UX TOOLBOX

Building Better Web for Citizens

British Columbia

UXBC
user experience design • british columbia

Ce

Citizen Engagement and Social Media

Contents

Foreword

The UX Toolbox contains a series of modules to help you build a better web presence for your organization, and to align your web presence with overall government direction.

Each module helps set the stage for the next. For a thorough understanding of the entire process we recommend reading the modules in order. That said, if you are reading to get a general understanding or are looking for some particular information or tool that might help, you can jump right into any particular module.

We recommend starting with the **Overview of the Toolbox** before continuing. By reading the **Overview of the Toolbox**, you'll understand how the toolbox works, how it can help you create better user experiences, and where you can go if you need help.

The **Introduction to Online Service Delivery** module helps to paint a picture of online service delivery in the public service, our new corporate approach to web, and how we need to rethink our positioning so that citizens can access more of our services online more easily.

The **Design Research** module explains why research is so important and why you should conduct user research before diving into strategy, development and implementation. It explains when to conduct re-search and describes several design research methods and tools.

The **Web Strategy** module helps you create both ministry- and project-level online strategies based on evidence from design research, providing best practice tools, guidelines and exercises for developing a good vision.

Introduction

The B.C. Government is taking an enthusiastic approach to citizen engagement. We believe that by opening up government and engaging with British Columbians, we can build a better province.

Dozens of engagement projects have been initiated and citizens from across B.C. are talking with government like never before. Some of these projects include face-to-face discussions around the province. Others utilize social media technology, like Twitter and YouTube, to connect with citizens and allow them to share their views and participate and contribute in new ways.

The **Citizen Engagement and Social Media** module introduces the B.C. Government's approach to citizen engagement. We'll discuss:

- Why we engage citizens in B.C.;
- How to internally develop a business case and plan for an engagement initiative;
- Different ways to engage with the public and tools to do so; and
- The B.C. Government's social media framework and guidelines.

In addition, this module provides guidelines for planning for six popular social media tools – blogs, Twitter, Facebook, wikis, YouTube and Flickr.

Strategic Alignment

Citizens @ the Centre[1] articulates our commitment to an evidence-based, citizen-centred and service-focused approach to government's web presence. It states that citizens expect and deserve a range of services and supports from their government, that our organization will save citizens' time in their interactions with government and that we will make it easier to access better quality services.

Our corporate Internet Strategy outlines this new approach to web, which will better serve the needs of both citizens and government. It makes the citizen the driving force behind the design of our business, our services, and how we deliver them.

To support this new approach, the Ministry of Citizens' Services and Open Government (CITZ) has been given strategic responsibility for government's web presence, and is responsible for creating policy, governance and tools to support sectors and ministries through this change. As part of sector Transformation Plans, each ministry created a strategy to rationalize their web presence and make it more citizen-centred by aligning with the overall government approach.

We need to work differently in order to put services closer to citizens in a consistent manner based on their needs. Instead of managing a website, we now manage a set of services that may be delivered online. To be successful and truly put citizens at the centre, this approach requires service delivery innovation and adaptation.

Service delivery innovation comes from gaining empathy and insight into what people really need, while taking into consideration what organizations are capable of and mandated to create. This includes a deep understanding of users' context, goals, motivations, options, constraints and needs and an understanding of how we need to organize teams and efforts within our organizations. Citizen engagement is a key piece to this puzzle - how can we possibly understand users' context, goals, motivations, options, constraints and needs if we don't ask? Design research is great but it doesn't reach every citizen. Citizen engagement provides opportunities for everyone to have their voice heard.

1. www.gov.bc.ca/citz/citizens_engagement/gov20.pdf

Discovering Citizen Engagement

What is Citizen Engagement?

The B.C. Government is changing how it interacts with the public. We're talking with citizens more often about the issues that affect them. Sometimes we work directly with the public towards solutions. Other times we invite the public to take the lead on the issues that matter to them the most. These are all examples of citizen engagement.

The B.C. Government engages citizens for many reasons. Some of the top reasons are:

- **Citizens want a say in the issues that affect them**. Citizens are more likely to support government decisions when they've been consulted and have had a say in shaping them. This gives people a sense of ownership over issues they believe are important.

- **Government doesn't have all the answers**. Many of the issues that we face today are complex. Addressing these issues properly requires input from a lot of people – many of whom don't work in government. Engaging these people in conversation and action will help us work towards solutions.

- **It helps government keep its finger on the pulse**. Engaging citizens helps government better understand citizens' interests and opinions. Knowing what's important to people can lead to a more responsive government.

Citizen engagement can be done in many ways and no one way works for every situation or circumstance. Choose an approach or a few approaches that will provide the greatest benefits.

For more information on citizen engagement and why it matters, see *Citizens @ the Centre*.

Defining the Purpose

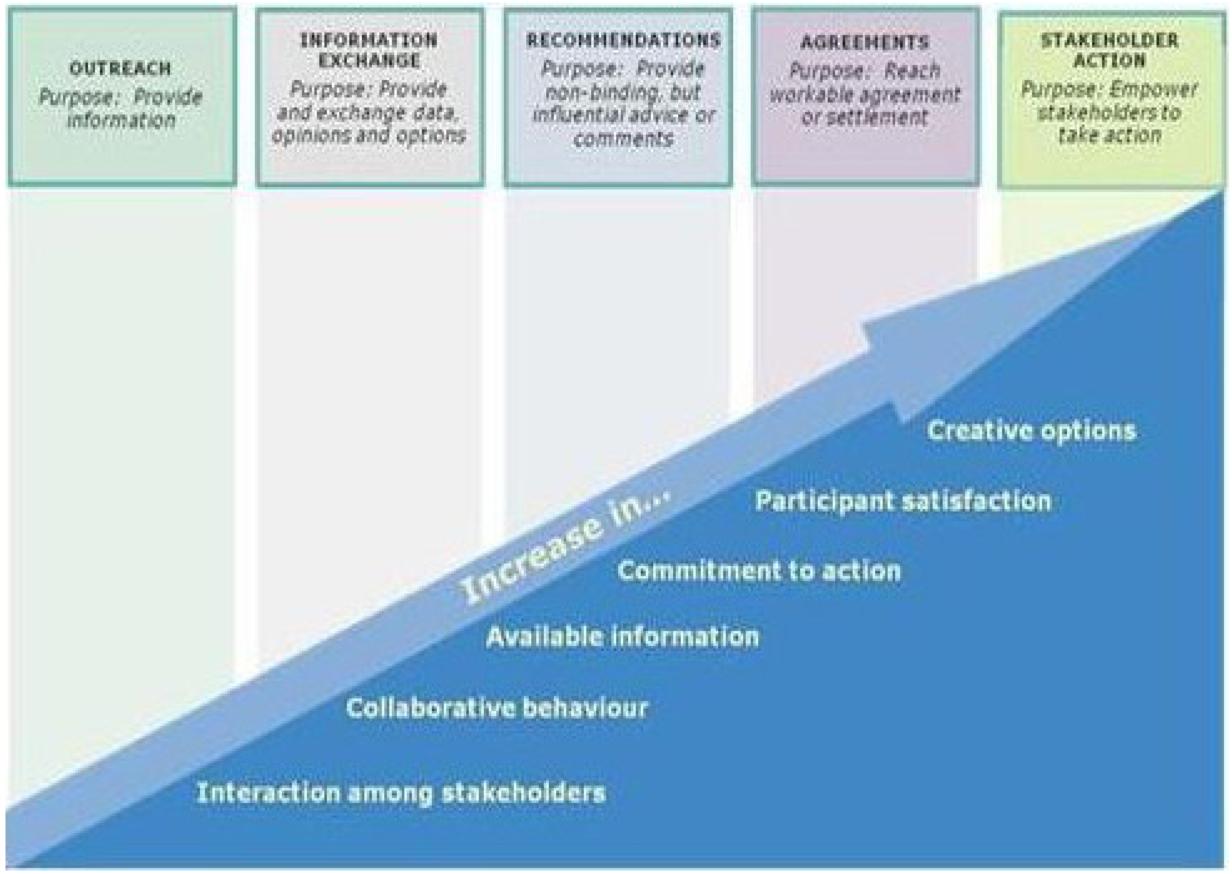
The first step in designing a citizen engagement initiative is to clearly define the goal to be achieved. The goal may be to increase public awareness of a health initiative, involve the public in finding ways to reduce homelessness, or have citizens play a role in emergency preparedness. Regardless of the overall

"*Public engagement is a new way of thinking about how governments, stakeholders, communities and ordinary citizens can work together to find solutions to complex problems.*" - Don Lenihan, Chair in Public Engagement, Public Policy Forum idea, it's essential to clearly define the objective. Once there's a clear vision for the initiative, you can start thinking about engagement tools such as face-to-face dialogue or social media. The purpose, or business objective, can also be linked to the broader goals of the ministry and/or government's mission.

Consider these four questions when working on your business objective:

1. What is the problem?
2. How will engagement solve the problem?
3. What is the opportunity for change?
4. What are the long-term objectives of moving in this direction?

Consider where the program area currently sits on the engagement spectrum and where it could be in the future. This diagram depicts different ways to engage along the spectrum:



Graphic courtesy of Deborah Dalton, Center for Conflict Prevention and Resolutions, Environmental Protection Agency

Note that interaction, commitment to action, and satisfaction increase along the spectrum. It's important to think about the role citizens can play in engagement, and ultimately what abilities they'll have to take ownership and make decisions. Not all business objectives will be successfully met by a full-on engagement initiative, such as in those cases where the need is to simply inform citizens about a decision government has already undertaken.

Defining the Audience

The next step is to think about the audience of the engagement. It's important to identify the desired audience and to plan the extent to which the audience will be engaged. Some questions to think about are:

- Who is the primary audience?
- Who is the secondary audience?
- What is the relationship that is to be changed?
- How large is the intended audience?
- How much time is available?
- How much feedback is expected to be received?

There are many exercises and methods that can help define the audience. One of the methods that has been used successfully is creating citizen personas and mapping the citizen's journey. Personas and journey maps are discussed in more detail in the **Design Research** module.

Managing Risk

When planning a citizen engagement project, consider the following areas around risk management:

- Identify the specific risks of the initiative, including the risks of not moving forward.
- Compare how you will mitigate these risks and adjust and adapt throughout the project.
- Identify any safety, privacy, public relations, records management, and security risks and how they will be addressed.
- Identify the risks of not following through on the process - raising expectations and not delivering.

The B.C. Public Service Social Media Guidelines in Appendix C provide detailed information on the risks including privacy, records management, intellectual property, information security and public relations. In addition, contact information is made available for experts in each area who will assist in project planning to ensure risks are mitigated.

Writing Your Business Case

Following the release of the B.C. Public Service Social Media Guidelines in November 2010, many employees asked about how to turn an idea into a project. The answer to this question varies. Whether you're pitching the idea of citizen engagement, the start-up of a Twitter feed, or a new way of delivering services to citizens, the case for change needs to be made. There are many things for decisions-makers to consider and multiple implications.

To assist with moving projects forward, we recommend the use of the business case template in **Appendix A**. This template has been developed and revised with input from employees across the B.C. Public Service, and assists groups in defining the purpose and process of engagement.

As you start to plan your process, you may also wish to think about the roles and responsibilities required for success. The **Governance** module provides an overview of some roles you may wish to consider for your citizen engagement initiative.

Deciding on Tools

There are a variety of channels to consider when deciding how to engage with the public:

- Face-to-face, where government speaks to citizens in person;
- Open data, where government data is provided to citizens, who explore it and create uses for it; and
- Social media like Twitter, Facebook and blogs, where citizens can communicate with government in a variety of ways.

After doing the proper research and learning about the different social media tools available, you can make an informed decision about which option will work best for your intended audience and goal.

What Tool(s) Should be Used?

The tools selected depend on the desired outcomes of the initiative and the level to which citizens need to be engaged in order to achieve those outcomes. For most citizen engagement projects, a combination of tools will work best.

Goal	Inform	Outreach	Recommendation/ Advice	Agreements	Action
Primary Tool	• News Releases • Fact Sheets • Web Sites • Info Hotlines • Talk Shows • Video • Flickr • QR Codes • Documentaries	• Email • Public/Small Meeting Groups • Open Houses • Facebook • Twitter	• Workshops • Focus Groups • Roundtables • Surveys/Polling • Public Meetings • Townhalls • Blogs • Discussion Forums	• Advisory Committees • Partnerships • Public Meetings • Summits • Wikis	• Citizen Juries • Open Data • Mobile Apps • Interactive Maps • Contests

Tool: Face-to-Face

One of the more traditional ways to engage citizens is through face-to-face dialogue. Face-to-face dialogue has many benefits, including:

- Citizens tend to feel more involved when they can hear directly from, and speak directly to, the people who make the final decisions.
- Participants can see others' body language and gestures – important information that's lost when using only written words.
- Participants may have fewer outside distractions, so they are often more attentive and engaged in the conversation.
- Decisions can be made more quickly because participants must focus their efforts for a limited time.

Face-to-face engagement also has its drawbacks. Chief among them is the cost. It can be very expensive to meet directly with people, especially over a broad area and it can be time consuming if travel is required.

The following are examples of face-to-face dialogue in B.C.:

Citizen Assembly on Electoral Reform[2] (2004)
The Citizen Assembly on Electoral Reform was a group of randomly selected British Columbians who recommended changes to the provincial voting system. The assembly met with people across B.C. to hear their ideas then prepared and presented its report to the government.

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizens%27_Assembly_on_Electoral_Reform_(British_Columbia)

Conversation on Health[3] (2006)
The Conversation on Health was a 12-month public engagement initiative through which British Columbians offered their ideas for reshaping our provincial public healthcare system. Citizens were invited to provide input in many ways, including at public forums across the province.

Water Act Modernization[4] (2010)
Representatives from the Ministry of Environment met with people across B.C. to hear their ideas on ways to modernize the province's 100-year-old Water Act. More than 650 participants registered for 12 multi-stakeholder and First Nations engagement workshops. Each session produced many pages of feedback including comments, questions, suggestions and break-out session reports totalling over 200 pages of direct feedback. These face-to-face consultations were part of an engagement strategy that included an online blog and mail-in submissions.

Small Business Roundtable[5]
The roundtable's mandate is to give advice to government and the small business sector on supporting British Columbia in becoming the most small-business-friendly jurisdiction in Canada. It is a permanent body, chaired by the minister responsible for small business, and its 18 board members are leaders in the small business community. The roundtable holds consultations with small business owners in all regions of the province – nearly 50 so far, with over 1,000 participants. These consultations give small business owners a chance to raise issues directly with the minister and help government develop policies and programs that meet these businesses' needs.

Here are a few examples of face-to-face dialogue in other jurisdictions:

21st Century Town Meetings[6]
21st Century Town Meetings bring together diverse, demographically-representative groups of up to 5,000 American citizens to discuss an issue and work through options in small groups. Neutral and balanced background material on issues is used to inform discussion, and experts and policy makers are present to help with the discussions. Results from small group conversations are shared with the entire group via laptop computers. Ideas are prioritized and reported to decision-makers at the end of the day.

City of Chicago[7]
The City of Chicago recently organized a planning session to speak directly to residents about the future of the city. They used face-to-face processes and interactive polling to set priorities.

3. www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2007/conversation_on_health/
4. www.livingwatersmart.ca/water-act/
5. www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca/
6. www.americaspeaks.org
7. http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2040/main

Tool: Open Data

The B.C. Government has a lot of data. We have data on roads, forests, climate change, water, registered daycare locations, early learning programs, school performance, medical payments, hospital locations, labour and economy statistics, and more.

For many years this information has been held internally and only used by government. But there's a change underway. Governments around the world are opening up their data to the public.

Data that's made freely available to everyone to use with minimal restrictions is called "open data."

Open data is an effective tool for citizen engagement. It creates the potential for government transparency. It offers the opportunity for people outside government to see and use the same data that government sees when it's making policy and program decisions. It also provides people with information to help them make decisions for themselves and their families, and about the world around them.

DataBC

The B.C. Government shares its data through a website called DataBC[8]. DataBC provides a catalogue of data in open formats such as .csv or .shp as well as in Excel spreadsheets and text files. Anyone from anywhere in the world can use B.C.'s data for research, statistical analysis, app development, or simply to satisfy curiosity. Visitors to DataBC include members of the general public as well as people in other provincial governments, municipalities, school districts, and post-secondary institutions.

Government Data in Action

So what does government data look like when it's put to use? Here are a few examples:

- Court Services Online[9] allows lawyers, litigants and citizens to search for a variety of court-related information.
- When The BC Jobs Plan[10] was launched, DataBC highlighted post-secondary education data[11] on its homepage.
- The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Avalanche and Weather Programs provides historical weather data[12] for the province.
- The Ministry of Environment's Wildlife Species Inventory[13] includes all surveys undertaken to determine the presence or abundance of any wildlife species in B.C.

