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SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE AIR FORCE

**AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS AGENCY
EMERGING TECHNOLOGY DIVISION**

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE AIR FORCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

This guide provides Air Force Public Affairs professionals with basic social media knowledge needed to maneuver in the online information space and the basic-level tactics explained here should be used to compliment the traditional forms of Public Affairs, to include internal communication, community relations and media relations.

This is not a comprehensive guide for conducting social media campaigns. It provides exposure to entry-level tools Airmen may use to communicate the Air Force story to broader audiences on the Web. As social media is always growing, Airmen should stay informed through blogs, independent learning, wikis and other participatory Web 2.0 tools such as those described in this book.

Research shows traditional journalism is shifting and now uses Web as a primary resource for information. Air Force Public Affairs must be proactive, ensuring the truthful representation of the Air Force is conveyed online.

In the past, the Air Force did not officially engage blogs or other forms of social media. Now, Air Force leaders realize the broad reach—both positive and negative—these forms of communication have on Airmen and society, as well as the value of maintaining a presence in this information domain. While communication with media and the public has traditionally been the responsibility of Public Affairs, today all Airmen are communicators. The intent of this guide is to educate and empower the PA Airmen who are the trainers for Airmen communication programs. All Airmen are encouraged to use social media to communicate about topics within their areas of expertise, or their interests.

Traditional, vertical communication is critical for the Air Force, but new technologies give Airmen the opportunity to horizontally inform the media, the public and each other.

If the Air Force does not tell its own story, someone else will.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Public Affairs professionals are responsible for researching, preparing, conducting and assessing communication operations in the information battlespace and they must use all available communications means to fulfill this dynamic role.

Social media allows messages to potentially spread far greater than initially intended (hence the term, "viral marketing"), and tools like blogs, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook provide instantaneous communication with vast audiences. Understanding and incorporating these tools will allow Public Affairs to provide a broader range of converged products and become better communicators.

We now fight wars on multiple fronts; one of which is the information front. Joint Doctrine states, "Information is an instrument of national power and has complex components with no single center of control. Information itself is a strategic resource vital to national security and allows communicators to shape the information battlefield."

Together with the joint services, Air Force Public Affairs professionals work to collaborate and develop messages, conversations and positions to engage online communities. The joint fight extends to the Internet, and as such, the Air Force's strategic position makes the entire Department of Defense more accessible and transparent for Internet audiences.

The Air Force provides a unique skill set for America that compliments the other services and it's the role of Public Affairs offices worldwide to educate audiences on the Air Force's mission in air, space and cyberspace.

Note: For the purposes of this book, social media, digital media and emerging media will connote the same overarching communication principles based on Web 2.0 (Internet) applications.
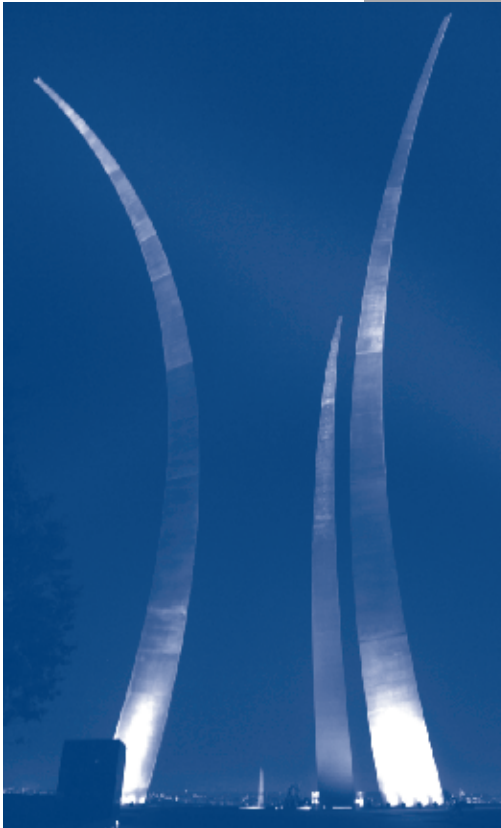
SOCIAL MEDIA BACKGROUND

Web 2.0 is a term first coined by O'Reilly Media in 2004 to describe blogs, wikis, social networking sites and other Internet-based services that emphasize collaboration and sharing, rather than less interactive Web publishing (Web 1.0). It is associated with the idea of the Internet as a platform.

