormant
- Express political or otherwise controversial opinions and/or content
- Engage in destructive or negative "comment wars"



- 1 Leverage built-in "trending" data to target content**
- 2 Use hashtags to make content searchable and trendy**
- 3 Identify goals and develop metrics for Facebook success**
- 4 Post content that provides value to your stakeholders**

How to use
facebook[®]
effectively

*Social Media
Stars*



U.S. AIR FORCE

US Air Force

Humanizing and endearing content

Trivia and other "fun facts"

Create productive two-way conversations

NASA

Over 9 million "likes"

Post videos, photos, articles, statistics and live feeds

Post several time per day



**CENTERS FOR DISEASE
CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

CDC

Post timely, relevant, and vetted resources

Helpful Q&A videos on hot topics

Interesting health and wellness statistics





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Social Media for Government

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twitter



IS TWITTER
RIGHT
FOR YOU?

twitter

is right for you if...

1

You want to share real-time information and content with an extremely diverse audience

2

You want to interact live with your audience, via live Q&A's or Twitter Chats

3

You want to contribute or participate in trending topics

Twitter Resources

Click the circles for further information

Twitter
HANDBOOK

Getting
STARTED

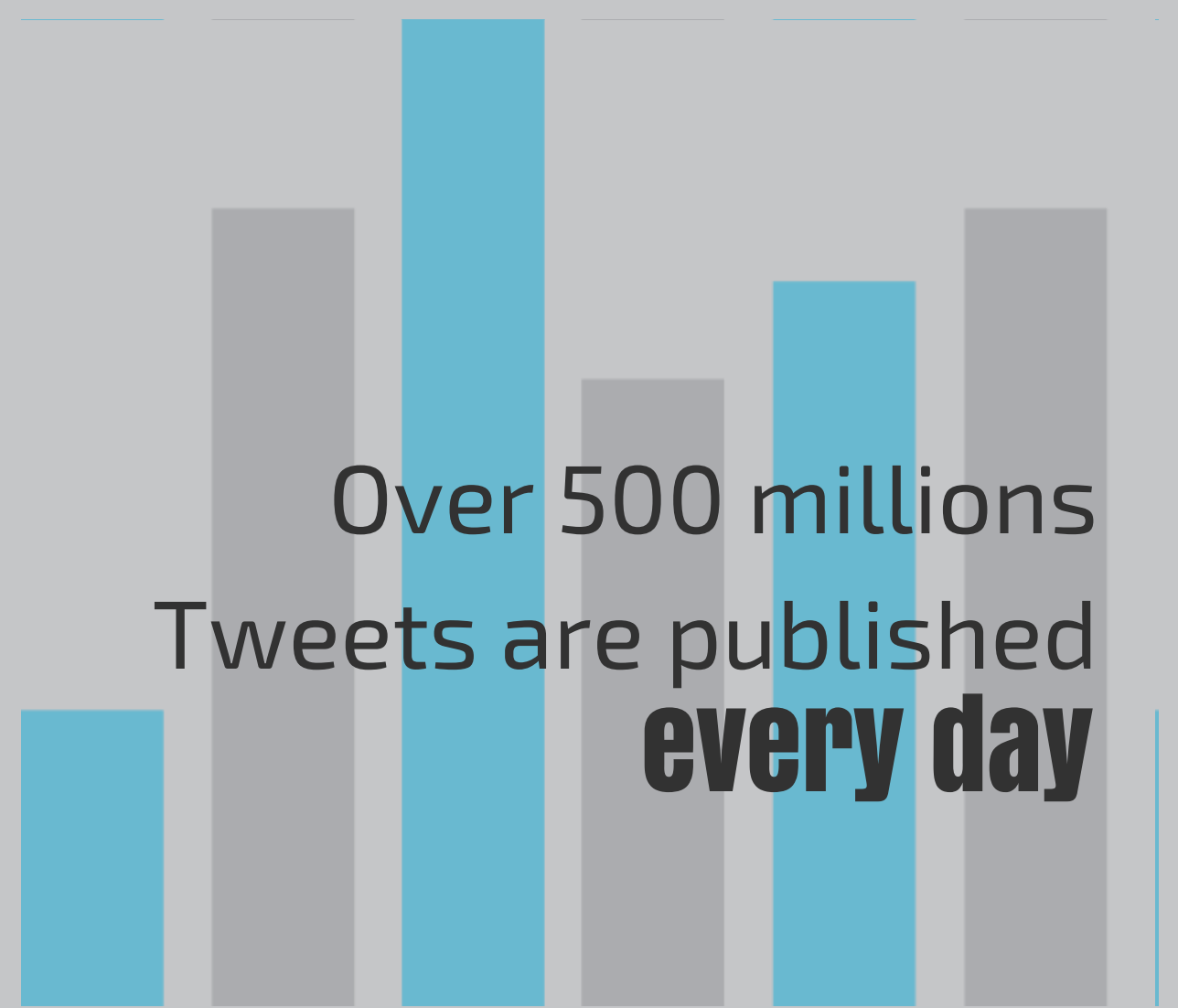
Using
HASHTAGS

Use
ANALYTICS




WHY

TWITTER



Twitter has revolutionized the way that government agencies share and receive information. Twitter can be used to both improve an organization's ability to achieve it's goals and also reduce costs compared to traditional communications

methods.




During Hurricane Irene, more than 3,000 tweets were published per second




Over 271 Million active monthly users



#SocialGov



Twitter Chats are low-cost, high-impact ways to increase engagement and spark dialogue



The White House's Twitter account has more than 5.82 million followers



Hear from the Founders



Twitter

— DOs & DON'Ts —

DO

- Use plain language
- Show a sense of humor (when appropriate)
- Include photos!
- Hashtag, hashtag, hashtag....after vetting your hashtags
- Include links (Twitter now shortens them for you!) & handles
- Learn from others: #socialgov
- Tweet timely and often
- Live Tweet at events
- Host Twitter chats to actively educate and engage your stakeholder base
- Have a strategy

DON'T

- Only retweet, make sure to post original content!
- Abuse irrelevant hashtags
- Use too many acronyms
- Use jargon
- Be boring
- Be dormant
- Let any and all employees post from your agency's account



How to use twitter effectively

Social Media Stars

- 1 Leverage hashtags to reach target audience
- 2 Host Twitter Chats to increase engagement
- 3 Share real-time information and increase program visibility
- 4 Campaign. Post related content over the course of several days