8. www.data.gov.bc.ca/
9. https://eservice.ag.gov.bc.ca/cso/index.do
10. www.bcjobsplan.ca/
11. www.data.gov.bc.ca/dbc/search/result.page?ms=url%3Aapps.gov.bc.ca&keyword=post+secondary&search.x=0&search.y=0
12. https://pub-apps.th.gov.bc.ca/saw-paws/weatherstation
13. www.env.gov.bc.ca/wildlife/wsi/index.htm

Here are a couple of examples of what people outside government have done with data:

- A private company built a search engine[14] that looks up B.C. Government financial data.
- Some talented folks in the Netherlands created a map of building permits[15], with click-through to see the associated building plan drawings.
- A citizen initiative called Montreal Ouvert published a map of Montreal restaurant health inspections[16].

Opening up data is not the end point; it is just the first step. The real purpose is to provide data so that people can better understand their world. The examples above illustrate how a bit of data and some programming talent can create some pretty useful tools that help answer important questions.

The point of the Montreal restaurant health inspection app seems simple enough; maybe think twice about eating at some of those spots or risk getting sick. But that's only one facet of the power of open data. If fewer people get sick from bad restaurant food there's less pressure on the healthcare system. That's good. And those restaurants are likely pretty motivated to get it right so they can stay in business and keep employing people and contributing to the economy. And that's also good. So, a simple idea combined with a bit of data can do some amazing things.

Data Visualization
Research on learning styles shows that roughly 65% of the world's population are visual learners. Visual learners learn better from a visual presentation than a page of words or numbers. This is where data visualizations and maps come in. A visualization takes complicated data and presents it in ways the public can better understand. This includes charts, maps and infographics.

The following are some examples of data visualization using B.C. Government data:

- BC Winery Finder[17] uses data from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to create a map that denotes every winery in B.C.
- Recreation Sites and Trails BC[28] uses data from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts to showcase sites and trails in B.C. Users can search by name, location or activity.

For stunning examples of data visualizations on a large scale, check out Gapminder[29]. This groundbreaking work by Hans Rosling and his organization make very complex data accessible to a broad audience.

Mash-ups, Web and Application Development
Mash-ups combine data, presentations or functionality from two or more sources to create new services or

14. www.proactivedisclosure.ca/
15. http://bouwplannen.heroku.com/
16. www.resto-net.ca/
17. http://wineseekr.labs.opendatabc.ca/
18. www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca/
19. www.gapminder.org/

products. Essentially, by pulling data from multiple sources, it's possible to create a new perspective on the challenges we face.

A list of current B.C. government apps[20] is available on DataBC.

How Ministries Can Share Data
When ministries have data they want to make open, they're asked to contact DataBC. Members of the DataBC team assist employees in publishing their data with a series of checkpoints on intellectual property, privacy and information security. They also help determine how to share data in a usable format.

Tool: Social Media

There are dozens of social media sites on the web. The B.C. Government focuses on a handful of the top-used sites, as these are the channels that will bring the most exposure and, therefore, higher engagement.

Detailed modules, which provide information and guidelines, are available for the social media tools below (see **Appendices D-I** for full modules). The table below provides a brief description of the most popular social media tools and their best uses.

Tool	Description	Best Uses
Blog	• A frequently-updated website that allows for two-way conversation between author(s) and audience. • Allows for public comment. • Easy to update as often as you'd like.	• To share important information with the public. • To put a human face on government, using an informal tone. • To get feedback from the public before taking action. • To initiate a conversation between citizens.
Twitter	• A form of "microblogging." • Extremely short blog posts (140 characters or less). • Users send and read messages called "tweets." • Users can forward or "re-tweet" messages, thus expanding the reach of the original tweet. • Users follow other people or organizations with similar interests.	• To broadcast messages, news, emergency notifications, etc. • To redirect followers to other government service channels for more information (e.g. face-to-face, phone or web). • To ask questions of the public and initiate a dialogue. • To determine the current and historical popularity of certain topics.

20. www.data.gov.bc.ca/dbc/apps/index.page?

Tool	Description	Best Uses
Social Networks (Facebook)	• Websites that connect people who know each other and people with similar interests or affiliations. • Many also have groups, which are feature-rich chat boards for members.	• To connect people who are involved or interested in government services. • To broadcast important messages to group members. • To provide a forum for group members to chat and share ideas and information.
Wikis	• Websites with fully editable content.	• To co-author and/or edit content when expertise is widely dispersed. • To involve a broad group of experts and stakeholders in the development process. • To ensure there is input from the people who are most knowledgeable about the subject(s) in question. • To co-create policy, etc. but may need to be combined with face-to-face dialogue if deliberation is necessary.
YouTube	• Free online service that lets users upload, share and comment on short videos. • Users can create custom "channels" where content can follow a theme.	• To inform the public or promote a message in a more interesting, personable way. • To reach a broad audience. • To redirect followers to other government service channels for more information.
Flickr	• Photo management website that allows users to upload, share and comment on photos and videos.	• To tell the government story in a more interesting way. • To support formal communication channels like news releases. • To redirect followers to other government service channels for information. • To provide images for the use of the media and the general public.

Planning Your Citizen Engagement Initiative

Any project, but specifically one that involves talking to citizens, can be divided up into four phases:

1. Discovery

- Determine your business outcomes and what you want to achieve.

2. Planning

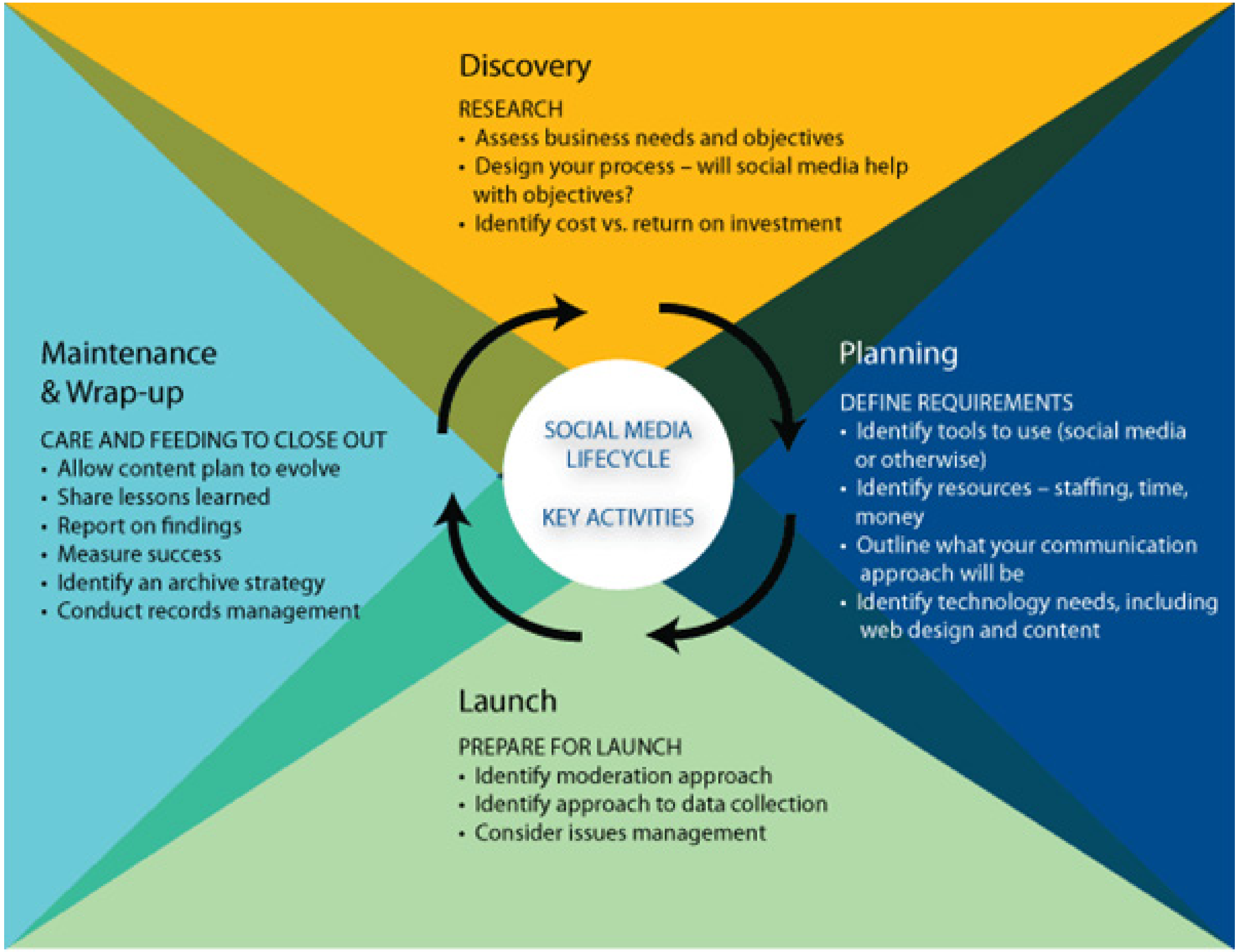
- Choose the tool(s) that you will use to help you achieve your business objectives.
- Create the project plan and determine the resources required to proceed.
- Involve your communications shop to ensure your communications, marketing and outreach plan is ready to go.

3. Launch

- Go live with your engagement initiative.
- Start measuring success; get a baseline.
- Build upon and improve your initiative.
- Manage issues as they arise.
- Start to think about how you will report on your success.

4. Maintenance & Wrap-Up

- Measure and summarize the results.
- Report those results.
- Put in place any action(s) resulting from the engagement.


Discovery
RESEARCH
• Assess business needs and objectives
• Design your process – will social media help with objectives?
• Identify cost vs. return on investment
Planning
DEFINE REQUIREMENTS
• Identify tools to use (social media or otherwise)
• Identify resources – staffing, time, money
• Outline what your communication approach will be
• Identify technology needs, including web design and content
Launch
PREPARE FOR LAUNCH
• Identify moderation approach
• Identify approach to data collection
• Consider issues management
Maintenance & Wrap-up
CARE AND FEEDING TO CLOSE OUT
• Allow content plan to evolve
• Share lessons learned
• Report on findings
• Measure success
• Identify an archive strategy
• Conduct records management
SOCIAL MEDIA LIFECYCLE
KEY ACTIVITIES

Content Planning

"*Content strategy is the technique of planning, publishing, creating, curating, distributing and evaluating relevant, valuable and unique content to attract, acquire and engage a specific audience.*" - Sean Moffitt, author of Wikibrands[21].

What is Content?

Content is the material that is shared on social media channels. It can include text, links, video, audio, images and more. Some social media channels focus on specific kinds of content (such as YouTube, which is exclusively for video) while others provide the opportunity to share a variety of content (such as Facebook).

Content can either be original or sourced from other places. Most B.C. Government social media channels feature a mix – they share new, original content and highlight relevant content from partners, stakeholders, other jurisdictions or citizens.

Does Content Really Matter?

Why bother putting effort into content? Isn't it easier to just slap up a few tweets and be done with it? Why should we invest time, energy and resources in creating engaging, interesting content?

Here's why: the Internet is a vast collection of materials that grows larger every minute. You want your content to be heard above the noise, and in order to do that, you have to offer value to users and give them something they can't find anywhere else.

If you want to truly engage people – to hear their thoughts, answer their questions, change their behaviour, or get them to act – you have to find ways to connect. You have to offer interesting information, and the opportunity to participate. You have to be with them in the same place at the same time, grabbing their attention and building a connection that brings them back, and inspires them to share your message with their network. You have to give citizens something that is worthy of their time and attention, otherwise they will move on and never look back.

Okay, I get it, it's important. But how do I make sure my content is engaging?

What you need is a plan. Social media content doesn't just magically appear by itself - it requires thoughtful creation, curation and timing. It is suggested that if you're going to talk to citizens using social media, you need to plan out what you want to say over the medium- and long-term. Regardless of what tool you use, success depends on both planning it out and being flexible:

21. http://wiki-brands.com/

- What type of content are you going to share (e.g., blog posts, tweets, pictures, videos, hyperlinks)?
- How often are you going to share it?
- Where you are going to get it from (is this government content or is it something from that others have posted)?
- Who has to approve it before it goes live?

When you're creating your strategy, always remember that your goal is to have a conversation, not just to push information out in one direction. Social media gives citizens the opportunity to ask questions and provide their thoughts, so be prepared to engage in a dialogue. You can encourage dialogue by posing questions, posting polls, or re-tweeting or sharing information from others. Aim to build relationships with your users so that they will return and continue to enjoy and share your content.

But what if I run out of things to say? How can I make sure I keep people's attention on an ongoing basis?

Variety is the spice of life! Sean Moffitt has identified 75 different conversations[22] you can have online.

Some tips to keep in mind:

Language

- In general, social media content should be written in plain, accessible language.
- Avoid using acronyms, government jargon and program speak.
- Use interesting, dynamic language to catch people's attention – think like a magazine publisher.
- Be succinct. Many social media tools are designed to get information across really, really quickly.

Tone & Voice

- Always be professional and authentic.
- Depending on the channel, the subject and audience, your tone may need to change – it could be friendly, casual tone, or a more formal tone.
- Ensure everyone who writes content or moderates the discussion is well-versed in the tone and voice for consistency.

Conversation

- Listen to users and their feedback. Respond accordingly.
- Ask questions, and be prepared to respond to answers.
- Have a process ready so that questions from users can be answered in a timely manner.

22. http://wiki-brands.com/content-wikibranding-the-76-types-of-digital-content-and-conversation/

Schedules & Organization

- Create a schedule for when you want to post.
- Plan for a mix of both pre-determined content and on-the-fly responses to news items, questions, etc.
- Use tools like SharePoint or Excel to organize timing of content.
- On a monthly basis, plan for around 5 blog posts, 100 tweets, 12 Facebook posts, and/or 1 video to keep things fresh.
- Monitor the time of day when your content gets the most traffic, and schedule your posts accordingly.

Source Material

- Use program experts to find good content. Ask them what they are working on that may be relevant to your audience.
- Reach out to other groups or stakeholders who may have an interest. Exchange links and feature each other's content.
- Watch for relevant news items that you can link to, re-tweet, etc.
- Consider using different themes that will help you establish a consistency and rhythm to your content.

Now what?

This is a whole lot of information. Here are some quick pointers to get you started.

1. Tackle 3 big things that you learned from this module - experiment with one new tool every month.

2. Develop your top list of 50 blogs/websites to follow and track via content aggregation software.

3. Develop your top list of 150 members/fans to follow and incubate and credit regularly.

4. Start monitoring weekly content progress on key metrics.

5. Ensure your blogs/tweets are no more than 10% of one type of conversation posting (see top 75 online posts).

6. Build an editorial calendar including topic, author, SEO keywords, call to action, status, assets, and links.

7. Maintain minimum levels of platform frequency.

8. Provide intrinsic, extrinsic and explicit incentives in your content.

9. Develop seamless website/social integration.

10. Build a content strategy for the year.

Measuring Success

Good metrics are a constantly moving target, especially in an online world. Social media channels are ever-changing and the measurement tools that support them are also developing rapidly. Every expert has a different take on the how, why and when of measurement and metrics. So how do you even know where to start? Wouldn't it just be easier to look at the number of followers you have on Twitter and Facebook and call it a day?

While there are no rules or formulas for measuring success, you can absolutely develop your own system of metrics to help you determine the success of your engagement. Take a read through the materials below, courtesy of Sean Moffitt, co-author of the book Wikibrands[23].

What are your goals?

Before getting into specific metrics, consider the overall goals of your project. Chances are, you're trying to achieve at least one of the following:

- Get your message out to more people and gain more exposure.
- Build a reputation for your program or initiative.
- Build a community of followers.
- Garner rich feedback from users.

Once you've identified the goals of your project, you can start to think about specific metrics that will show you whether or not you're achieving those goals.

What are you measuring?

Historically, measurement of online activity was primarily focused on website traffic. While this remains an important measure, other areas are now of greater priority. Today, the top five items to measure are:

1. **Engagement** – how much time do people spend on your content? Are they commenting? If so, how frequently? Do they return to your channels?

23. http://wiki-brands.com/

2. **Sentiment** – what are people saying to you and about you? Are their comments mainly positive or negative?

3. **Traffic** – how many visitors and page views do you get on a daily, weekly and monthly basis?

4. **Conversion** – how many visitors are taking a specific action when visiting your site or channel (e.g., signing up for a newsletter)?

5. **Customer evangelism** – do your users tell their friends about your site? Do they share or re-post your content?

Within these five areas, there is a huge number of metrics you can track. Wikibrands lists a total of 216, with 46 identified as core metrics to consider tracking[24].

When selecting metrics, ensure you're finding ways to measure different groups along the Community Richter Scale shown below. How big are your crowds? How many evangelists do you have? How do these groups behave? These are all things to consider.