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is constantly changing and growing. Wikipedia defines social media as, "The emergence of digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies; while social media defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audio."

This guide changes the way the Air Force employs social media and Web 2.0 technology, and positions the Air Force well to communicate transparently with online audiences. PA professionals can help change the way the Air Force uses these quickly developing, and evolving, trends. Blogging is now considered mainstream; bloggers often scoop reporters and upload video, images and content. Reporters may mine blogs for information providing relevance to mainstream Web sites. As a result, Airmen bloggers are quickly becoming Airmen journalists, propelling their work from social media to the front page of the mainstream media.

CNN AND MSNBC ACTIVELY ENGAGE AUDIENCES THROUGH RSS FEEDS, BLOGS, AND ENDEAVORS SUCH AS iREPORT

MAINSTREAM MEDIA AND WEB 2.0

Traditional media outlets leverage new and social media, taking advantage of the Web 2.0 workspace. The Washington Post alone oversees dozens of internal blogs, many of which are moderated by section editors who previously wrote exclusively for the printed version. News organizations actively engage their audiences through RSS feeds, blogs and online reporting features such as iReport.com, a service launched in 2008 that allows users to submit their own video footage. CNN regularly uses YouTube videos and blogs as a primary source of information to present to viewers and online visitors.

MAINSTREAM MEDIA

Mainstream media reports a shift to digital media. "At larger papers, 57 percent of those surveyed say, 'Web technology offers the potential for greater-than-ever journalism and will be the savior of what we once thought of as newspaper newsrooms'," said Mark Glaser, contributing author of MediaShift. To see more of his article visit www.pbs.org/mediashift/.

Virginian-Pilot Editor Dennis Finley said, "I feel I'm being catapulted into another world…I don't really understand. It's scary because things are happening at the speed of light. The sheer speed (of change) has outstripped our ability to understand it all." Visit the following Web site for more information: http://www.journalism.org/node/11961

57% OF THOSE SURVEYED SAY WEB TECHNOLOGY OFFERS THE POTENTIAL FOR GREATER-THAN-EVER-REAL-TIME JOURNALISM

AIR FORCE AND THE SOCIAL MEDIA WORLD

In an effort to manage resources more effectively, the Air Force issued a policy to end its long-standing tradition of producing printed base newspapers in lieu of online publications. This action provides a good start for the Air Force to take advantage of disseminating its news via Web 2.0 avenues.

Progress is being made toward helping Airmen engage each other across the social media spectrum—with a higher goal of transparently reaching out to industry leaders, other agencies and the general public. The U.S. Air Force is currently creating an official, and active, presence in the larger world of social media. With the help of Airmen communicators, that presence will grow and flourish.

GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS

According to a December 2008 survey from World Internet Usage Statistics News and Population Stats, approximately 1.5 billion people currently use the Internet out of approximately 6.7 billion globally (www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm).

The study also states that Internet use in North America has grown 129.6 percent since 2000, whereas it jumped to 1,296 percent in the Middle East, and 1,100 percent in Africa, with only a moderate increase in Europe at 271 percent and 469 percent in Asia, comparatively. Syria has the highest percentage of Internet growth usage in the Middle East at 11,466 percent, followed closely by Iran at 9,100 percent, and then by Saudi Arabia at 3,090 percent. Even media outlets in non-democratic parts of the world, such as *Al Jazeera*, employ blogs and other Web 2.0 technology in order to disseminate news content. Though there is a mass movement to new and emerging media by the mainstream media, the American public and the military, these resources continue to be infiltrated by insurgents and terrorists using social media tools to counter our messages, intelligence and effective communications globally.