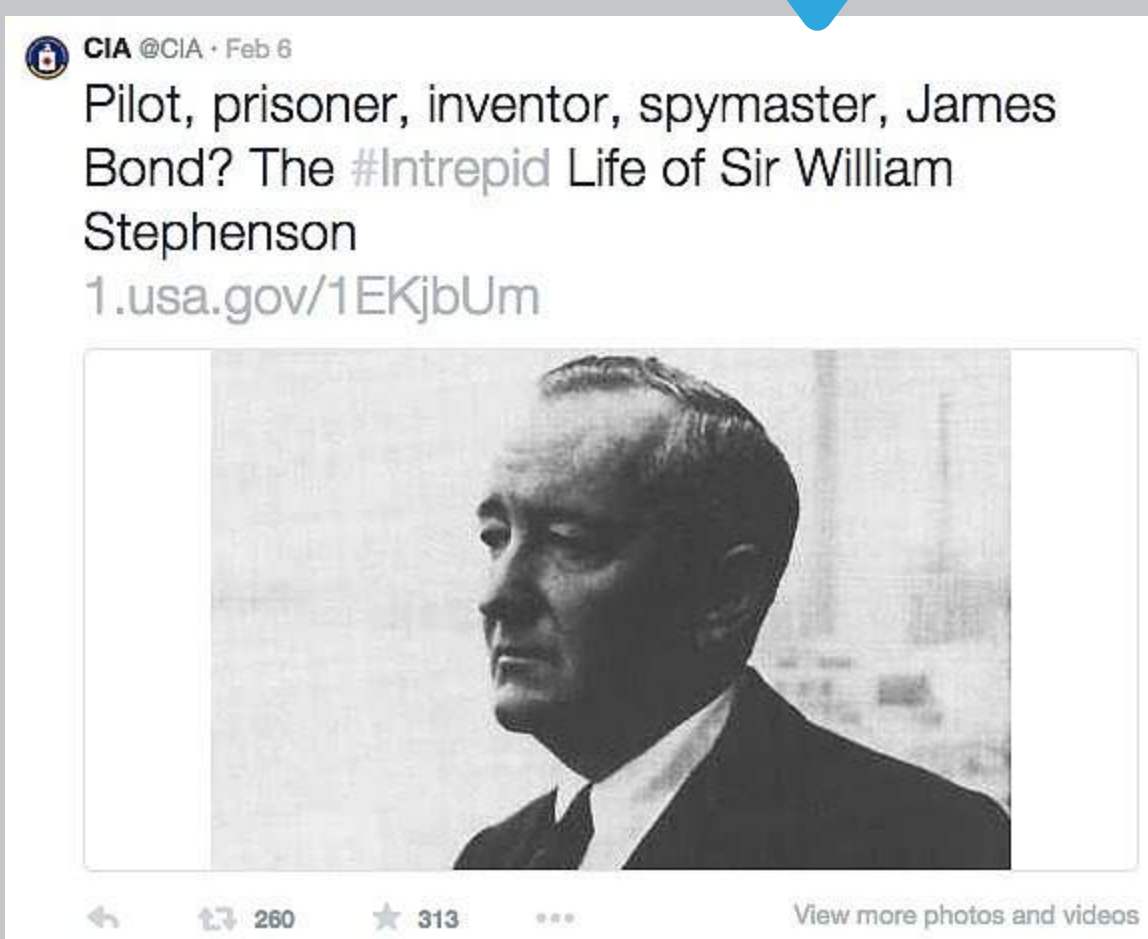


@DHSSciTech
11K Followers



@WhiteHouse
5.83M Followers

@CIA
776K Followers



@USDA
299K Followers





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Social Media for Government

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Instagram



IS INSTAGRAM
RIGHT
FOR YOU?

Instagram

is right for you if...