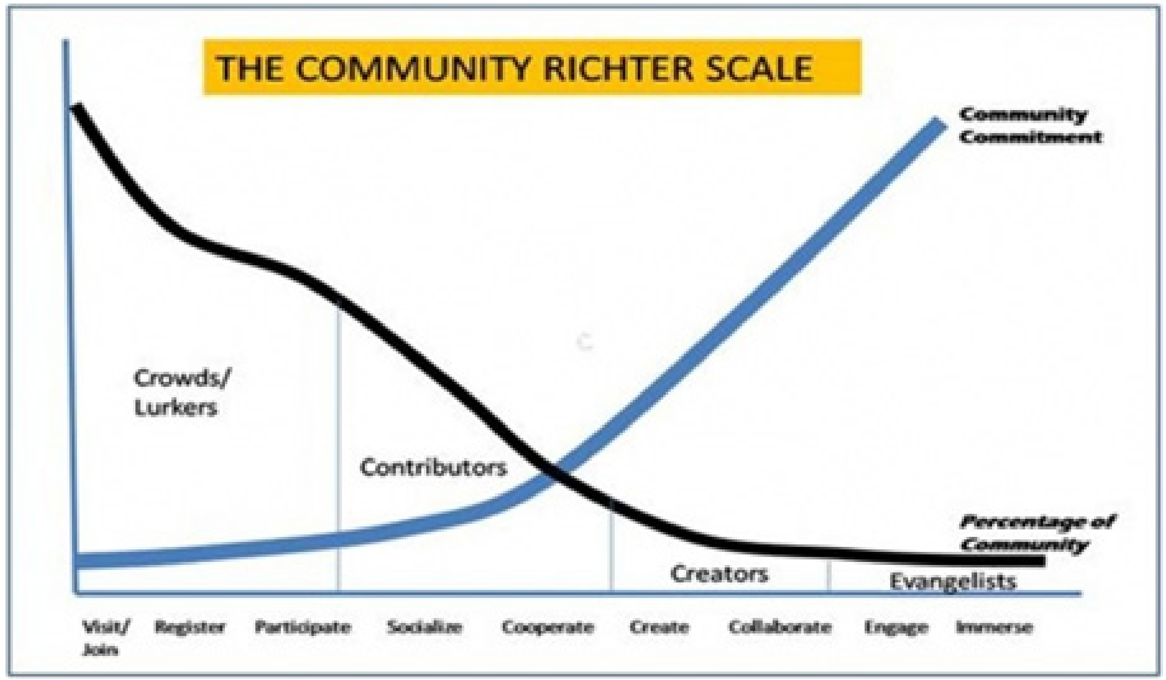


Image couresy of Sean Moffit

24. http://wiki-brands.com/wikibrand-measurement-count-the-clapping-not-the-attendance/

It's important to select the measures that are the best fit for your initiative, so take the time to consider what will have the most impact for you. Pick 5-6 metrics that you'll hold yourself accountable for, and build those into your project plans. If possible, include them in your personal performance goals so that they truly carry weight.

Ten Measurement Topics to Think About

1. **Dashboarding** – Using a dashboard will help you, your team, and your managers better understand your data. Visualizing the data helps to demonstrate insights and forces people to give attention to key items.

2. **Influencers** – An estimated 7% of the web world is responsible for 80% of the interactions. You need to determine who those 7% are and how you can use them to help you achieve your goals. Try using a tool like Klout[25] to identify the biggest influencers.

3. **Monitoring sentiment** – There is a debate occurring as to whether to invest in human or automated monitoring. The recommendation at this point is to continue to rely on human monitoring, as current tools are not yet as accurate at reading sentiment.

4. **Yardsticks and benchmarks** – Here are some marketing benchmarks to start with:
    - Emails are opened 23.8% of the time and have a 5.5% click-through rate
    - Items in a user's Facebook newsfeed have a 0.15% click-through rate, while Facebook ads get 0.05%

    However, even if people aren't clicking, they're still seeing these items and may connect with you on them in other ways.

5. **Corporate coordination** – Good measurement requires coordination. You need to track metrics from multiple sources and report them to multiple channels. Take a team approach – find common measures, share dashboards, benchmark against each other, celebrate milestones, and share your findings with the public.

6. **Net Promoter Score: The Ultimate Metric** – This metric asks the question, 'Would you recommend Brand X to a friend or colleague?' This tells you whether someone is really committed to what you're doing. The **Design Research** module goes into more detail on this metric.

25. http://klout.com

7. **How to get information back** – There are other ways to collect information outside of analytics. Try a poll, a small market test, or conducting A/B testing – that is, changing one factor or aspect of your site and asking for people's reaction. For more on these tools, refer to the **Design Research** module.

8. **Web Analytics** – Use the 10/90 rule: for every $10 invested in an analytics tool, invest $90 in extracting insight from the data. Or, focus your time on what the data means, rather than focusing on collecting the data itself. Some other web analytics tips include:

   - Ensure your entire site is covered, not just pieces.
   - Find out what keywords are driving traffic.
   - Look for where bounces are happening.
   - Segment audiences into repeat visitors vs. one-time visitors, and people who arrive on your site via Google vs. other sources.

9. **Social Analytics** – Look for influencers, overall volume, types of conversations, topic specificity, and hashtags.

10. **Vendor Choice** – When looking at vendors, consider: cost, ease-of-use, simplicity, length of contract, tailorability, team use, integration with other products (e.g., Excel), functionality, and location determination (where posts/tweets are coming from).

5 Measurement Challenges

1. **Access** – Social media companies don't want you to be able to track everything. They own and control the data, because this information is very valuable. You may not be able to track every metric you want, simply because there is no way for you to access the data.

2. **Time allocation** – Effective measurement comes from investing significant time in evaluating the information you've gathered. If you don't have enough time, your information may not be as powerful as you'd like it to be.

3. **Benchmarks** – These are still being established as the world of online analytics evolves. There is no predictable, scientific way to evaluate data, so you'll need to develop your own milestones.

4. **Absence of insight or foresight** – Data on its own is not helpful. Action needs to be taken based on the results. Try to project the future using your measures and change your behaviour accordingly.

5. **Proportion and expectations** – If you're not investing a significant amount of money in your social media, how much are you really expecting to change the way you do business? Minimal investment in social media should lead to minimal expectations.

Now What?

Here are 10 suggestions of things you could start doing right away to improve your measurement and metics:

1. Spend 2-3 hours on Google Analytics.
2. Start building your dashboard.
3. Identify current metrics that are inadequate; look at ways to develop your own.
4. Provide relevant historical benchmarks.
5. Test a new social media tool each week.
6. If you are using social media tools, take their tours.
7. Learn from others.
8. Stay abreast of changes.
9. Spend enough time, but don't spent too much time.
10. Act.

Writing Your Project Plan

Are you providing information to the public, or having a two-way dialogue asking for citizens' feedback and input? Regardless of where you fall on the engagement spectrum, you will want to document your citizen engagement idea. The business case template (see **Appendix A**) can assist you and help you to get approval in concept for your initiative.

Once you get approval in concept, you will need to plan your project. There are many project plan templates and project management tools. The B.C. Government's engagement project planning template is just one tool to help you plan your discussion in detail and ensure that you are equipped to have a successful two-way discussion with citizens.

This project plan includes the following components:

1. Background
2. Purpose of Engagement
3. Timeframe
4. Audience and Outreach
5. Roles and Decision-Making
6. Partnerships
7. Context Setting for Citizens
8. Feedback Process
9. Measuring Success
10. Deliverables, Resources and Costs
11. Work Plan

The project plan is detailed in **Appendix B**.

Discovering and Planning Social Media

Social media refers to online and mobile tools people can use to communicate with each other, including blogs, Twitter and Facebook.

The B.C. Government uses social media[26] to:

- Give citizens access to government information quickly and in new and different ways.
- Facilitate conversation with the public.
- Allow citizens to comment on government actions and initiatives.

Use of Social Media in the B.C. Public Service

A variety of resources are available to guide employees in their use of social media, including social media guidelines, portions of the B.C. Public Service Standards of Conduct, and some general Q&As.

Social Media Guidelines

The B.C. Public Service Social Media Guidelines provide context, considerations and principles for the use of social media within the B.C. Government.

The guidelines and support materials were developed by employees across government who already had experience engaging citizens using social media. They're based on the philosophy that employees are trusted to use social media tools, and that the public service will support them with training and guidance.

Standards of Conduct

Employees must remember what is expected of them as B.C. Public Service employees. Upon commencing work with the B.C. Government, staff make an oath to abide by the Standards of Conduct, in which they promise to:

- Act professionally;
- Represent the B.C. Government in as positive a way as possible;
- Preserve the confidentiality of any information entrusted to them; and
- Keep professional and work activities and comments separate from their lives as private citizens.

26. www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/connect.html

The bottom line is that the oath applies when employees use social media just as it does when they talk to people face-to-face, on the phone, by email, or during a presentation.

The following sections of the Standards of Conduct are especially important to remember when using social media:

- **Loyalty**: As members of the B.C. Public Service, employees are expected to act honestly and in good faith, and to place the interests of their employer above their own. Social media is not to be used to tell others about issues with colleagues or personal opinions about government processes or priorities.

- **Confidentiality**: B.C. Public Service employees are not to divulge personal and private information about colleagues, government clients or anyone else. This is even more important in the social media age when information can spread quickly and widely. Protecting the privacy of individuals is paramount.

- **Public comments**: Employees are free to post comments on blogs, Facebook, Twitter or other channels. However, employees are reminded to remain impartial and if any doubt could arise about the capacity in which they are commenting, to clearly indicate that comments do not reflect the views of government.

- **Political activity**: Employees are free to join a Facebook page in support for a political candidate or sign an online petition against a piece of proposed government legislation, provided that it is not done on government time or using government computers. It's not OK to use social media for political purposes while in the role of a public servant. Employees must remain impartial in relation to their duties and responsibilities.

The B.C. Public Service Standards of Conduct apply to all aspects of work as a government employee, including social media. When using social media, employees are asked to act professionally, say only what they're qualified and permitted to say, keep private what's supposed to be private, and always remember their duty as a public servant of the province.

Personal Use

The social media guidelines are about use of public social media tools like Facebook and Twitter. They do not apply to the use of internal tools, such as the government-wide intranet or ministry intranets, or employees' own personal use (e.g., what they do in their private lives on their own time).

The following Q&As help guide employees in the appropriate use of social media:

Q. *Can I access these sites for personal use from my work computer?*
A: We have stated all along that we trust employees to be responsible in the use of these tools, just as we trust them in every other aspect of their work. Recognizing that there may be unique circumstances, the personal use of these tools should be limited while at work, but will not be restricted.

Q. *Can I use my work computer to access personal email?*
A: Yes, you can. The policy that previously prohibited this has been amended. Employees may now use their own personal email accounts at work to conduct reasonable personal affairs to help foster a work-life balance.

Q. *Can I have a personal account with Facebook, Twitter, etc.?*
A: Of course. Participation on social media sites on matters unrelated to work are an employee's own concern. But do keep in mind that things like the Standards of Conduct still apply. In other words, you shouldn't post anything that would contravene those standards or bring the B.C. Public Service or the B.C. Government into disrepute.

Conclusion

Citizen engagement is a new way of doing business for government, and in B.C. we are excited for its possibilities. While we have made great strides, there is still more to do.

As the world of citizen engagement (including digital engagement) evolves and changes, we will continue to refine our processes and build capacity within the public service. We will also explore new tools and interact with citizens using their preferred channels.

Use this module as a helpful resource for deciding on what types of engagements you should do and what possible social media tools you could use to engage citizens.

Recommended Reading

Citizen Engagement

1. Rethinking the Public Policy Process: A Public Engagement Framework - Don Lenihan (www.ppforum.ca/sites/default/files/FRAMEWORK PAPER .pdf)

2. Handbook on Citizen Engagement: Beyond Consultation - Amanda Sheedy, in collaboration with Mary Pat MacKinnon, Sonie Pitre and Judy Watling (www.cprn.org/documents/49583_EN.pdf)

3. Public Participation: Principles and Best Practices for British Columbia - Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia (www.bcauditor.com/files/publications/2008/report11/report/public-participation-principles-and-best-practices-british-columbia.pdf)

4. Focus on Citizens: Public Engagement for Better Policy and Services - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/3/42658029.pdf)

5. Guide to Online Participation - Government of New Zealand (www.e.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/agency-guides/participation/guide-online-participation/introducing-guide)

6. Participation Case Studies and Effective Practices - OpenGov Playbook (https://opengovdirective.pbworks.com/w/page/4874180/Participation%20Case%20Studies%20and%20Effective%20Practices)

7. Resource Guide on Public Engagement - National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (www.ncdd.org/files/NCDD2010_Resource_Guide.pdf)

8. What the Public Say: Public Engagement in National Decision-Making - Simon Burall and Thea Shahrokh (www.involve.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/What-the-public-say-report-FINAL-v4.pdf)

9. Public Deliberation: A Manager's Guide to Citizen Engagement - Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer and Lars Hasselblad Torres (www.businessofgovernment.org/report/public-deliberation-managers-guide-citizen-engagement)

Examples of Citizen Engagement

1. Conversation on Health - Ministry of Health, B.C. Government (www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2007/conversation_on_health/)

2. Citizen Engagement and Consultations - Government of New Brunswick (www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/public_consultations.html)

3. Engaging Victoria - City of Victoria (http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/departments/communications/engaging-victoria.html)

4. New Brunswick Poverty Reduction Program - Government of New Brunswick (www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/esic/pdf/Plan-e.pdf)

5. New Brunswick Poverty Reduction Program - What Was Said - Government of New Brunswick (www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/esic/pdf/WhatWasSaid-e.pdf)

6. Speak Out! Alberta Student Engagement Initiative - Government of Alberta (www.speakout.alberta.ca/Default.aspx)

7. Better Decisions through Consultation and Collaboration - US Environmental Protection Agency (www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/betterdecisions.htm)

Social Media

1. CIOs Struggle with Social Media's Security Risks - Cindy Waxer (www.govtech.com/pcio/CIOs-Social-Media-Security-Risks-021111.html)

2. The United States Army Social Media Handbook - United States Army (www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia/social-media-handbook-2011-8992055)

3. Making the Most of Social Media: 7 Lessons from Successful Cities - Chris Kingsley (www.govdelivery.com/pdfs/social-media-success-kit.pdf)

4. Digital IQ Index: Public Sector - Scott Galloway and Doug Guthrie (www.l2thinktank.com/publicsector-digitaliq/publicsectordigitaliq_f.pdf)

5. The U.S. Marine Corps Social Media Handbook - United States Marine Corps (http://marines.dodlive.mil/files/2012/01/Marines-Social-Media-Handbook.pdf)

6. Social Media in Government: Hands-on Toolbox - Government of New Zealand (http://webstandards.govt.nz/guides/strategy-and-operations/social-media/hands-on-toolbox/)

For More Help

Depending on the resources available in your organization, you may need more than just the guidance and advice provided in this toolbox. The team responsible for this toolbox is available for consultation and guidance and has a number of resources and contracts that are available to ministries on a cost recovery basis.

If you have any questions about the corporate approach, this or any of the other modules in the toolbox, or how to move forward on your ministry approach please contact the Citizen Engagement team within the Strategic Planning and Public Engagement Division of CITZ or the User Experience Design Team (UXBC) within the Strategic Initiatives Division of CITZ.

citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca

uxbc@gov.bc.ca

Appendix A - Business Case Template

SAMPLE TEMPLATE - Business Case for Citizen Engagement

While decision-making processes in each ministry are different, this document can help structure the discussion and determine the strategy for moving forward with the idea.

1. **Set the strategic context**
   - What information or service is provided by government?
   - What is the role of government on this topic? Are there third parties involved?
   - Are there organizational structure or governance models that are important to this process?
   - How does this connect with the Transformation Plan, the Ministry Service Plan, *Citizens @ the Centre*?
   - Is this a new initiative or something existing that you are trying to change?
   - What are the societal trends?

2. **Know and show the data**
   - How many citizens are impacted by this topic? Directly or indirectly?
   - Quantify the citizens' touch-points with government on this topic – telephone calls, web site page views, complaints, in-person counter visits. Do you know the transaction costs?
   - What is the budget? FTEs?

3. **Define your audience and their journey**
   - Describe some typical people that would need or want to access this information/service.
   - Describe characteristics of the audience. What are their needs?
   - How do they find out about it now? Are their needs regular, once-in-a-while, cyclical or once-in-a-lifetime?
   - Look for patterns in what characteristics are important to your audience, e.g., birthplace, first language, job, hometown, technical aptitude, mobile access, etc.
   - Use your audience to test the proposed strategy.

4. **Map the current process**
   - Map the process that occurs now. For citizens. For government.
   - What are the steps?
   - Where on the engagement spectrum are you now?

5. **Define your goals and set business objectives**
   - What is the vision set by Executive?
   - What are you trying to accomplish with this initiative?
   - What relationships are you trying to change?
   - Where on the engagement spectrum do you want to be?

6. **Decide on tool possibilities**
   - What traditional tools are used now?
   - Are there other traditional tools that might make sense?
   - What new tools exist? How will these tools help you meet your objective(s)?
   - What is the best tool to meet your objective? Why?

7. **Create the strategy**
   - What will you do, specifically?
   - How is what you will do connected to your business objective(s)?
   - Do you want to take a phased approach?