As a result, there is another task accomplished by teaching social media to Airmen. The Air Force needs to turn all of its Airmen, and especially it's front-line Public Affairs specialists, into communicators who combat negative

CORPORATE RESEARCH SHOWS, 1.5 BILLION PEOPLE USE THE INTERNET

influence of enemy propaganda, misinformation and misrepresentation. We are training world-class Airmen to act as our communicators who can successfully wage an information media war against our detractors.

GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA INFORMATION FLOW

The online conversation is a fluid and dynamic space with many factors shaping media, messages and products. This chart reflects how social media products are possibly influenced by multiple factors, both from individuals and mass media. Social media allows for the social interaction between a messenger and receiver. Web 2.0 uses online tools like social networking sites, blogs, wikis, folksonomy and video-sharing Web sites.

CNN ABC CBS NBC AP

FOX **MASS MEDIA** UPI

Reuters Reporters *Al Jazeera*

PUBLIC OPINION

Podcasts Vodcasts

Social Bookmarking Text Messaging

Blogs **SOCIAL MEDIA** Email Blasts **ENEMY PROPAGANDA**

YouTube MySpace

Flickr Facebook

Web 2.0

PUBLIC OPINION

Airmen Journalists **INDIVIDUAL MEDIA** Citizen Journalists

Family & Friend Journalists AF- PA Journalists Military Journalists

GUIDELINES

Strong social media policies and guidelines are necessary to actively engage Web 2.0 applications and Internet audiences. The guidelines allow Air Force communicators to understand what is and is not allowed, thereby setting expectations. Good policies can also help protect people from getting in trouble.

It is up to the Public Affairs professionals at each level to teach and enforce Air Force social media policy, by training and educating every Airman on the proper use and techniques for engaging in social media. Security is critical and is at the source. All policies will be reviewed by Air Force officials to ensure that legal and ethical problems are addressed.

Airmen should note that anytime they engage in social media, they are representing the Air Force, and therefore should not do anything that will discredit themselves or the Air Force.

In general, the Air Force views personal Web sites and blogs positively, and it respects the rights of Airmen to use them as a medium of self-expression.

However, Airmen must abide by certain restrictions to ensure good order and discipline. All Airmen are on duty 24-hours a day, 365-days a year and all actions are subject to the UCMJ. Even if Airmen state they are not representing the Air Force, other audiences may not interpret the information that way.

> **The Air Force respects the rights of Airmen to use blogs as a medium of self-expression**

Airmen, by the nature of the business, are always on the record and must always represent the core values, even on the Web: integrity first, service before self and excellence in all that is done.

BLOGGING

■ **No Classified Info** *Do not post classified or sensitive information (for example, troop movement, force size, weapons details, etc.). If in doubt, talk to your supervisor or security manager.*

■ **Replace Error With Fact, Not Argument** *When you see misrepresentations made about the Air Force in social media, you may certainly use your blog, their's, or someone else's to point out the error. Always do so with respect and with the facts. When you speak to someone with an adversarial position, make sure that what you say is factual and is not disparaging. Avoid arguments.*

■ **Admit Mistakes** *Be the first to respond to your own mistakes. If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so (such as by using the strikethrough function).*

■ **Use Your Best Judgment** *Remember there are always consequences to what you write. If you're still unsure, and the post is about the Air Force, discuss your proposed post with your supervisor. Ultimately, however, you have sole responsibility for what you choose to post to your blog.*

■ **Avoid The Offensive** *Do not post any defamatory, libelous, vulgar, obscene, abusive, profane, threatening, racially and ethnically hateful, or otherwise offensive or illegal information or material.*

■ **Avoid Copyright** *Do not post any information or other material protected by copyright without the permission of the copyright owner.*

"NOBODY WOULD BLOG EXCEPT FOR THE VERY SENIOR PEOPLE. I WONDERED WHY NOT? WELL, THEY HAD BASICALLY ORDERED THEIR PEOPLE NOT TO BLOG. I SAID, 'WELL, YOUR CHOICE IS TO BE FIRED OR GET THEM TO BLOG'."