1 You want to share visuals and capture your agency's story

2 You want to showcase your people and improve morale

3 You struggle to communicate what your agency does daily

Instagram Resources

Click the circles for further information

Intro to
INSTAGRAM

Set up
YOUR ACCOUNT

Post a
PICTURE

Post a
VIDEO



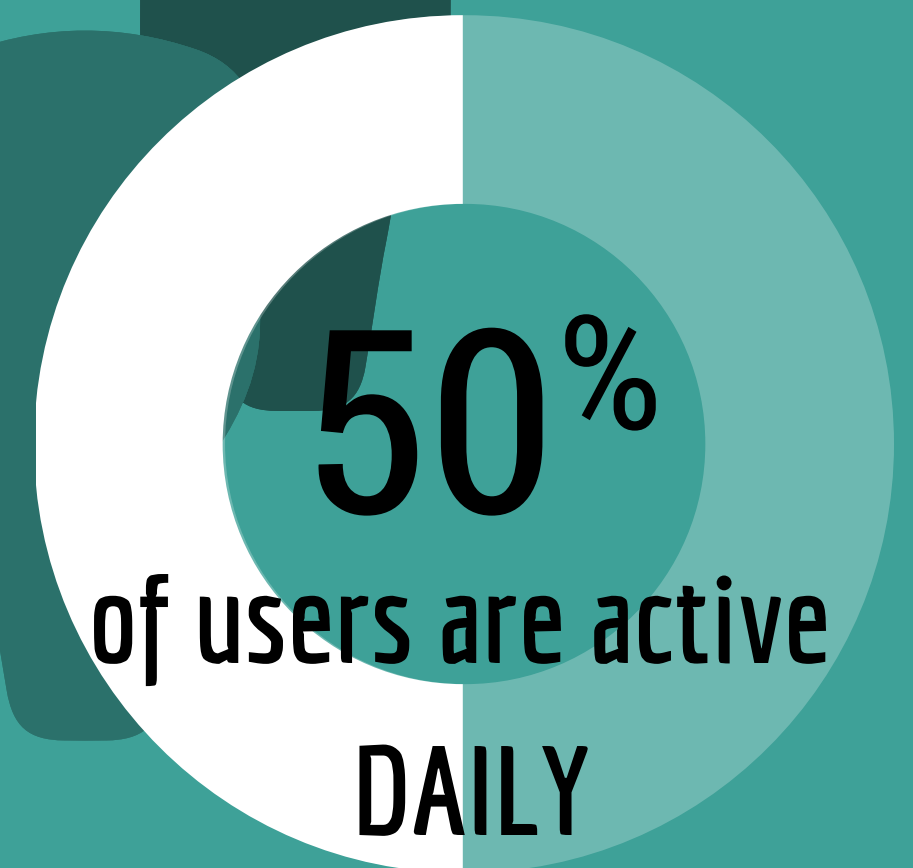
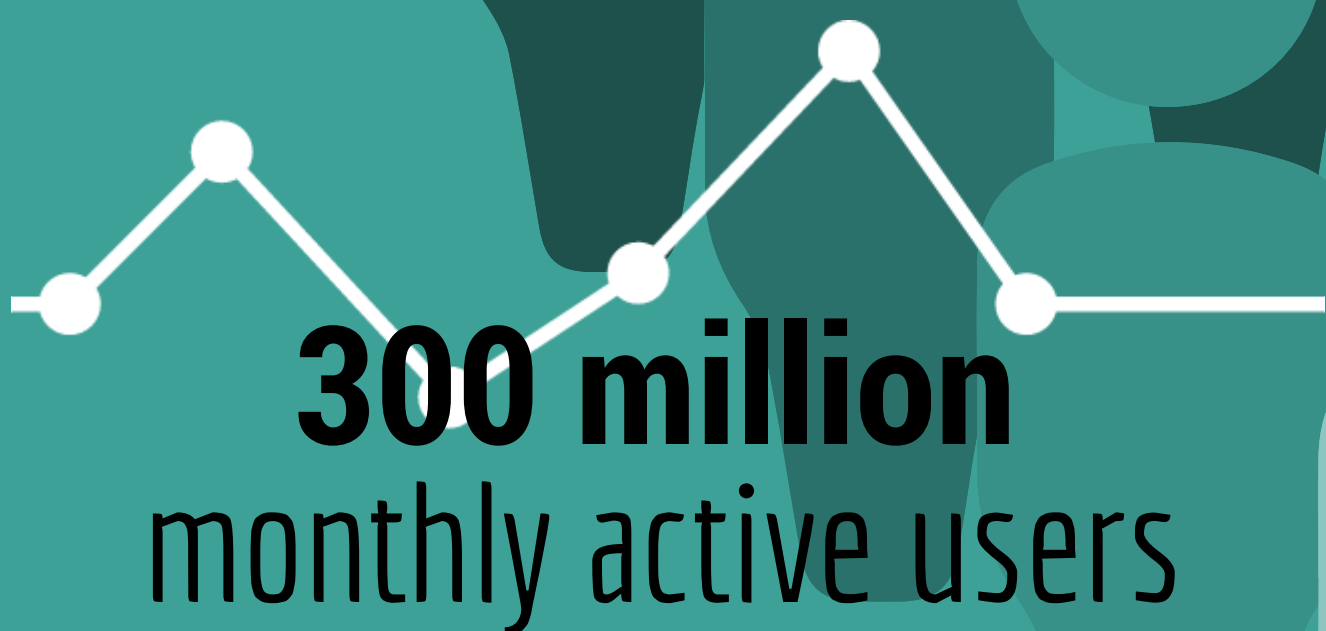
WHY

INSTAGRAM

posts that include another user
in a caption net 37% more
engagement

Instagram is an opportunity to show a new perspective.

The application allows you to share information with stakeholders in a way that also increases engagement with your agency's brand.



Instagram increases morale through visual communication.

Use photos and video in the moment to highlight your organizational culture, employees, and unseen personality for likability.



Instagram

— DOs & DON'Ts —

DO

- Post content that encourages interaction, not just your accomplishments
- Tell a story. What makes your organization unique?
- Create a consistent posting schedule and stick to it
- Vary posts in order to see what gets the most "likes" from followers
- Use relevant hashtags
- Write interesting, succinct captions which speak to your unique content
- "Tag" partner organizations and add locations for photo context

DON'T

- "Like" too much. Stick to content related to your mission and stakeholders
- Post too often or irregularly
- Use #latergram, only post in the moment and bring your audience "behind the curtain"
- Assume followers know what you are posting
- Use stock photos or boring content. Get creative and catch the followers eye



How to use Instagram effectively

- 1 Sync to all other social media accounts for branding**
- 2 Mention influential partners to increase engagement**
- 3 Use likes and comments as a feedback mechanism**
- 4 Showcase your people and improve morale**