8. **Identify risks**
   - Identify specific risks of the initiative, including risks of not moving forward.
   - Compare how you will mitigate these risks and adjust and adapt throughout the project.
   - Identify any safety, privacy, public relations, records management and security risks and how they will be addressed.

9. **Identify benefits**
   - Identify possible qualitative benefits.
   - Include potential benefits to the audience, for the Ministry and for government overall.
   - Link back to your strategic context and audience.

10. **Moving forward and approvals**
    - Foreshadow the next steps.
    - When are decisions needed? By whom?
    - What form is required for decisions, e.g., decision note, presentation?

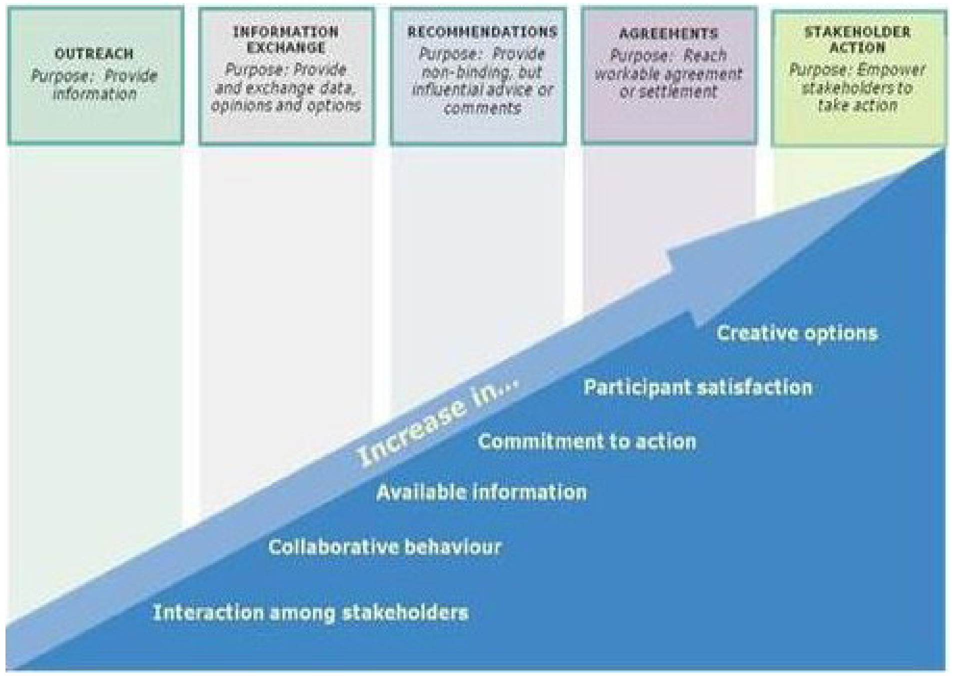
Appendix B - B.C. Government Engagement Project Planning Template

This template was developed to assist ministries who wish to involve the public in improving policy, plans or services. This template supports your work in using the best of face to face and/or digital communications technology to achieve your public engagement goals.

The template will be successful if it helps you design a good practice of public engagement that delivers meaningful results for your program area and the public you seek to involve.

Context

Before engaging with the public, several planning steps must be undertaken. First, consider where your initiative falls on the engagement spectrum:



Graphic courtesy of Deborah Dalton, Center for Conflict Prevention and Resolutions, Environmental Protection Agency

Are you providing information to the public, or having a two-way dialogue asking for citizens' feedback and input? Regardless of where you fall on the engagement spectrum, the first step is to complete a Business Case to determine the purpose of the project and where it fits on the engagement spectrum. The Business Case Template in **Appendix A** will assist in fleshing out the initiative and getting approval in concept.

If you have completed the Business Case Template and you decide the purpose of your engagement is to have a two-way dialogue with the public, particularly if your concept is to ask the public for their input on a policy, program or decision, a suggested next step is to complete the following Planning Template. This template will help you plan your discussion in detail and ensure that you are equipped to have a successful two-way discussion with citizens.

Once it is completed and approved by your program leadership (e.g., Executive Director, Assistant Deputy Minister), please forward the completed template to your ministry communications director for sign off.

1. **Where on the engagement spectrum does this project fall?**

2. **Describe the issue for discussion with the public.**

3. **What is the level of impact of the issue?**
   The Province is involved in a diverse range of services, projects, activities and planning matters, and it is recognized that processes may vary according to the level of impact of a particular issue.

   - Local or Site Specific
     Issues regarding a specific site (e.g., improvements to a street or local planning issue such as change in the use of a site)

   - Regional
     Issues having an impact on a part of the province

   - Service Delivery
     Any change, review or impact on a particular service.

   - Policy Development
     The development or review of policy that has an impact on British Columbia (e.g., legislation).

4. **What information are we seeking? What is the scope and limitation of the discussion?**
A clear understanding of what is needed from the discussion, and what decisions are likely to be influenced by the findings helps to keep the process relevant and avoid misunderstandings with British Columbians about possible outcomes that may be outside the scope of the process.

5. **What is the timeframe for the engagement process? At what stage of the project will the discussion with the public be undertaken?**
When will the process begin and end? Are we talking to citizens at the very beginning or 'scoping' stage of a project, or on a specific element of an overall plan? Are there key dates or deadlines to be considered? Are there decisions that will need to be made during the process?

6. **Who should participate?**
Consider any geographical communities and communities of interest. Name specific people or groups that should be present.

7. **Have MLAs been contacted in relation to this issue?**

8. **Are there other organizations, agencies or partners involved with this issue?**
Consultants, provincial and/or federal government representatives, other local government agencies, etc.

9. **What do we need to know about the perceptions/concerns/needs of participants?**
A summary of our current knowledge can enhance the process by ensuring that we consider and/or address any perceptions or concerns that have already been expressed. (Attach page(s) if preferred).

10. **Who is responsible for the final decision or action on this issue?**
The decision-making process or responsibility for action must be clearly communicated to all consultation participants.

11. **Describe the engagement mandate in a paragraph using the following guide:**

1	We	*Who is responsible for the consulta-tion?*	
2	Need to understand the views of	*Who is the audience?*	
3	About	*What are you asking the audience about?*	
4	So that	*Who is responsible for taking the de-cision or an action on the results?*	
5	Can do	*What is the decision or action to be taken?*	
6	By	*When will the decision or action take place?*	
7	To achieve	*How does this decision or action help achieve wider project or corporate aims?*	

Here are some examples of engagement mandates, based on real projects but not necessarily reflect-ing their actual direction:

- The Ministry of Education needs to understand the views of parents and students about how to im-prove K-12 education in British Columbia so that the Ministry can ensure these interests are reflected in principles that guide the development of a new strategic plan for the education system, due by the end of 2012. This input will help to establish a vision for education in B.C. driven by the people the system is meant to serve. Such a vision will be instrumental in achieving successful change in the system.

- The DataBC team in CITZ needs to network with people who are passionate about using data to make better decisions and improve services, to foster new projects, create learning opportunities and demonstrate the value that open data has for innovation in the public and private sector. Our priority is to support that network, and citizen participation is valued whether it is providing advice about how to improve DataBC, getting involved in DataBC events, sharing the stories on our blog, or (perhaps best of all) creating projects that citizens are passionate about with open data. This work will help achieve the fulfillment of the commitments made in the Premier and Executive Coun-cil's Open Government Direction.

12. **What information can we provide for participants to be best informed?**
Discussion papers, project briefs, reports, statistical data, etc. provided in an accessible and timely way will help the community to put the issue into perspective, determine their particular interest (if any) in the issue and facilitate informed discussion.

13. **Define the deliverables, resource requirements and associated costs for this project.**

Purpose/Deliverable	Tools	Resource Requirement	Associated Costs	$
e.g. Public meeting participants	*Direct mail invitation*	*Time to develop and mail*	*Printing and mailing*	*5000*

14. **How will we collect, collate and evaluate feedback, information and ideas generated by the citizen discussion?**
Meeting notes/minutes, comments on draft plans, feedback forms, attendance records and story-boards are all useful tools for this purpose.

15. **Participation Audit**
Successful community discussion relies on genuine efforts to inform all stakeholders about the process and to address barriers that may impact on the community's active participation. Do any of the groups listed below form part of the target audience?

- **Older people or people with a disability**
  Consider working with seniors groups to facilitate additional publicity and participation. Schedule meetings during the day. Participants may require assistance with transportation . Venues must have disabled access. Printed material should be appropriate for people with impaired vision.

- **Young families, single parent families**
  Consider using local schools and libraries for additional publicity. Connect with service providers to spread the world. Consider providing childcare or children's activities for meetings.

- **People who are unemployed or low income**
  May require assistance with transportation.

- **Youth**
  An innovative 'event-based' consultation process is more likely to be successful. Consider using local high schools and youth networks for publicity and participation. May require assistance with transportation.

16. **How will you provide feedback to participants in the short, medium and long term?**
    Short-term feedback could include auto-generated emails to thank participants for adding an idea and ensuring they receive email notice about new comments on discussions they are participating in. Medium-term feedback could include updates on the status of an idea (labeling things 'in process' or 'being considered') and providing ongoing summaries of what's been heard to date. Long-term feedback is about "closing the loop" and letting participants know how their ideas have been considered in formulating next steps.

17. **How will you measure success? Where and how will you document lessons learned? Can you share them with the Citizen Engagement team so they can be posted on @Work?**

Sections of this tool are sourced, with permission, from Murrindindi Shire Council in Victoria, Australia, Nottinghamshire County Council in Nottingham, England, and Susanna Haas Lyons. For more information, please see:
- *www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/thecouncil/democracy/have-your-say/guides/*
- *www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/files/6f80aa16-50ff-4f6a-a86d-9fd000eeb244/Community_Engagement_Toolkit_with_task_grid.doc*
- *www.engaging.ly/digital-democracy-vancouver-discussion-with-delib/*

Appendix C- Social Media Guidelines

Guidelines for Conducting Social Media-Based Citizen Engagement

The B.C. Public Service Philosophy and the Context for Change

Every day B.C. Public Service employees deal directly with the public, with stakeholder groups and with colleagues. They do that work professionally and responsibly, reflecting the trust placed in them by their employer and citizens. Social media is quickly becoming part of the everyday work of the public service and, in fact, many organizations.

Citizens increasingly expect greater responsiveness and input into decisions that affect them. They expect better access to services and more choice about how, when, and where they get that access. Social media tools are not just tools for communication. They are tools for business and can help us in our work with citizens and stakeholders.

Eventually, social media tools will just be a part of the normal working experience for government employees, just like telephones and email. But, recognizing that social media tools are also new and unique in many ways, these guidelines have been developed to support the adoption and adaptation of these tools in the public service. They reflect some of the unique circumstances that apply to the public service, including the reality that citizens tend to expect greater accountability from government than most organizations. But overall, these guidelines are based on one important philosophy: *we trust our employees to be responsible in their use of these tools, just as we trust them in every other aspect of their work.*

With these guidelines and the right training and support in place, we trust that employees will use these tools responsibly.

Key Considerations

Planning for the use of public social media tools (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) should include developing a business plan with intended outcomes, appropriate tools and resources required to support the project. As part of the planning process, the ministry or program area should have gone through a process that determines if social media tools are the best approach and if they should be one of a variety of approaches to engage the public.

Approvals: Social media tools are part of the tool set for engaging the public; therefore, it is important, no matter which tool you use, that you make an assessment of potential communications issues for government. This might mean involving your supervisor, your executive, your deputy minister or even your Minister's Office in the approval processes, depending on the situation. You should involve your ministry's GCPE team if you think your project may create an issue for government. The training and information that supports these guidelines will provide examples of when to involve different areas in your approval process. But in general, you should evaluate the use of social media tools and receive the required approvals in the same way you would evaluate the risks and benefits of any other more traditional form of public engagement, keeping in mind that social media tends to be a more publicly visible approach to engagement.

Support: The Citizen Engagement team at CITZ is available to support ministries with planning for the use of social media tools. Information specific to the range of tools that can be used for public engagement will be posted on @Work over time.

Managing Professional and Personal Use of Social Media
B.C. Public Service employees who comment on public social media sites in their professional capacity, or who wish to comment on work-related issues in their personal capacity, must adhere to the B.C. Public Service Standards of Conduct. Comments on social media sites on matters unrelated to work are employees' own concern.

Important sections of the Standards of Conduct[27] to note are those respecting:

- **Loyalty**: Employees' conduct should instil confidence and trust, and must not bring the public service into disrepute.

- **Confidentiality**: Confidential information that employees receive through their employment must not be divulged to anyone other than persons who are authorized to receive the information.

- **Public comments**: Employees may comment on public issues, but must not engage in any activity or speak publicly where this could be perceived as an official act or representation (unless authorized to do so). Employees must not jeopardize the perception of impartiality by making public comments or entering into public debate regarding ministry policies, or use their position in government to lend weight to the public expression of their personal opinions.

- **Political activity**: If engaging in political activities, employees must not do so during work hours or using work equipment, and must be able to retain the perception of impartiality in relation to their duties and responsibilities.

27. www.bcpublicserviceagency.gov.bc.ca/policy/HR_policy/09_Standards_Conduct.htm

If in doubt, employees may discuss the matter with their supervisor, and/or consider adding a disclaimer to their web presence, such as "these views are mine alone and do not represent those of the Government of British Columbia or the B.C. Public Service."

Planning for the use of social media must also include considerations for privacy, intellectual property, records management and information security. See more details on these in **Appendix A**.

Principles for Employees Participating in Social Media

Participating in social media means contributing content or comments. When doing so, we trust you to be professional, personable, and relevant.

Being Professional

When using social media sites in a professional capacity, you should identify your role as a B.C. Public Service employee. When in conversation, be a good judge of content. Keep in mind that there are three important categories of information that cannot be discussed with members of the public in any forum - face-to-face or online: 1) matters before the courts; 2) draft legislation; and 3) material about third parties (i.e., information about identifiable individuals) unless you have statutory authorization to do so.

Beyond these rules, two good tests for judging content include:

- "Does this content have a direct connection to my paid role?" - in an online discussion, only comment on topics for which you have responsibility and direct knowledge. Do not comment on areas outside your areas of responsibility. Refer out-of-scope questions to those with responsibility for those areas, or to the relevant communications officer.

- "Is this content something I would be comfortable saying in a public setting, such as a conference or stakeholder meeting?" - that is to say, be aware that your comments may be shared widely. Be sure to express your words and ideas in ways that do not undermine the reputation of yourself, your ministry or the B.C. Public Service.

Being Personable

Success in social media means not necessarily being formal in your online interactions. Being personable will help you build productive relationships, manage your own and your ministry's reputation, and help you become a valued and proactive contributor to online conversations and communities. Draw on your experience to tell stories and anecdotes that illuminate your ideas, and use an authentic voice to help people connect to the person behind the title. In doing so, be mindful of the privacy guidelines in **Appendix A** - sharing too much may lead to compromises of your own or others' privacy.

Being Relevant
Provide information that is timely and useful for your audience. Work hard to create conversations that are productive, and be responsive to questions and input that come in through your site. Consider inviting a colleague's input before making a public posting. Talk to your GCPE team if you want advice about how to create relevant content and be sure to notify them if you receive a media request, including ones from bloggers who might be working on a story.

Summary and Further Information
These guidelines should underscore two key points. One, all B.C. Public Service employees are trusted to be responsible professionals in the use of social media. The second point is that we will strive to support employees in using social media, through information, training and discussion. Additional information will be accessible through @Work - that information will help employees and ministries consider and plan for appropriate use. That information will also further address how to manage risks and issues associated with using these tools.

This is the first iteration of these guidelines and they will continue to evolve over time as employees provide input and ask questions and we collectively gain more experience. If you have any questions at all about the use of social media in the workplace please email them to citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca. We will help where we can or forward your request to the appropriate subject matter expert.

Appendix A

Planning for the use of social media tools needs to include the following considerations:

Privacy
One of the biggest considerations in using social media is the protection of any personal information that is collected and disclosed. There are legislated restrictions through The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA)[28] regarding what government may collect, use and disclose. Personal information has a special meaning in FOIPPA, which is "information about an identifiable individual other than contact information" (with contact information meaning workplace address, telephone number, email, etc. when used to contact that person at a place of business for a business purpose). The definition of personal information has a broad scope and includes, among other things, an individual's home address or email, appearance and image, educational and employment history, and personal opinions.

Because much of the content of social media sites contains personal information (i.e., user accounts containing personal profiles and pictures, comments containing opinions, images of people in photos or vid-

28. www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/96165_00

eos, etc.), FOIPPA plays a significant role in government's ability to use social media tools.

One of the first questions is to ask is if there is any personal information contained in the content - either content collected from a social media site, or content that is to be posted, i.e.:

- Does the content contain photos or videos containing identifiable individuals?
- Is the content about a particular individual?
- Is an individual expressing an opinion?