Social Media Stars

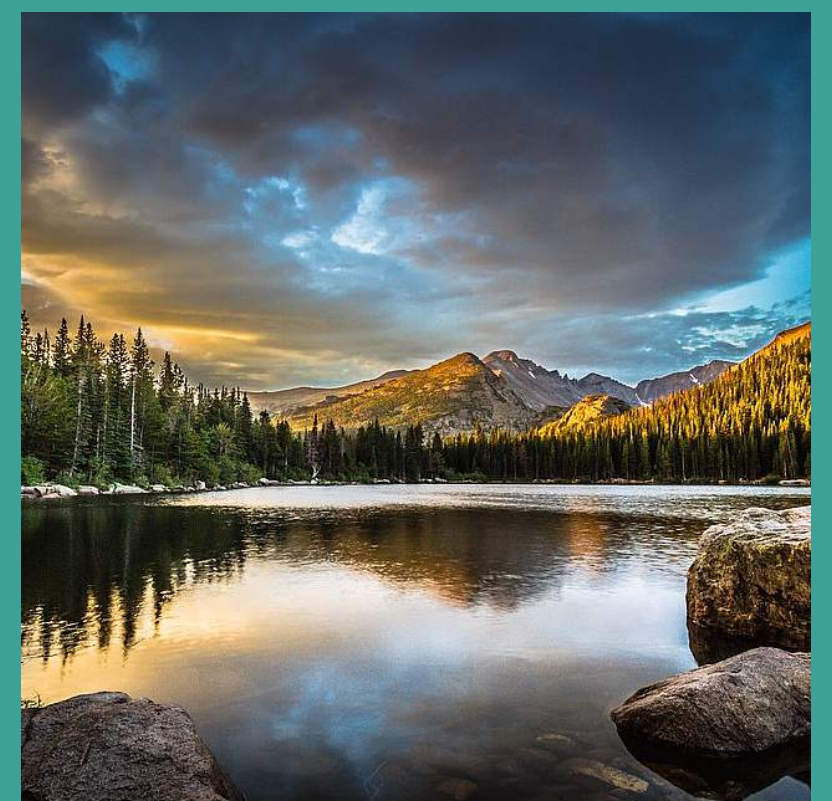


NASA 2.3m followers

A stellar presence. High quality photos and video offer a sneak peak into the life of an astronaut, both enticing and inspiring followers.

453k followers DOI

Breathtaking animal shots and landscapes, this account highlights partners and the more than 500 million acres of public lands DOI protects.



TSA 207k followers

Pictures of confiscated items restore faith in the TSA. Highlighting employees with their K9 companions improves public relations.





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YouTube



IS YOUTUBE
RIGHT
FOR YOU?

YouTube

is right for you if...

1 Your agency seeks greater transparency

2 You want to inform stakeholders about existing programs

3 You need to disseminate info or create a dialogue quickly

YouTube Resources

Click the circles for further information

Create
AN ACCOUNT

Starting
YOUTUBE

Using
CHANNELS

YouTube
ANALYTICS



WHY

YOUTUBE



Consumers are bored with traditional government marketing techniques. 150,000 viewers left their TV providers at the end of 2014. YouTube reaches more US adults ages 18-34 than any cable network and it's still growing.

100

hours of video
uploaded every minute



4X

daily subscriptions in
2014

More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month, making it a prime platform for federal agencies to build relationships, create a dialogue, and share engaging content.



YOUTUBE

— DOs & DON'Ts —

DO

- Plan a channel layout which matches your other traditional brands of government marketing
- Post meaningful content that educates or entertains
- Share webinars, interviews, or video responses to stakeholder questions
- Create a consistent posting schedule to develop an authoritative voice
- Reply to comments and engage stakeholders to build trust
- Use YouTube analytics to monitor and track your channel
- Put your most popular content at the top

DON'T

- Burn hours and try to make your videos go viral
- Post long, in-depth videos. The average YouTube attention span is 2-3 minutes, so summarize key points
- Be silent and ignore comments and feedback
- Throw out content in order to post more videos
- Submit low quality video



How to use YouTube effectively

- 1 Make your channel and videos findable**
- 2 Turn your channel into a destination for agency info**
- 3 Post your videos to other social media platforms**
- 4 Use data for strategic marketing through analytics**

Social Media Stars

NASA

A social media star, NASA's mass following is made possible through their perfect social sharing strategy and some very entertaining Google Hangout interviews