If there is no personal information, FOIPPA does not apply, as there are no restrictions to posting text, video, photographs or other information that does not contain personal information (though there may be intellectual property, copyright, or confidentiality restrictions, as discussed below). For example: A comment without personal information might include a statement of fact or a website URL that does not point to an individual; a photo or video without personal information might be of a place or thing without an identifiable person in frame.

If, however, if you are planning to host or establish a social media tool as part of your ministry's work (e.g., setting up a Twitter account, starting a Facebook group, creating a YouTube channel, etc.), or if you are participating on behalf of your ministry (e.g., commenting on someone else's stream/feed in a way that collects, uses or discloses personal information) you should complete a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)[29]. The PIA will help you make sure your social media use is in keeping with FOIPPA.

'Collection' and 'disclosure' using social media are complicated. The Citizen Engagement Team at CITZ is available to support ministries and bring appropriate expertise in on this topic. Here are some of the details:

Collection
Personal information can be collected in a number of ways on a social media site. If planned content will contain personal information, ***before collecting it*** government must:

- Meet one of the requirements of the collection provision under FOIPPA. Consultation, service provision, and communication purposes are laudable goals, but government must be able to demonstrate that the collection relates directly to and is *necessary* for a program or the activity it is undertaking. Necessity is a strict test – it does not mean "it's convenient" or "would be nice to have." Much of the chatter of social media sites will not pass the "necessity" test.
    - Employees should consider stripping content of personal information before saving it, such as only saving peoples' comments, not the names of the people who made them.

29. www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/priv_leg/foippa/pia/pia_index.page?

    - When using a government site to engage the public, you should also carefully consider how you pose questions as you do not want to elicit from the public more information than is "necessary".

- Provide notice that ministries are collecting the information. This notice must include the specific authority under FOIPPA or other legislation for collecting the personal information, the purpose of the collection, and the contact information of an employee within the relevant program who can answer questions about the collection. Your design and use of a social media site must be planned so that this notice is given to anyone commenting or sharing information on the site.

Government may ***not*** collect personal information about a third party. For example: John Smith posts, "My wife, Jane Smith, needs to take daily doses of Medication A." This post contains Jane's personal information. In most cases, FOIPPA requires that the collection of personal information be directly from the person it is about; therefore, you should not collect this information in personalized form. Posting information of this kind should be actively discouraged wherever possible through site moderation, explicit terms of use, and careful consideration of what types of questions to the public are posted to the site.

Ministries may wish to provide other channels for interaction, such as a government email address, for users who do NOT wish to share information with the B.C. Government on social media sites.

Disclosure
Before *disclosing* personal information by posting it to a social media site, ministries should know that posting content to the Internet is a disclosure of personal information outside of Canada which requires special authority under FOIPPA. Should government post content that contains personal information on a social media site (subject to intellectual property, copyright, and confidentiality, restrictions, as discussed below), the first question to ask is, "Who posted the personal information?"

- Government may re-post personal information that was originally contributed to a social media site by the person it is about and if the personal information was both compiled and is being disclosed for the purposes of public discussion and promotion of proposed or existing initiatives, policies, proposals, programs, and legislation of your ministry. For example, if Jane Smith posts her opinion about a new piece of legislation on a government site or social media site, you may re-post her name and opinion.

- Government may not freely re-post personal information from other information sources, such as another website, photos, a newspaper article, government press release or ministry file. To do so, ministries must either have the written consent from the individual whose information is being disclosed or there must be legislation directing that the disclosure may take place. However, posting URLs and web addresses pointing to this information is permissible. You may want to investigate online consent as it relates to your project, as there are nuances under FOIPPA.

Intellectual Property

Intellectual property commonly used within government includes trademarks, official marks, and copyright. Trademarks and official marks are names, logos or other branding associated with an entity. Copyright encompasses a wide range of materials that includes written materials, such as books, manuals, reports and computer software; visual materials such as videos, photographs, pictures, posters and maps; and audio materials such as music and voice recordings.

Like any other type of property, intellectual property can be owned and disposed of by the Province. Disposal of intellectual property involves the sale, transfer or, most importantly in the context of social media sites, licensing of intellectual property rights to third parties. Under provincial policy, unless a ministry has legislative authority or Treasury Board approval to license intellectual property (whether copyright, trademark or otherwise), the approval of the Intellectual Property Program is required.

In relation to copyright-protected materials, where social media sites require a license to materials be provided as a condition of participation, ministries will need to obtain approvals as necessary for pre-existing provincial materials such as documents, videos or photographs. In relation to trademarks or official marks, ministries must not permit any entity to use government logos, branding or marks without approval of GCPE and, if permission requires a license, approval by the Intellectual Property Program, Treasury Board or ministry legislative authority to license property. The Disposal Handbook - Chapter 5 - Intellectual Property and Copyright[30] can be found on the Intellectual Property Program website[31]. In addition, prior to posting any copyright-protected materials on a social media site, it is important that ministries confirm that materials posted on the site are owned by the Province and are not encumbered by existing licensing agreements or other terms of use that would prohibit the Province from posting the materials. In relation to trademarks or official marks, ministries must not use the marks of another entity without permission.

Records Management

When information is shared or advice is provided online, government must ensure that all necessary records are being captured, retained, filed and managed appropriately in the office recordkeeping system. If in doubt, discuss the matter with your Records Officer[32].

Key points:

- If online interactions are transitory[33] (for example, they do not impact decisions, set policy, or document transactions, and are only for short-term or temporary use) they do not need to be recorded and filed.

30. www.pss.gov.bc.ca/psb/pdfs/disposal_handbook.pdf
31. www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/intellectualproperty/index.page
32. www.gov.bc.ca/citz/iao/records_mgmt/rec_officers/
33. www.gov.bc.ca/citz/iao/records_mgmt/special_schedules/transitory_records.html

- If interactions are not transitory (for example, they contribute to a decision or policy or are needed to document advice, transactions or operations) they must be recorded. Documentation options include:
  - Creating the record using standard government tools, adding the relevant metadata after posting (e.g., creator/sender, recipient/audience/dates, when and where it was posted) and filing it within the office recordkeeping system.
  - Capturing a copy (e.g., screen shot) of the posting if possible (but only the necessary information as noted in the collection section of the privacy information above) and filing it within your records.
  - Creating a summary or statement of the information communicated and filing that in the office recordkeeping system.

Records management guidelines, fact sheets, records schedules and other resources are available on the Information Access Operations website[34].

Information Security

When using social media tools, make sure you consider which security settings provided by the site are best suited for your situation and that you understand the terms and conditions of use on the site.

Also, think about your requirements regarding the integrity and availability of information you want to share. Remember, you may be using a site that is not controlled or managed by government. Can you live without the information if the data, or the site, is unavailable for a short period of time, or lost forever?

What security controls exist for access to data on the system and will you be able to ensure data provided by one person cannot be altered by another? Will you have the privileges you need to edit, remove or change your postings?

If you have questions or concerns regarding your information security requirements, contact your Ministry Information Security Officer[35] who can assist you with assessing risks and selecting appropriate security controls. They can also work with you to determine if a Security Threat and Risk Assessment is appropriate for your initiative.

And don't forget, you must immediately report any suspected or actual information incidents (potential or actual breaches of security) to your supervisor or manager, and immediately notify the Office of the Chief Information Officer by calling the Shared Services BC Service Desk at 250 387-7000 or toll-free at 1-866-660-0811 and selecting Option 3. You will be contacted shortly by the OCIO's Investigations Unit for further details. This procedure is outlined in the Information Incident Management Process[36].

34. www.gov.bc.ca/citz/iao/records_mgmt/
35. www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/informationsecurity/MISO/MISO.page?
36. www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/information_incident/index.page?

Appendix D - Blogs

This module is provided to B.C. Public Servants to guide them through their use of blogs as engagement tools.

Phase 1 – Discovery

Whether sharing political opinions, technology news, entertainment scandals or funny pictures of cats, blogs are one of the top ways to engage people on the web. More and more, organizations are using blogs as a way to interact with and learn from their clients and stakeholders.

What is a Blog?

A blog is a website, or part of a website, that is regularly updated by an author. With each new entry, or blog post, visitors are given space to comment, creating a dialogue between the author and visitors.

Blog Characteristics

- Text, images, video, audio and hyperlinks.
- A more conversational writing style than traditional websites.
- Reverse chronological order with the most recent post at the top of the page.
- The addition of new posts as often as the blogger/author likes.
- Multiple bloggers/authors permitted.
- Comments from the audience are permitted and encouraged.

Blogs and the B.C. Government

The B.C. Government uses blogs[37] to:

- Inform the public about government initiatives and future priorities.
- Provide a platform for conversation on a specific topic.
- Get feedback on a specific topic.
- Gather ideas or solutions from the public.
- Connect with hard-to-reach people (e.g. those in remote communities).

Some B.C. Government blogs include:

- B.C. Career Advisor (http://blog.gov.bc.ca/careeradvisor/)

37. www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/connect.html#blogs

- DataBC (http://blog.data.gov.bc.ca/)
- HelloBC (www.hellobc.com/british-columbia/blog.aspx)
- Living Water Smart (http://blog.gov.bc.ca/livingwatersmart/)
- TranBC (www.tranbc.ca/)

Phase 2: Planning

Getting Started - Develop a Business Case

Before you start a blog, you need to develop a business case to show that a blog is the right tool for your project. The business case template can help you define things like:

- Target audience
- Scope
- Purpose of the blog
- Benefits and risks

You will also want to consider:

- The name of the blog
- Whether other social media channels will be used to support the blog
- Existing blogs/bloggers that you can connect with
- The design of the blog - colours, fonts, tone, sitemap, etc.

Be sure to include GCPE early on when developing the business case for a blog. Their role is to ensure consistency in messaging. Just as with other corporate messaging, it will be important to ensure that the content you post is appropriate and aligned. GCPE will also help build a communications plan for promoting and connecting the blog to other social media and communication channels. You can learn more about GCPE's role on @Work.

Technical Solutions/Costs

Once you've received approval to proceed, you should connect with the Corporate Online Services (COS) of CITZ to review the corporate government blogging service. The COS blog service provides:

- Full compliance with government privacy and legal requirements, including a completed Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA). A PIA is a checklist that's used to determine if the collection, use and disclosure

of personal information on the blog meets the standards of FOIPPA.
- Custom themes, look and feel
- Plug-ins (e.g., YouTube galleries, Twitter feeds) that have been reviewed and approved for use in a government context
- Web analytics and visitor tracking
- Basic training for blog editors and authors
- Ongoing technical support

Have a look at the COS blog proposal form to get an understanding of the type of agreement you'll enter into for technical solutions and costs. The costs vary depending on the functionality you want, but a basic blog is $3,500 for set-up with a monthly fee thereafter for ongoing management of the site.

Contact the COS Office for more information.

If you wish to use a service other than the B.C. Government blogging service, privacy and legal reviews will be required. There will be additional costs beyond the blogging service (e.g., building web content, multi-media, moderation, equipment), so include these in your business case as well.

Resources – Money and People

As mentioned above, the basic cost for a blog through COS is $3,500 plus a monthly fee, and different costs will apply if you choose to use an outside service. In addition, the cost of staff time to moderate the blog must also be taken into account. Content needs to be planned, scheduled, written and posted, and comments must be moderated - this requires time, so you will need to plan accordingly. You can also "outsource" some or all of your content creation - have members of your network blog for you, but consider whether they will require remuneration.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

The use of blogs in the B.C. Government must comply with FOIPPA. Details on how social media can be affected by the FOIPPA are available in the social media guidelines. Contact the Privacy and Access Helpline at 250-356-1851 or CPIAadmin@gov.bc.ca for assistance.

Phase 3: Launch

What do you need to do to manage and monitor your blog now that it's up and running?

Write Good Blog Posts

A blog is only as good as the content you put on it. To write high-quality blog posts, you must:

- **Be personable**. Write the way you speak (i.e., conversationally), use first-person tense in your writing (I / we), use contractions and provide interesting stories and anecdotes.
- **Be effective**. Use headings and bullet points, write at a Grade 6 reading level, use plain language (no jargon, slang, clichés, government buzzwords, etc.), get to the point quickly and write in active voice (e.g., The Minister delivered a rousing speech), not passive voice (e.g., A rousing speech was delivered by the Minister).
- **Be relevant**. Provide important and timely information and content your readers can't get elsewhere, useful feedback to comments and queries, and added value to the conversation.
- **Be authentic**. Write your own posts, tell the truth at all times and avoid sensationalism.
- **Be mindful**. Say only what you're qualified and authorized to say. Don't divulge matters before the courts, draft legislation or material about third parties (i.e., information about identifiable individuals) unless you have statutory authority to do so. Protect your and others' privacy.
- **Be professional**. Abide by the B.C. Government Standards of Conduct at all times. Represent your ministry and the B.C. Public Service in as positive a way as possible. Express yourself in ways that improve your reputation and credibility.
- **Be respectful**. Respect your audience – avoid personal insults, obscenity, ethnic slurs, or topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory (e.g., politics and religion). Respect copyright - obtain permission to use third-party materials (e.g., text, images, media) and properly acknowledge the sources.

What to expect

The unexpected - Don't expect people to respond how you want them to. They are more likely to provide stories and anecdotes based on their experiences or even videos or research reports. Think about how to encourage people to tell stories in the medium of their choice – video, SMS, text, print, photos, paintings, drawings, etc. – while being careful to ensure participants' privacy.

To connect people in new ways - People will be interested in the content that frames the subject matter. But they will be even more interested in the community the blog generates. Find interesting and imaginative ways to connect people. Point out participants who are saying similar things, different things or outrageous things that might be of interest. Use the technology to produce information that will help lead people to discovery.

Moderate Your Blog

After you post content to your blog, you need people to moderate (manage) the conversation.

Moderators' roles include:
- Encouraging discussion/comments
- Keeping the conversation moving
- Suggesting ways to get the conversation back on track or move on to new topics
- Ensuring that all comments adhere to the Moderation Policy

Moderation Policy

Every B.C. Government blog must have a moderation policy that's been reviewed by the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's legal services. The standard moderation policy[38] explains how moderators will respond to comments from the audience. If you are blogging with minors you may need to do take some additional safeguards for their safety. Contact the Citizen Engagement team[39] for an analysis on privacy and consent when blogging with minors.

Moderation is vital to the success of your blog. It lets people know their comments are valued and will get a response. Moderation also ensures the conversation follows a respectful and safe path.

Approaches to Moderation

Moderation can range anywhere from hands-off to full facilitation. If your audience is an already established and active community, you may choose to have the moderators be less involved. For a broader, public audience, the moderators may need to be more hands-on. This is especially true if the subject matter is controversial or of a highly sensitive nature. In this case, moderators may need to ensure the conversation is appropriate and complies with the Moderation Policy. Think carefully about your audience and the purpose and content of your blog when deciding which moderation approach will work best for you.

Choosing and Training Moderators

Here are some important questions you'll need to answer:
- Will you have one moderator or a team?
- How will you train and support your moderators, at first and over time?
- What hours will your moderators be available?
- How many comments are you expecting? 100? 1,000? 100,000?

38. www.data.gov.bc.ca/dbc/admin/moderation_policy.page
39. Citizen Engagement Team: citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca

- What is your process for approving, rejecting or forwarding comments for further action?
- What is your process for defending moderator decisions?

Encourage Participation
Ways to encourage participation include:

- Regularly update your blog. People are more likely to read your blog and make comments if new and interesting content is frequently added.

- Try to get decision-makers online. Encourage decision-makers to participate in your blog as authors, commenters or both. Their involvement will add interest and reinforce participants' sense that they're part of a significant discussion.

- Remember the one-percent rule. Typically just one percent of users contribute 90 percent of content.
  - The engaged one percent are your most passionate participants. Because of their passion, they are leaders and can help engage others. Be sure that they distinguish themselves with the merit of their ideas and the efforts they apply to building the strength of the community – not their ability to generate noise. Your responsibility as host is to set a tone.
  - About 10-20 percent contribute occasionally, and the rest will watch and contribute if you make it easy for them.
  - "Lurkers" are the bulk of the iceberg. Work hard to engage them in ways that work best for them because they can bring ideas they see online into the offline world.
  -

Phase 4: Maintenance & Wrap Up

Evaluate Your Blog
When the time comes to evaluate your blog, you should consider the following questions:
- Did you hear from the people you hoped to reach?
- Did you get the feedback you needed? Did it meet your purpose?
- Did you design the right process?
- Did you accomplish the goals set out at the beginning of the blog?
- What was the follow-up process?
- Were people satisfied that they were listened to?
- What are the lessons others can learn from you?
- What are the obstacles that can be removed or avoided to make this easier for others?

To get the answers to these questions, you might decide to interview participants after the blog closes. You can also analyze the web statistics for your blog. The COS Office has web analytics software that will provide you with a range of standard reports about your blog, including:

- Page views
- Visitor comments per post
- Visitor comments by geographic region
- Who is connecting and from where

Talk to the COS Office as well about what you can collect and how that data will be transferred between ministries. You're collecting peoples' opinions and have the right to analyze those but only as set out in the terms of use. The privacy of participants is paramount.