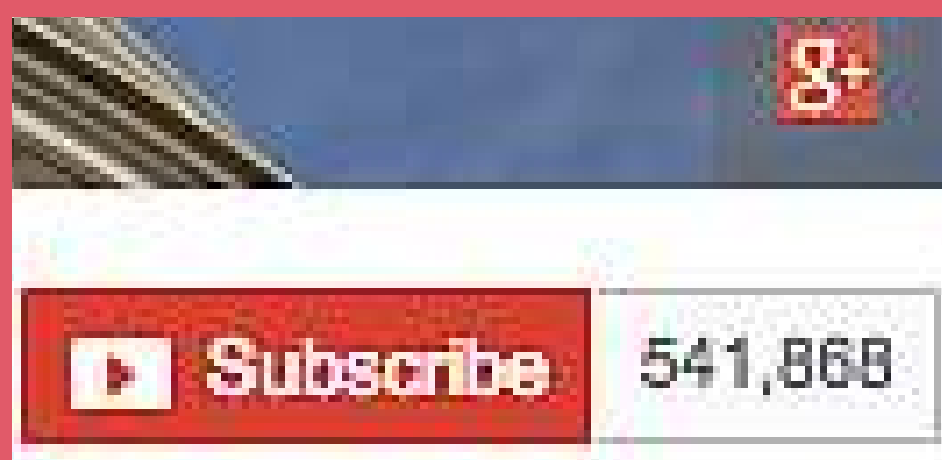
U.S. DOS

Well organized channel with remarks by Secretary Kerry, Daily Press Briefings, collections on foreign policy issues, and interviews of U.S. diplomats



White House

Hosts a number of reoccurring shows like West Wing Week, which takes you behind the scenes at the White House, and weekly Presidential addresses