You may want to talk to the Citizen Engagement Team about some tools that have been used by other ministries to analyze government blog comments. One of the ways to plan for this up front is to use tags within your blog. The COS Office can assist you with this in the planning stage.

Wrap It Up

Here are some things to think about when your engagement project is over and you're wrapping up your blog:

- How will you archive the content?
- How will you keep a record of the information?
- Will the public want to continue the discussion in the future, and is the blog the best forum for doing so?

Resources

- Moderating Wiki, Blog, and Forum Contributions (www.wellho.net/mouth/390_Moderating-wiki-blog-and-forum-contributions.html)

- Blog Moderation Challenges (www.boundlessline.org/2007/01/blog_moderation.html)

- Moderating Your Blog – Three Times When it's OK to Delete Comments! (www.affilorama.com/blog/three-times-when-its-ok-to-delete-comments)

- Blog Metrics: Six Recommendations for Measuring Your Success (www.kaushik.net/avinash/2007/11/blog-metrics-six-recommendations-for-measuring-your-success.html)

- Do You Have Analytics on Your Blog? (http://blogmarketingjournal.com/tag/blog-analytics/)
- How to Measure a Blog's Success (www.problogger.net/archives/2006/02/09/how-to-measure-a-blogs-success/)
- A Framework for Measuring Blog Success (http://gregverdino.typepad.com/greg_verdinos_blog/2008/01/a-framework-for.html)
- Measuring Your Blog's Outcomes and Use of Other Social Media Tools (http://beth.typepad.com/beths_blog/2007/05/measuring_your_.html)
- Blog Metrics: Measure the Conversation (www.communityorganizer20.com/2009/02/26/blog-metrics-measure-the-conversation/)
- Choosing Goals for Social Media (www.brasstackthinking.com/2010/08/choosing-goals-for-social-media/)
- List of B.C. bloggers (http://thetyee.ca/BCBlogs/)

Appendix E - Twitter

This module is provided to B.C. Public Servants to guide them through their use of Twitter as an engagement tool.

Phase 1: Discovery

Tweets, retweets, tweeps, DMs, follows, hashtags. These are just some of the terms you'll find in the hottest micro-blogging service around: Twitter[40].

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a free online service that lets users post and receive short messages via a mobile device or computer. At its most basic level, Twitter can be used to answer the question: "What are you doing?" But that's just the beginning. Every day people use Twitter to share links, ask questions and get answers, meet new people, advertise opportunities and much, much more.

Twitter Characteristics

- **Tweets**. Tweets are messages. They are limited to a maximum of 140 characters, are text-based and may contain links to websites, photos or videos.

- **Following**. Users subscribe or "follow" other users and read their tweets. You can search for people, companies, or other public sector organizations to follow. If you are managing a government Twitter account, you may want to follow relevant organizations, read their tweets, and respond if you have something to add to the conversation.

- **@Reply**. Users can reply to a tweet posted by another user by clicking the reply button or typing @ and then the username at the start of the message. Anyone following both the person who tweeted and the recipient will see this reply.

- **Retweet (RT)**. A retweet is a message a person copies from Twitter and sends to her own followers. Having a tweet retweeted is the ultimate compliment: it's a sign that the tweet is considered interesting enough that someone would like to share it with others.

40. http://twitter.com/

- **Hashtags (#)**. Hashtags are words or terms with a # sign in front of them. They provide a simple way for users to search for tweets on specific topics. For example, tweets about the 2010 Winter Olympics commonly included the #van2010 hashtag. Tweets about forest fires in B.C. often include the #wildfire hashtag.

- **Direct Messages (DM)**. A direct message is a private message between a sender and a recipient. Only these people can see the message. Users can only send direct messages to people they follow.

Twitter by the Numbers (as of Fall 2011)

- More than 100 million active users
- 400 million unique visitors per month
- 200 million tweets per day
- More than 1 million apps are connected to Twitter

Twitter and the B.C. Government

The B.C. Government uses Twitter[41] to:

- Broadcast information to a large public audience through links to press releases, links to breaking news stories, etc.
- Alert the public to emergencies or crisis situations like forest fires, floods and H1N1 flu
- Direct people to other resources (usually websites) for more detailed information
- Share ideas with the public and invite responses
- Build a niche following for a specific project or campaign like the BC Jobs Plan

Many ministries and programs are now utilizing Twitter to engage with British Columbians on everything from housing to emergency response during floods and forest fires.

- **@BCGovFireInfo** - Information updates on significant wildfires in B.C.

- **@BCGovNews** - News announcements and information from the B.C. Government

- **@BC_Housing** - Our vision is for housing solutions for healthier futures.

- **@DriveBC** - Developing road closure and weather information for travellers.

- **@MyBCLibrary** - Promoting B.C.'s provincial literacy action plan to improve literacy for all.

41. http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/connect.html#twitter

- **@TourismBC** - B.C.'s official tourism organization and source for vacation ideas in our province.

- **@TranBC** - The latest scoop on what the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure does for B.C.

Try it Out

The best way to learn about Twitter is to try it yourself. To get started, you'll need to sign up for a Twitter account. Enter your real name so people can find you easily. Create a unique username. This will appear in all your tweets. Choose a username that's easy to remember. And make it short: The fewer characters you use, the more you'll leave available for people who retweet your messages (as your username appears in them).

Phase 2: Planning

Getting Started - Develop a Business Case

Planning for Twitter in government is easier than planning for, say, a blog. Why? Twitter is simple to use, requires few resources, and – best of all – it's free. However, before you dive into the world of tweets, retweets, and hashtags, you'll need to talk to your supervisor and put together a case that shows why Twitter is the right tool for your government project.

A business case template is available to help you. The case will help you think about your objectives, strategies, audience and how Twitter could help you meet your goals. In addition to the items laid out in the template, you should also think about:

- The proposed name of the Twitter account.
  - Keep it short to minimize the number of characters you use up in the 140-character limit
  - Make it easily identifiable (e.g., your organization's name or the name of the project)
- How will you continue to find content to keep your Twitter account fresh, timely and meaningful?
- What Twitter accounts will your account follow? Who else is tweeting about your subject area?

Be sure to include GCPE early on when developing the business case for Twitter. Their role is to ensure consistency in messaging. Just as with other corporate messaging, it will be important to ensure that the content you post is appropriate and aligned. GCPE will also help build a communications plan for promoting and connecting the Twitter account to other social media and communication channels. You can learn more about GCPE's role on @Work.

Resources – Money and People

Although signing up and using Twitter is free, one of the real costs of using it is staff time to write tweets, post them, monitor the account and respond to your followers. All of these things will take time, so plan accordingly. Consider connecting with others in government who have managed Twitter feeds to determine the staff time commitment required.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Use of Twitter in the B.C. government must comply with FOIPPA. Details on how social media can be affected by FOIPPA are available in the social media guidelines. Contact the Privacy and Access Helpline at 250-356-1851 or CPIAadmin@gov.bc.ca for assistance.

Phase 3: Launch

Tips for Tweeting

Before you start tweeting from your government Twitter account, think about what, how, and when you'll do it. Here are some things you should consider:

- **Provide a good mix of content**. Your Twitter feed should have some content produced exclusively for Twitter and some links to regular communications channels (e.g., press releases and websites).
- **Keep it informal**. The content should reflect your business, but the tone and style should be conversational.
- **Tweet frequently**. How many times a day you tweet depends on what you're trying to accomplish: too many and your followers may be overwhelmed, but too few (especially days apart) and your followers may lose interest. Some experts suggest two to five tweets a day – and more during live events. Time your tweets for greatest impact. Tweet mid-week or during working hours when your feed will have the greatest traffic.
- **Make it retweetable**. Leave enough characters so the RT@username fits within the 140-character limit.
- **Make it timely**. Tweets should be about relevant issues, events or opportunities coming soon. Promotional material should have a current "hook."
- **Make it credible**. Your tweets should tie into your objectives. Where possible there should be a link to related content or a call to action.

- **Be inclusive**. Your tweets should help people find places to go to get more information or find experts outside government.

- **Have one voice**. In most cases it's a good idea to have one person in your organization be your tweeter. Others can suggest ideas, but for consistency have one person write and post tweets. You may want to expand this over time to build Twitter skills within your ministry.

What's in Your Twitter Profile?

If you identify yourself as a B.C. Public Service employee when using Twitter or any other social media tool, keep in mind that what you say will reflect on you and possibly your employer. You should abide by the Standards of Conduct at all times.

What to Tweet About

Before you post anything on your government Twitter account, ask yourself: Would this be interesting or useful for the public? If yes, your tweet may have value.

Tweeting about these things may be valuable to the public:

- New policy announcements, changes to policy decisions that are public, the content of newsletters, etc.
- News from other areas in your ministry or other ministries
- Promotional messages:
    - Announcements about events your organization is running or attending, like health fairs and workshops
    - Materials associated with an information or promotional campaign
- Blog posts by your organization or other ministries
- Other website updates – new or updated sections, new publications, or questions or events where you are inviting participation
- Program and policy content from your ministry site

You can also add value with exclusive content:

- **Ask and answer questions**. Your answers to followers' questions will be visible to the public, not just the person who asked them. Occasionally, you may also ask questions of your followers for immediate insight or quick opinions concerning a policy area.

- **Highlight relevant research or events elsewhere on the web** to position your organization as a thought leader and reliable filter of high-quality content. This content from other useful and relevant sources might include:
  - Updates and news from federal agencies and other partners and stakeholders
  - Emerging issues in your business areas

Phase 4: Maintenance & Wrap Up

Twitter Metrics

How successful is your Twitter account? Is it useful for the public? What can you can do to make the most of Twitter and improve your communications with the public? To answer these and other questions, you need to track your Twitter data. Some of the things you may want to track and tools that can help you do it include:

- The number of followers and how many are active followers versus inactive
- The number of people who click on the links you post
- The number of people who've stopped following you
- Measurement of retweeting
- Alert services that keep track of your presence on Twitter
- Online reputation
- Level of impact and influence

You may also want to track the responses you receive. For example, if you ask your followers a question and get a lot of responses, you'll need to put in place tools to analyze the responses.

Lessons learned

With experience from several B.C. Government Twitter accounts, here's what the moderators say are their lessons learned:

- Create a Twitter name that is interesting, easy to remember and relevant.

- Follow interesting and influential contacts. Twitter is a powerful way of building a network, making new introductions, and accessing interesting and varied content.

- Write content that answers the questions "What holds your attention?" and "What is it you need to know?" This will often include links to other websites.

- Schedule messages to go from any time and date.
- Use a URL shortener to minimize the number of characters you use up in your tweets.
- Track statistics.

Resources

- Twitter in Government Agencies: Best Practices (www.socialgovernment.com/2009/02/16/twitter-in-government-agencies-best-practices/)
- How to Write a Corporate Twitter Strategy (http://neilojwilliams.net/missioncreep/2009/how-to-write-a-corporate-twitter-strategy-and-heres-one-i-made-earlier/)
- Twitter Best Practices (https://cms.howto.gov/social-media/microblogging/twitter)
- How to Gather and Use Twitter Metrics (www.wikihow.com/Gather-and-Use-Twitter-Metrics)
- Twitter to Release a Real-time Analytics Solution This Year (http://mashable.com/2010/09/23/twitter-real-time-analytics/)
- Twitter Help Center (http://support.twitter.com/)
- Twitter 101 (www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/twitter-101?red=tc)
- The Twitter Guide Book (http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/)
- How to Use Twitter for Social Learning (http://c4lpt.co.uk/140Learning/twitter.html)
- Newbie's Guide to Twitter (http://news.cnet.com/newbies-guide-to-twitter/)
- Have Friends That Are New to Twitter? Five Tips to Help Them Hit the Ground Running (www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/newbie-twitter-tips_b5342?red=tc)
- 9 Ways to Build a Twitter Community With Substance (www.brasstackthinking.com/2010/09/9-ways-to-build-a-twitter-community-with-substance/)

- How to Build a Twitter Following From Scratch (www.ragan.com/Main/Articles/43731.aspx)
- Web-Based Companies Broadcasting on Twitter (https://gww.gov.bc.ca/sites/default/files/gov20/ce/files/Moxie-Twitter-1-Pager.pdf)
- Twelpforce: A Customer Service SWAT Team (https://gww.gov.bc.ca/sites/default/files/gov20/ce/files/Moxie-Twitter-1-pager_twelpforce.pdf)
- Twitter Guides for Government Agencies and Employees (http://www.govloop.com/profiles/blogs/new-twitter-guides-for-government-agencies-and-employees?xg_source=activity)

Appendix F - Facebook

This module is provided to B.C. Public Servants to guide them through their use of Facebook as an engagement tool.

Phase 1: Discovery

Social networking is about establishing and building relationships with people who have common personal or professional interests. Social networking takes place in the real, face-to-face world all the time. It also takes place online and the most common location it takes place is on Facebook[42].

What is Facebook?

Facebook is the most popular social networking website in the world. Facebook users can add people as friends, send them messages and update their personal or corporate profile to notify friends about changes. Users can join networks organized by city, workplace, school, college, common interests or causes.

Facebook Characteristics

- **Profiles**. Each user builds a profile page. There, they share information about themselves, post pictures, and create "statuses" to share updates about themselves. Each user's profile has a "timeline" where their friends can write messages. Timeline posts are visible to the user's other friends, who have the ability to add comments to posts.

- **Friends**. Users connect by adding each other as "friends." Users can decide how much of their profile to share with each friend, but for the most part, users allow their friends to see their entire profile.

- **Newsfeed**. Each user's homepage shows a newsfeed – a chronological timeline of updates from their friends. Newsfeeds also display updates from pages that users have "liked."

- **Pages**. Organizations can create pages where they share information and photos and interact with users. Users click a button to "like" a page, and updates from that page are shared in their newsfeed. If you wish to use Facebook to engage with citizens, you would do so by creating a page.

42. http://www.facebook.com/

Facebook by the Numbers (as of Fall 2011)

- More than 800 million active users
- 50 percent of active users log on to Facebook in any given day
- An average user has 130 friends
- More than 900 million objects for users to interact with (pages, groups, events and community pages)

Facebook and the B.C. Government

The B.C. government is quite active on Facebook[43] because:

- Organizations can post live information in one place, and participants can return again and again to get the most up-to-date and relevant information.
- Participants can interact with organizations and with each other.
- Anyone who is part of the network can post links, videos, websites or research.
- Participants can interact, collaborate, communicate and follow the actions of others and by way of that, find new sources of ideas, information and opinions.

Phase 2: Planning

Getting Started - Develop a Business Case

Before you can use Facebook for a government project, you'll need to create a business case and get it approved. A business case template is available to help you in **Appendix A**. As you move through the business case template you'll need to think about the following areas:

- **What are you trying to accomplish?** Explain your objectives clearly and state how Facebook can help you achieve them.

- **Who is the target audience and are they on Facebook already?** Considering how many people are on Facebook (800 million active members), it's quite possible your target audience is as well.

- **Does anyone else in this area have a Facebook page?** Check if other organizations or groups in your field have a Facebook page. If they do, study them closely. What can you learn from them to make your Facebook page successful? How can you make yours stand out from the crowd?

- **How will you handle the comments and activity that may come your way on Facebook?** By using Facebook, you're opening your content to a much broader audience than just British Columbians. How will you deal with comments from a potentially huge audience? How will it impact your analysis and your discussion?

43. http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/connect.html#facebook

- **Who will monitor the page and make comments?** Moderation is important. Building understanding and capacity for moderation will need to be part of your plan.

As well, you'll need to consider some logistics, such as:
- What is the page name?
- What logo or image will be used as a profile photo?
- What other pages will your account "like"?
- What initial content will you use to populate the page?
- Which Facebook features will the page use?

Be sure to include GCPE early on when developing the business case for Facebook. Their role is to ensure consistency in messaging. Just as with other corporate messaging, it will be important to ensure that the content you post is appropriate and aligned. GCPE will also help build a communications plan for promoting and connecting the Facebook account to other social media and communication channels. You can learn more about GCPE's role on @Work.

Resources - Money and People
As part of your planning, recognize that using Facebook may not be totally free: there could be costs associated with customization. Beyond that, the real cost is staff time. Using Facebook requires people with skills to create content, moderate discussions, and keep the community active. As you plan your Facebook project, it might be a good idea to connect with others in the B.C. Government who have developed Facebook pages. Find out how they created an effective Facebook presence.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
Use of Facebook in the B.C. Government must comply with FOIPPA[44]. Details on how social media can be affected by FOIPPA are available in the social media guidelines. Contact the Privacy and Access Helpline at 250-356-1851 or CPIAadmin@gov.bc.ca for assistance.

Phase 3: Launch

Moderating your Facebook Page
Once you post content to your page, you'll need people to moderate (manage) the conversation. Moderators' roles include:
- Encouraging discussion and comments
- Keeping the conversation moving

44. http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00

- Suggesting ways to get the conversation back on track or move on to new topics
- Ensuring that all comments adhere to the B.C. Government Facebook Moderation Policy[45]

Moderation is vital to the success of your Facebook page. It lets people know their comments are valued and will get a response. Moderation also ensures the conversation follows a respectful and safe path.