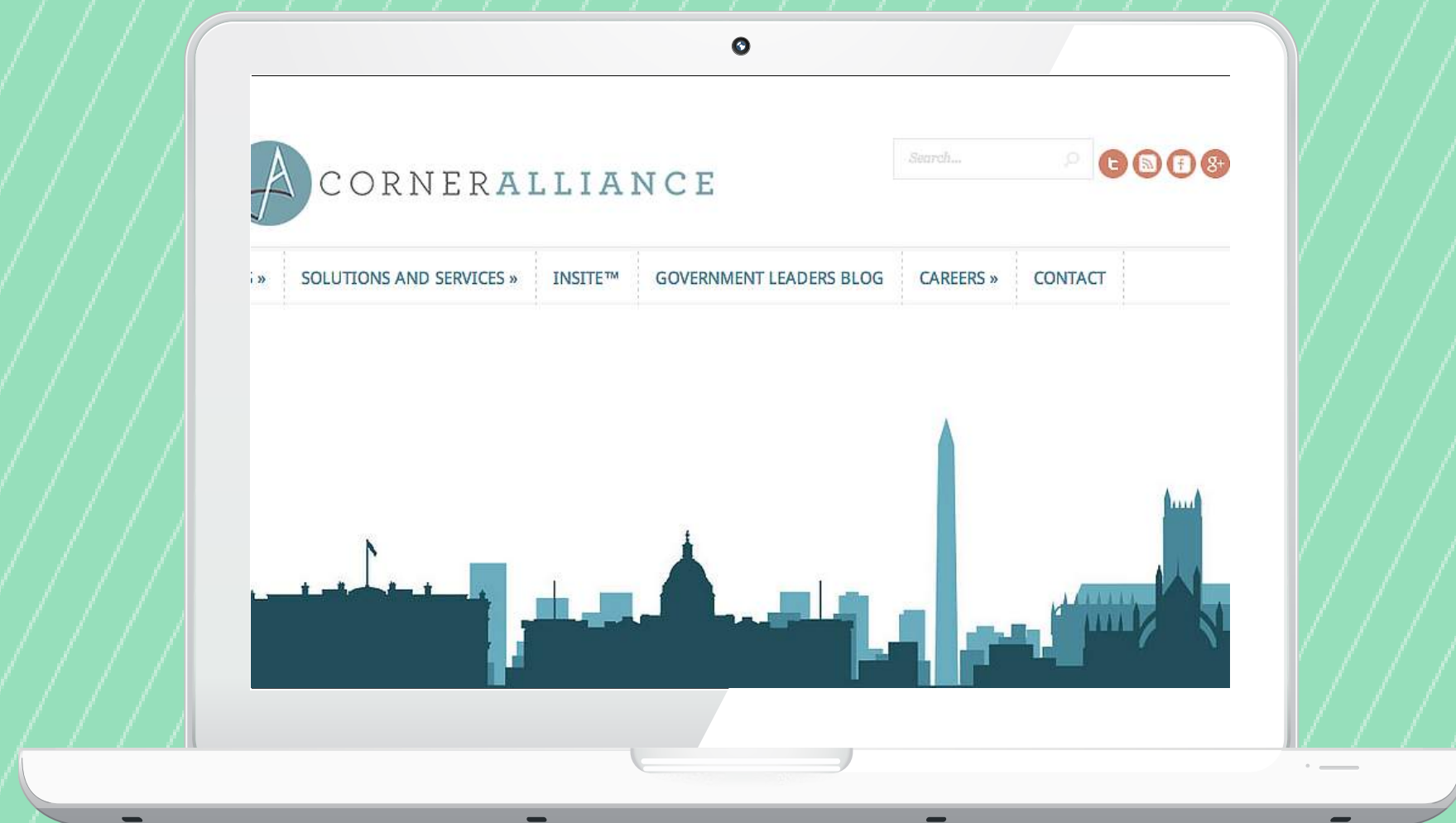


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Bloggging



IS BLOGGING
RIGHT
FOR YOU?

Bloggging

is right for you if...

1 You want a cost effective way to share information with stakeholders

2 You need to release agency information in a timely manner without red tape

3 You want to position your agency as a thought leader in your space

Blog Resources

Click the circles for further informaiton

Intro to
BLOGGING

Set up
WORDPRESS

Design
YOUR THEME

Site
MAINTENANCE



WHY

WRITE A BLOG

A blog acts as a central location for program updates and relevant information regarding your organization. A good content strategy is crucial to a blog's success. Allow leadership or employees to write, thereby establishing greater authority.

Organizations
that write blogs
have 97% more
inbound links



Today, news blogs rival
mainstream media

Design your agency's blog with stakeholders in mind. Traffic via shares on social media will expose your agency to new audiences, potential partners, and greater value.



Blogging

— DOs & DON'Ts —

DO

- Use a simple, clean layout
- Create relevant, catchy headlines to attract readers
- Write for your stakeholders, not your own interests
- Edit, edit, edit. A typo can destroy your credibility
- Let your employees write blogs for a more authentic voice, and ask those in your network to guest blog
- Develop a content strategy and rely on analytics to refine it
- Make it easy to share your blogs on other forms of social media

DON'T

- Write on a huge variety of topics. Stick to those within your mission focus
- Post inconsistently or go long periods without generating new content
- Use jargon. Rely on simple and sophisticated language
- Sell yourself all the time. Stakeholders recognize obvious advertising
- Use bright colors or low quality videos/media



How to blog effectively

- 1 Choose a domain name that encompasses your organization
- 2 Create a content strategy to communicate your desired message