Be Professional, Personable and Relevant

As with all social media, the guiding principles are our Standards of Conduct. These are some of the questions you should ask yourself before posting anything on your Facebook page:

- Am I acting in my professional capacity?
- Am I maintaining the privacy of things like new laws, procurement and personal identity?
- What would my boss or my deputy or my mother think of what I'm writing?

Be Professional

As a member of the B.C. Public Service, the three important categories of information you absolutely cannot discuss with members of the public on Facebook or in any other forum are:

- Matters before the courts;
- Draft legislation; and
- Material about third parties (i.e., information about identifiable individuals) unless you have statutory authorization to do so.

Beyond these rules, two good tests for judging what's appropriate to say on Facebook are:

- Does this content have a direct connection to my paid role? Only comment on topics for which you have responsibility and direct knowledge. Refer out-of-scope questions to those with responsibility for those areas or to the relevant communications officer.

- Is this content something I would be comfortable saying in a public setting, such as a conference or stakeholder meeting? Be aware that your comments may be shared widely and quickly. Express your words and ideas in ways that improve the reputation of you, your ministry and the B.C. Public Service.

Be Personable

Being personable will help you build productive relationships, manage your own and your ministry's reputations and help you become a valued contributor to online conversations and communities. Tell stories and anecdotes or share ideas and use an authentic voice to help people connect to the person behind the title. Be mindful of the privacy guidelines set out in the B.C. Government Facebook Moderation Policy. Sharing too much may lead to compromises of your own or others' privacy.

45. https://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=215915891760044

Be relevant
Provide information that's timely and useful for readers. Work hard to create conversations that are productive, and be responsive to questions and input that come in through your page. Consider getting a colleague's input before making a public posting. Talk to your ministry's GCPE team about how to create relevant content and notify them if you receive a media request, including ones from bloggers who might be working on a story.

Phase 4: Maintenance & Wrap Up

Measure the Success of Your Facebook Page

When the time comes to evaluate your Facebook page, consider these questions:

- Did we hear from the people we hoped to reach?
- Did we get the feedback we needed? Did it meet our purpose?
- Did we design the right process?
- Did we accomplish the goals set out at the beginning of the Facebook project?
- What was the follow-up process?
- Were people satisfied that they were listened to?
- What are the lessons others can learn from us?
- What are the obstacles or improvements that can be made to make this easier for others?

One way to analyze your results is to look at the web statistics for your Facebook page. Facebook's web analytics can provide you with the data you need to understand more about your page and audience.

Resources

- How To Use Social Media Strategically in the Federal Government (US) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oo31b5VeASc)

- Why You Need a Social Media Strategy, Not a Facebook Strategy (http://econsultancy.com/blog/6406-why-you-need-a-social-media-strategy-not-a-facebook-strategy)

- Facebook Tips and Tricks: The Ultimate Guide (http://ca.gizmodo.com/5781165/the-ultimate-facebook-tips-and-tricks-guide)

- Group Love: Engaging Consumers on Facebook (https://gww.gov.bc.ca/sites/default/files/gov20/ce/files/Moxie-Group-Love-Engaging-Consumers-Facebook.pdf)

Appendix G - Wikis

This module is provided to B.C. Public Servants to guide them through their use of wikis as engagement tools.

Phase 1: Discovery

Two heads are better than one. The more, the merrier. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Wikis make these statements come true by enabling groups to collaborate and share.

What is a Wiki?

A wiki is a platform that can harness the "wisdom of the crowd," where no one person needs to know everything but collectively there is enough knowledge to create a resource that is informative, comprehensive, and highly accurate. Wikipedia[46] is one of the most famous examples of a wiki.

Group authoring and group collaboration are two reasons for using a wiki. Wikis are a continual work in progress because they are created and updated live. A wiki can be useful for information that changes quickly.

Wikis allow contributors to participate as much or as little as they want. Every revision can be tracked, and wiki contributors can view the changes and revisions made on each page of the wiki, compare versions or revert to a previous version of a wiki page.

Wikis can be open to the public like Wikipedia, or can be restricted to a specific group of users.

Here is a list of the **Top Eleven Reasons to Use a Wiki**[47], created in Wikilumbia by Matthew Hall (Ministry of Forests, Land and Natural Resources) and other B.C. Government colleagues:

1. To quickly edit content for many people to see.

2. To enable collaboration on information from currently unknown stakeholders.

3. To provide an easy way to link related bodies of information together with a simple hyperlink syntax. (e.g., [[wiki links]])

46. www.wikipedia.org/
47. https://gww.gov.bc.ca/wiki/items/10-reasons-use-wiki

4. To maintain a version history of the content as it develops.

5. To allow a large number of people to have discussions about the information that is posted on the wiki pages.

6. To get people to contribute real content, not just to make "IMHO comments."

7. To be a tool designed for the mass audience, not for top-down managerial messaging where control is necessary.

8. To provide a self-moderated knowledge repository.

9. To have a persistent, accessible, editable location to store knowledge about processes, procedures, best practices, research methods, and current standards.

10. To let Ministry A learn from Ministry B and vice versa.

11. Because a stitch in time saves nine. If everyone added a little tidbit of knowledge, we would have 30,000 tidbits. That is a tad bit more than tidbit, now isn't it?

Wiki Characteristics

- **Edit button/link**: usually found at the end of each paragraph or section. Click on this to make a change (addition, deletion, move content) to that part of the wiki. Editing is easy using the WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) tool. Note: In many wikis you need to register and login before you can edit content.

- **History/archive**: every change to a wiki is saved in the history or archive section. As a user, this allows you to look up what has been done to that page in the past. If you prefer a previous version of the content you can click on its link and revert to that version. Nothing is ever lost in a wiki.

Common Wiki Questions

Why would government use a wiki?

- Wikis are a useful tool to co-author content when expertise is dispersed in time and place. B.C. Government employees with knowledge and expertise who are distributed in different offices with different roles and priorities can use a wiki to contribute in ways that work for them as they are available - they can write, edit or comment.

- Wikis can maintain a record of organizational knowledge, ensuring that it is preserved during employee turnover. Wikis can be accessed, verified, and updated by all employees in the business unit and the wiki can be used by new employees to quickly bring them up to speed.

- Wikis are an excellent way to compile notes that result from conferences or presentations. A comprehensive, long-term resource can be created when attendees combine their individual notes into one wiki.

- Wikis can be used to gather feedback from end users or stakeholders.

What about quality control?
Many people worry that a wiki gives too much power to users: What if one person rolls back the content to a previous version and thereby undoes the improvements from more recent contributors? Or worse, what if someone maliciously alters or deletes content just to ruin an article?

These things could happen. However, one of the strengths of the wiki as an authoring tool is that nothing is ever permanent. No content that is removed is gone forever; the same applies to content that is added. In a healthy wiki community, the vast majority of all contributors are committed to making the content the best it can be. To that end, a wiki needs to be moderated, which means someone is monitoring the site to ensure all is well and the content improves over time.

Phase 2 - Planning Your Wiki

Develop the Business Case for a Wiki

The first step in any engagement process is to determine what you trying to accomplish and who the audience is. The next step is to match the tool to your needs. This part is called building your business case. A business case template is available to help you with this step in **Appendix A**.

In addition to the questions in the business case, you may want to think about the following:

- Will our users be comfortable collaborating online?
- Are our users prepared to work in a democratic environment with loose structure?
- Do we need in-person discussions as well?
- Who will manage the wiki?
- How will we build community around our wiki?

Once you have decided that a wiki is the right tool to meet your needs, you must determine which wiki platform is right for you.

Setting Up the Wiki's Structure

- Keep the front page simple to navigate.
- Avoid having to cut and paste a lot of content in.
- Keep the number of pages down.
- Use a variety of media to communicate the wiki and its purpose.
- Have a venue for off-line discussions.
- Establish moderators and define their roles.
- Ensure you have active participation by building a strong community. Use heavy contributors to champion the wiki and communicate within their networks.
- Clearly communicate a focused purpose, and don't try to do too much at once.
- Know what you are asking people to contribute and ensure that they understand what is expected of them.
- Identify executive champions to demonstrate support.
- Understand the cultural shift that needs to occur – wikiphobia is real. Some people may be scared of the lack of structure. There is also sometimes fear of losing control of a document: wikis are very democratic and put people on a more level playing field.
- Have events for topics that need more discussion.

Phase 3: Launch

Moderating/Facilitating

The biggest part of managing a wiki is finding ways to encourage participants to contribute. You will also have to manage comments and make editing decisions.

Remember that co-authoring is a very different way of working, and there are challenges with getting people to participate just as there are challenges using other social media tools. The biggest challenge is getting contributions, so finding ways to bring people to the wiki and encouraging them to contribute in a value-added way will be key to your success.

Some keys to moderation:

- **Organize your wiki so that people can move around fairly intuitively**. However, you don't want to overthink the structure. Some people prefer more structure and others like more of an organic process. You will have to find the right balance.

- **Set the tone for engagement**. If you don't want people to edit the structure, move pages, or worry about hyperlinks, then tell them so. Be very clear about the task at hand. Be prepared at first for people to comment more than they edit. That is part of the fun of using a wiki – to see people move from lurking or observing to commenting and then to contributing.

- **Use tactics and incentives for contributors**. There are many tactics that can help bring people to your wiki. Information sessions, web conferences, small team meetings, food and financial incentives, and barn raisers. Often people engage if there are face-to-face sessions, where they take the time to edit the wiki. You can also use reminders and deadlines to help bring your content experts on board.

Phase 4: Maintenance and Wrap Up

Wiki Metrics

How successful is your wiki? Is it useful for the public? What can you can do to make the most of your wiki, expand its progress and use it to improve your collaboration with the public and/or fellow public servants? To answer these and other questions, you need to track your Wiki data. Some of the things you may want to track:

- The number of users and how many are active versus inactive
- The number of edits to your wiki pages
- The number of pages in your wiki
- The depth and breadth of your wiki subject matter
- Is your wiki the go-to place for your information?
- The number of visits to your wiki

Wikis also tend to see new page creations and edits drop off while the content stabilizes. This if often a sign that your wiki is actually being adopted and is maturing. It's important to balance edits with visits and page views stats.

Gardening

Wikis are often compared to gardens. Dead end pages, double pages with slightly different title names and broken links are all common. Intellipedia[48], which is the largest internal wiki in the world, employs editors and gardeners to keep information trim and up-to-date. When planning your wiki project, it's very important that you plan for wiki gardening in order to be successful.

Resources

- The Top 10 Reasons Students Cannot Cite or Rely On Wikipedia (www.findingdulcinea.com/news/education/2010/march/The-Top-10-Reasons-Students-Cannot-Cite-or-Rely-on-Wikipedia.html)
- 111 Reasons Why You Need an Enterprise Wiki (http://blogs.atlassian.com/confluence/2010/08/111-reasons-why-enterprise-wiki.html)
- 10 Questions to Answer When Evaluating Enterprise Wiki Software (http://blogs.atlassian.com/confluence/2010/06/10-questions-evaluating-enterprise-wiki-software.html)
- How to Use Wikis for Business Projects (http://mashable.com/2009/07/01/wikis-business-projects/)
- Using Wikis in Government: A Guide for Public Managers (www.businessofgovernment.org/report/using-wikis-government-guide-public-managers)
- 7 effective wiki uses and the companies that benefit from them (www.stewartmader.com/7-effective-wiki-uses-and-the-companies-that-benefit-from-them/)
- Wiki 101 and the Challenges of Organizational Culture at Natural Resources Canada (https://gww.gov.bc.ca/sites/default/files/gov20/ce/files/Moxie-Wiki-101.pdf)
- The Public Sector Wiki Workplace: Leveraging Collaborative Technologies Across the Organization (https://gww.gov.bc.ca/sites/default/files/gov20/ce/files/Moxie-The-Public-Sector-Wiki-Workplace.pdf)
- Intellipedia: Enabling Collaboration in the Intelligence Community (https://gww.gov.bc.ca/sites/default/files/gov20/ce/files/Moxie-Intellipedia-Enabling-Collaboration.pdf)

48. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intellipedia

Appendix H - YouTube

This module is provided to B.C. Public Servants to guide them through their use of YouTube as an engagement tool.

Phase 1: Discovery

The Evolution of Dance[49]. Canada Day with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge[50]. Careers in the B.C. Public Service[51]. These are just three of the many videos you'll find on the world's largest shareable video archive service: YouTube[52].

What is YouTube?

YouTube is a free online service that lets users upload, share and comment on short videos. Anyone can view or upload videos. Users can create custom "channels" where content can follow a theme. YouTube is owned and operated by Google. YouTube is the third most-used search engine in the world, ranking just below Facebook and Google.

YouTube Characteristics

Share. The direct share button allows you to share videos by email, Twitter, Facebook and Google+. You can also directly embed YouTube videos onto webpages, including blogs. Sharing this way requires a basic understanding of HTML.

Views. The number of times a video is viewed is a measure of its popularity. Many YouTube videos now feature a chronological graph of views over time.

Subscribe. Users can follow other users by subscribing to their channels. Each subscriber receives a notification when a video is added.

Pop-out, full-screen viewing, and higher resolution viewing. These viewing options allow users to watch videos in larger sizes and higher quality.

Title, description, and tags. The video's title and description are used by various search engines to identify the content of the video. Tags are keywords associated with the video that do the same thing.

49. www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMH0bHeiRNg
50. www.youtube.com/CdnHeritage#p/u/19/7VpIL3pfbLM
51. www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMAs2RgADiQ&feature=channel_video_title
52. www.youtube.com/

- **Comments**. The comment field allows viewers to share their opinions on specific videos and respond to other users' comments. Despite restricting comments to account holders, the sheer popularity and vast size of YouTube tends to attract inappropriate comments. As a result, many government YouTube channels do not allow comments or choose not to respond to comments.

YouTube by the numbers (as of Fall 2011)

- Over three billion videos are viewed each day
- 48 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute
- 150 years worth of video is shared on Facebook each day
- More than 500 tweets containing YouTube links are shared on Twitter every minute

The B.C. Government uses YouTube[53] to:

- Broadcast information to a large public audience
- Provide detailed information on policy and events
- Share ideas with the public and invite responses
- Promote itself as an employer
- Create momentum for a specific project or campaign like the You Gotta Be Here initiative[54]

Some B.C. Government YouTube channels include:

- Province of BC[55] – the province's official YouTube channel
- BC Housing[56] - information on subsidized housing
- BC Public Service[57] – promoting the careers available in the public service
- BC Trade and Investment[58] – information on B.C. business
- Healthy Families BC[59] – information related to healthy living
- LiveSmart BC[60] – information on climate change
- Tourism British Columbia[61] – promoting B.C. as a tourism destination
- Transportation[62] – information on transportation and related infrastructure
- WelcomeBC[63] – information on living, working, studying and investing in B.C.

53. www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/connect.html#youtube
54. www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXqKORNdDh4&feature=plcp
55. www.youtube.com/ProvinceofBC
56. www.youtube.com/bchousing1
57. www.youtube.com/BCPublicService
58. www.youtube.com/user/BCTradeInvest
59. www.youtube.com/user/healthyfamiliesbc
60. www.youtube.com/LiveSmartBC
61. www.youtube.com/user/TourismBC
62. www.youtube.com/MinistryofTranBC
63. www.youtube.com/user/WelcomeBCca

Phase 2: Planning

Getting Started – Develop a Business Case

Before you dive into the world of video, you'll need to develop a business case that demonstrates what you are trying to accomplish, identifies your audience and explains why YouTube is the right tool to meet your objectives. A business case template is available to assist you in **Appendix A**.

Many of the Dragons' Den Course[64] business cases have determined that video will help, at least partially, to meet their business objectives. Have a look at the Employment Standards business case[65], developed as part of the Dragons' Den Course, which proposes the use of video to more clearly, communicate employment standards to citizens (as one part of their solution). Here you can see how the business objective and audience are an important consideration prior to determining the tools to use. If you would like to be involved in the Dragons' Den planning course to help you build a business case, contact the Citizen Engagement Team[66].

Be sure to include GCPE early when developing the business case for video. Their role is to ensure consistency in messaging. Just as with any other corporate messaging, it will be important to ensure the messaging in the video is appropriate and aligned. They also will help build a communications plan for promoting and connecting the video to other social media and communication channels. You can learn more about GCPE's role on @Work.

The communications plan can also help determine how to build a following. YouTube is one of the largest search engines in the world, which means that getting your video noticed requires some powerful Search Engine Optimization (SEO)[67]. The three most important steps in YouTube SEO are title, description and tags.

Title - this is the first thing YouTube's search function uses to find out information about your video.

- Be specific.
- Keep it short (maximum length is 120 characters).
- Describe the content.

Description - the description is where you can expand upon your title. You can add up to 5,000 words of detailed information.