- 3 Encourage sharing with visible social media links and simple design
- 4 Write authentically on your culture and mission, building trust and subject matter expertise

Social Media
Stars

From Boston: Snowed In & Plugged In

Author: [Eilis Maynard](#)

I'm Eilis and I work in FEMA's Region 1 office in Boston. Right now, wind is whipping snow around my Charlestown apartment, and the typically busy intersection right outside my door is completely deserted - not a car in sight! I'm in the midst of what [Twitter has dubbed #snowmageddon2015](#). Although the city of Boston is almost completely shut down (no running subway and a driving ban in place)



FEMA

Posts informative blogs from a variety of FEMA employees regarding disaster preparation. They own the topic and develop subject matter expertise

White House

This clean, professional blog uses catchy headlines and numerous forms of multimedia to engage the reader. Social media shares made easy

Our Top Stories



President Obama's National Security Strategy in 2015: Strong and Sustainable American Leadership

From the Streets of Brownsville, Brooklyn to the Oval Office

The Promise We Make: My Brother's Keeper and Expanding Access to Career Pathways for

Roy L. Austin, Jr.,
Byron G. Auguste
February 09, 2015
03:30 PM EST



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Press Releases

FirstNet Blog

Current Events

On the Road
Advanced C
February 9, 2015
Amanda Hilliard.

FirstNet

Distributes important information and updates to stakeholders regularly to ease tensions on a slow moving project. Perfect example of avoiding red tape



Conclusion

Government agencies are and should continue to expand their efforts to better use social media. For most agencies, social media platforms are where their customers and stakeholders are. At Corner Alliance we work with agencies and programs to help create, improve, and implement their social media plans. If you'd like to continue the conversation, click below:

Click Here to
Talk With
Corner Alliance