- Put your most important information at the beginning of your description.
- Include the city and province where the video was shot.
- Provide the names and organizations of people in the video.
- Link back to your website.
- Spell out acronyms

64. https://gww.gov.bc.ca/gov20/social-media/training/planning-your-engagement-pilot
65. https://gww.gov.bc.ca/gov20/social-media/moving-forward#employmentstandard
66. Citizen Engagement Team: citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca
67. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SEO

Tags - tags are key words that help viewers search for and find your videos. You will want to include as many tags as possible within the limited space provided (120 characters). Commonly-used tags are:

- B.C.
- British Columbia
- Government
- Location the video was shot
- Person/group/organization in the video
- Topics discussed in the video

As with every tool, there is a planning cycle beyond building the business case and getting approval to proceed. You will need to determine the strategies to build and maintain your channel in both the short- and long-term and you will need to determine how you will measure the success of the project. You will also need to think about how you will resource the video production.

Resources

Video production can be complex and resource-intensive. Typically the kinds of activities that go into shooting a video are:

- Building a storyboard
- Setting up the shoot
- Determining the shots you want
- Determining who will be in the video, who will shoot the video, and who will edit the video
- The equipment needed to shoot the video
- The format of the final product

You will need the right people with the right skills to complete these activities. Sometimes you may have staff with the skills to do this work (for example, the Living Water Smart videos[68] were developed internally). Sometimes it may be appropriate to bring in outside expertise, like the Ministry of Education did with their BC Education Plan video[69]. GCPE staff may also be of assistance, as they were with the You Gotta Be Here video production[70].

Although YouTube accounts are available for free, there can be significant costs associated with video production, especially if you choose to hire an external vendor to shoot and edit your videos. If videos are produced in-house, this may require significant staff time. Time is also needed to post the videos and monitor the account for comments, if comments are enabled. Ensure that you have considered all the resources you will need before launch.

68. www.youtube.com/watch?v=58xsp2k-YT4&
69. www.bcedplan.ca/bcedplan_video.php
70. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXqKORNdDh4&feature=plcp

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Use of YouTube in the B.C. Government must comply with FOIPPA[71]. Prior to launch, you will need to complete a Privacy Impact Assessment[72] and you will need participants to sign a release form (see section on Releases and Disclaimers below).

When using YouTube, personal information, which is information about an identifiable individual other than their business contact information, must be handled appropriately. Consideration must be given to the personal information disclosed both within the video and in the comments section. Further details on how social media can be affected by FOIPPA are available in the social media guidelines. Contact the Privacy and Access Helpline at 250-356-1851 or CPIAadmin@gov.bc.ca for help completing your PIA.

Intellectual Property

When creating video content, you need to consider all of the materials you are planning on using, such as music, logos, pictures, scripts and storyboards, to determine if you have the right to use them for this purpose. The social media guidelines provide an overview and flow chart that will help you evaluate and determine the appropriate use of intellectual property, such as copyright-protected materials and trademarks.

If a third party is creating the video or any content for the video, ensure that the Province obtains all necessary and appropriate rights and permissions with respect to those materials. You can do so by contacting your Legal Services Branch solicitor for assistance. Please contact your Client Services Coordinator if you are uncertain who your Legal Services Branch solicitor is.

Releases and Disclaimers

All participants appearing in your YouTube video should sign a release form that is appropriate in the circumstances (consider, for example, whether the performers are being paid or if minors appear) and includes specific FOIPPA language. Other types of releases may be necessary if there is any risk that loss, damage or injury to persons or property could arise in connection with the production of the video. In some cases, depending upon your shoot location, a location release may also be required.

A disclaimer should be included with your video when any statements contained in the video reflect the opinions of an individual rather than the Province, or if there is any concern regarding content becoming "stale-dated" over time.

You should contact your Legal Services Branch solicitor for assistance if you have any questions regarding releases or disclaimers.

71. www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/96165_00
72. www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/priv_leg/foippa/pia/pia_index.page?

YouTube Terms of Service – It's Complicated Stuff

Before proceeding with YouTube, be sure you read, understand and are prepared to agree to the YouTube Terms of Service[73]. You should contact your Legal Services Branch solicitor for assistance if you have any questions about these Terms of Service.

Within the Terms of Service you will find an indemnity. The Risk Management Branch (RMB) within the Office of the Chief Information Office will help you with the details on indemnity. RMB approval must be obtained prior to entering into any contract that contains an indemnity (where the Province is agreeing to secure another party against an anticipated loss or damage), such as is within the YouTube Terms of Service. More information about indemnity approval can be found at the RMB intranet site[74].

Because Terms of Service can change over time, sometimes without notice, it is strongly recommended that you make a copy of the Terms of Service as they exist at the time you first plan to use the YouTube website (a copy of which should be provided to RMB and also retained for your records) and that you regularly access and review the Terms of Service to ensure that there have been no material changes. If you notice a material change to the indemnity within the Terms of Service, contact the RMB and if you notice a material change to other parts of the Terms of Service, contact your Legal Services Branch Solicitor.

Phase 3: Launch

How to Create Great YouTube Content

When producing content for a B.C. Government YouTube channel, think about where you want it to appear, how it can be shared, how it fits in with the overall image of your project and ministry, and how to make the content interesting and useful to the public.

- **Keep your brand consistent**. Regardless of the tone and style you choose, your videos should always reflect the brand you want to project for your initiative.

- **Types of video content**. There are a wide variety of types of video content. Some ideas are:
  - New policy decisions and program announcements
  - Information on upcoming projects
  - Messaging around recruitment and government as an employer
  - Sharing complicated data and information in a simpler format
  - Public service announcements
  - Information about processes and procedures

73. www.youtube.com/t/terms
74. https://gww.fin.gov.bc.ca/gws/pt/rmb/indemnityapproval.stm

- Promotional messages
- Challenges
- Contests (many specific rules apply to contests so you should contact your Legal Services Branch solicitor for assistance)
- Requests of the public : "Help us to..."
- Telling the government story differently
- Supplementing web/written information using different media
- Posting information in multiple languages
- Demonstrations of citizens and/or public servants in action

- **Keep it brief**. If your expectation is to gather large numbers of views, or encourage sharing of your video content, keep the content short. Videos under 45 seconds are shared far more often than longer videos.

- **Location, location, location**. Embedding YouTube-hosted videos in other social media channels has the potential to greatly increase the overall exposure and engagement of your project.

Making YouTube a Two-Way Conversation

Many governments are using YouTube to initiate dialogue between citizens and leaders. In March 2010, Prime Minister Stephen Harper answered Canadians' questions in a YouTube-based town hall[75]. Many of these types of dialogues tie in an additional question-ranking tool to determine the most popular questions, which are then asked in the dialogue.

Phase 4: Maintenance and Wrap-Up

Metrics

How successful are your videos? Is the public finding and sharing them? How are they helping to meet the business objectives? Think about the Employment Standards case study from earlier, where they want to use video to communicate process and policy. The measurement strategy should determine how the video is doing in meeting that business objective. Think about how the videos are impacting citizens. Part of the answer is in tracking your YouTube data. Some metrics to track are:

- The number of views
- The chronology of viewership
- The number of times the video has been shared
- The number of likes and dislikes
- The number of comments (if enabled)

75. http://youtube-global.blogspot.com/2010/03/your-interview-with-prime-minister.html

- The hot spots in your videos (these tell you where interest rises and falls and where people stopped watching).
- If you embed your video on another website, gather metrics from there.

In addition, you will want to look at the level of impact and influence of your videos – have you changed people's behaviour? Have the lives of British Columbians been improved through your project? Has the public learned from your videos? If you want some assistance with your measurement strategy, the Citizen Engagement Team[76] can help.

Lessons Learned

- Keep it short and simple.
- Video production expertise is vital, whether it is sourced internally or externally.
- Connect with GCPE to get their support for your project.
- Embedding videos in other websites can allow greater flexibility and control over your messaging.
- Create content that will hold the audience's attention and give them the information they need to know.
- Track as many metrics as possible.

Resources

- YouTube Help Centre (http://support.google.com/youtube/?hl=en)
- How to Boost Your SEO with a YouTube Channel (http://mashable.com/2010/04/16/boost-seo-youtube/)
- How to Get Started Marketing on YouTube (http://mashable.com/2011/07/20/how-to-marketing-youtube/)
- The Art of Video Storytelling (www.slideshare.net/dangreenberg/the-art-of-video-storytelling-sharethrough)

76. Citizen Engagement Team: citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca

Appendix I - Flickr

This module is provided to B.C. Public Servants to guide them through their use of Flickr as an engagement tool.

Phase 1: Discovery

A picture is worth a thousand words, and it's also a quick and interesting way to tell a story. Flickr[77] makes it easy to tell your story with pictures on the web.

What is Flickr?

Flickr is a photo-management website that enables users to organize and share their photos. Users can join groups with common interests or share their photos with family and friends. Users can also share videos, although this feature is used less frequently.

Users have the option to share their photos publicly, so anyone on the Internet can see them, or privately, where only certain Flickr users can view them.

Flickr is also used to host photos that are then connected into other web sites or social media channels such as blogs or Facebook pages.

Flickr Characteristics

- **Photostream**. Each user or group has a photostream that displays their photos in the order in which they were uploaded.

- **Descriptions and tags**. Users can provide further information and context on photos through descriptions and tags. These also help the photos come up in search results.

- **Sets and collections**. Users can organize their own photos and videos into sets, and sets into collections. This brings structure to large numbers of photos. For example, if a user wanted to share photos from a conference, they could organize each day of the conference into a separate set, then all sets into one collection.

77. www.flickr.com/

- **Favourites**. Users can mark other people's photos as "favourites," which enables users to quickly and easily find all of their favourite photos in one place.

- **Galleries**. Galleries are a way to "curate" up to 18 photos by other users. Users can pick out the best of their favourites and highlight them in a gallery.

Flickr by the numbers (as of Fall 2011)
- Hosts over 6 billion images
- Receives about 80 million visitors per day
- Users upload 4.5 million photos every day

Flickr and the B.C. Government
The B.C. government uses Flickr[78] to:
- Engage citizens to collaborate on activities and information gathering
- Share information and images about government services, programs, infrastructure and events
- Tell the government story differently
- Give information beyond the news release
- Promote B.C. as a tourism destination
- Provide images for the use of the media and the general public

Some B.C. government Flickr accounts include:
- B.C. Government Photos (www.flickr.com/photos/bcgovphotos/)

- LiveSmartBC (www.flickr.com/photos/livesmartbc/)

- Tourism BC (www.flickr.com/photos/tourism_bc/)

- TranBC (www.flickr.com/photos/tranbc)

- BC Housing (www.flickr.com/photos/bc_housing/)

Phase 2: Planning

Getting Started - Develop a Business Case
It is important that Flickr fit into the business case you have developed and meets the objectives you are

78. www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/connect.html#flickr

trying to achieve. A business case template is available to assist you in developing that case in **Appendix A**.

Once you identify that Flickr might help you meet your objectives, you will need to consider some logistics:

- Do you need a free or paid account? (Differences between the two are available in Flickr's help section[79].)
- What is the account name? This should be short, easy to remember and a reflection of your work area or ministry.
- What is the proposed "buddy icon" (profile picture)?
- Do you want permission settings to allow the photos to be viewed publicly or privately?
- Do you want or need the photos to have geotags or metadata attached to them?
- Do you want or need to allow users to comment on your photos?
- What is your process for moderating and responding comments?
- Are you going to simply post photos, or create a group where others will post their photos as well?

Be sure to include GCPE early on when developing the business case for Flickr. Their role is to ensure consistency in messaging. Just as with other corporate messaging, it will be important to ensure that any photos you post are appropriate and aligned. GCPE will also help build a communications plan for promoting and connecting the Flickr account to other social media and communication channels. You can learn more about GCPE's role on @Work.

Resources - Money and People

Flickr is an inexpensive tool: accounts are either free or very low-cost ($24.95US per year for pro accounts). The more significant resource to consider is staff time. Someone must be responsible for sourcing photos, confirming associated rights and permissions, posting and tagging them, writing photo descriptions, and monitoring comments. If you are using Flickr to build a community or for a specific engagement initiative like King Tides, there will be additional staffing and resource considerations.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Use of Flickr in the B.C. government must comply with FOIPPA[80]. Prior to launch, you will need to complete a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)[81]. Personal information, which is information about an identifiable individual other than their business contact information, must be handled appropriately. Concern must be given to both the personal information disclosed via uploaded photo (e.g., the image of an individual in a photo) and the personal information collected from individuals commenting on photos (e.g., their profile picture, name, and personal opinion). Further details on how social media can be affected by FOIPPA are available in the social media guidelines. Contact the Privacy and Access Helpline at 250-356-1851 or CPIA-admin@gov.bc.ca for help completing your PIA.

79. www.flickr.com/help/limits/#28
80. https://gww.gov.bc.ca/gov20/social-media/guidelines?quicktabs_7=7#quicktabs-7
81. www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/priv_leg/foippa/pia/pia_index.page?

Intellectual Property

Before posting photos to Flickr, you need to determine if you have the right to use them for this purpose. The social media guidelines provide an overview and flow chart that will help you evaluate and determine the appropriate use of intellectual property, such as copyright-protected materials and trademarks, in your photos.

If a third party is creating the photos, ensure that the Province is obtaining all necessary and appropriate rights and permissions with respect to those materials.

You will also need to consider how your photos may be used by others. Some Flickr accounts use a creative commons licence[82] that provides others with broad rights (with few restrictions) to use photos, which helps to promote the account's message and attract new users. Others reserve all rights, meaning that the photos cannot be used in any way by anyone other than the owner without permission. The Intellectual Property Program is responsible for, and must be consulted regarding, the granting of rights to use and reproduce Province-owned intellectual property such as photos.

You should contact your Legal Services Branch solicitor for assistance if you have questions regarding any intellectual property issues. Please contact your Client Services Coordinator if you are uncertain who your Legal Services Branch solicitor is.

Releases and Disclaimers

All identifiable individuals appearing in your photos should sign a release form that is appropriate in the circumstances (consider, for example, whether the "models" are being paid or if minors appear) and includes specific FOIPPA language.

Depending upon the content of the photo(s) it may be wise to include a disclaimer.

You should contact your Legal Services Branch solicitor for assistance if you have any questions regarding releases or disclaimers.

Flickr Terms of Service

Before proceeding with the creation or uploading of your photos, be sure you read, understand and are prepared to agree to the Flickr (Yahoo! Canada) Terms of Service[83]. You should contact your Legal Services Branch solicitor for assistance if you have any questions about these Terms of Service.

82. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/deed.en
83. http://info.yahoo.com/legal/ca/yahoo/utos/utos-ca01.html

Phase 3: Launch

Tips for Flickr Success

- **Tell a story**. Keep your message in mind and ensure that your images clearly communicate that message to the audience. Post photos that are interesting and grab people's attention.

- **Support your Flickr photostream through other communication channels**. Link your Flickr photostream to your website, blog, or other channels.

- **Be an active member of the Flickr community**. Post comments on or "favourite" other users' photos. It shows that you are engaging with the community, and will broaden your exposure on the site. If another user makes you a contact, reciprocate by adding them as a contact.

- **Post regularly**. Keep your photostream active by regularly adding new images. This will bring users back to your photostream.

- **Organize your photos**. Create sets and collections to help users navigate your images. Highlight relevant photos from other users by putting them in galleries.

- **Tag your photos and write descriptions**. Use multiple keywords to tag your photos, and write detailed descriptions. Doing this will help your photos turn up in search results. In addition, ensure your tags are consistent between photos. Separate your tags with spaces, or use "double quotes" to tag phrases.

Moderating your Flickr account

Once you have begun to post photos, you will need to moderate user comments. As with any type of online moderation, the moderator will need to be professional, personable and relevant.

The moderator's role is to:
- Reply to comments left on photos
- Monitor the account's contact list, and reciprocate when a user adds the account as a contact
- Block members, if necessary

If you opt to create a group where users can join and add photos, the moderator's responsibilities broaden:
- Create group rules and ensure members adhere to them

- Approve or remove photos posted to the group
- Monitor and respond to comments in the group's discussion board
- Remove or ban members, if necessary

Phase 4: Maintenance and Wrap-up

Tracking Your Success

Each photo posted on Flickr displays the number of views and comments it has received as well as the number of times it has been added as a favourite by other users. Sets and collections also show views. If you have a group, you can track the number of members and the number of comments on the discussion board.

Pro accounts have access to more detailed statistics such as:

- Total views for photos, sets, collections and the overall photostream
- Most popular photos
- Referring addresses for the whole account and for individual photos
- Trends of views over time

In addition to reviewing statistics, you may want to ask yourself the following questions:

- Did your Flickr account meet your objectives?
- Did you successfully engage the public?
- Did you collect/share the information you set out to?
- Did you reach the audience you hoped to reach?
- What lessons can others learn from your project?
- What improvements can be made to make this easier for others?

Resources

- Flickr Help (www.flickr.com/help/)

- How to Use Flickr: Basics and Beyond (www.mahalo.com/how-to-use-flickr-basics-and-beyond/)

- 100+ Flickr Resources (http://traffikd.com/resources/flickr/)

- Flickr Help: Galleries (www.flickr.com/help/galleries/)