THEN LT GEN JAMES CARTWRIGHT AT US STRATEGIC COMMAND

Also, consider using a Creative Commons license to protect your own work (see http://creativecommons.org for details).

■ **Trademarks – Don't Breach** *Do not use any words, logos or other marks that would infringe upon the trademark, service mark, certification mark, or other intellectual property rights of the owners of such marks without the permission of such owners.*

■ **Don't Violate Privacy** *Do not post any information that would infringe upon the proprietary, privacy or personal rights of others.*

■ **Avoid Endorsements** *Do not use the Air Force name to endorse or promote products, opinions or causes.*

■ **No Impersonations** *Do not forge or otherwise manipulate identifiers in your post in an attempt to disguise, impersonate or otherwise misrepresent your identity or affiliation with any other person or entity.*

■ **Use Disclaimers** *Identify to readers of a personal social media site or post that the views you express are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Air Force. Use a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Air Force positions, strategies or opinions."*

■ **Stay In Your Lane** *Discussing issues related to your AFSC or personal experiences is acceptable but do not discuss areas of expertise for which you have no background or knowledge.*

■ **Link** *You may provide a link from your site to an Air Force Web site.*

TOP PUBLIC BLOGGING SITES

TOP BLOGS

For a USAF-specific blog, check out: http://airforcelive.dodlive.mil or www.pacafpixels.com.

■

THE HUFFINGTON POST
www.huffingtonpost.com

■

TECHCRUNCH
www.techcrunch.com

■

ENGADGET
www.engadget.com

■

MASHABLE
http://mashable.com

■

BOING BOING
www.boingboing.net

■

OFFICIAL GOOGLE BLOG
www.googleblog.blogspot.com

■

ARS TECHNICA
www.arstechnica.com

■

LIFEHACKER
www.lifehacker.com

■

TMZ
www.tmz.com

■

GIZMODO
http://gizmodo.com

Source: technorati.com

According to Technorati

There are 112.8 million blogs and over 250 million pieces of tagged social media online

There are 175,000+ blogs created every day

New blogs are updated regularly at 1.6 million posts per day, or over 18 updates per second

62% of reporters said blogs play a significant role in the "tone of discussion" in traditional news reporting

52% of reporters say they use blog search engines like Google Blog Search

TOP MILBLOGS

For a full list of milblogs, visit: milblogging.com. You can search by a number of criteria.

■

365 AND A WAKEUP
http://thunder6.typepad.com/

■

A SOLDIER'S PERSPECTIVE
http://www.soldiersperspective.us

■

BLACKFIVE-THE PARATROOPER OF LOVE
http://www.blackfive.net/

■

ONE MARINE'S VIEW
http://onemarinesview.com/

■

MICHAEL YON
http://www.michaelyon-online.com/wp/

■

AFGHANISTAN WITHOUT A CLUE
http://traversa.typepad.com/

■

FROM MY POSITION…ON THE WAY!
http://tcoverride.blogspot.com/

■

THE MUDVILLE GAZETTE
http://www.mudvillegazette.com/

■

SOME SOLDIER'S MOM
http://somesoldiersmom.blogspot.com/

■

WORDSMITH AT WAR
http://www.wordsmithatwar.blog-city.com/

INDUSTRY PRACTICES

Most social media Web sites have their own policies that users must follow. The Air Force policies incorporate and expand upon the industry practices and both sets must be followed. Always consult your local legal office on terms of use agreements with civilian sites. Following are guidelines from some popular social media Web sites:

■ **YouTube** www.youtube.com/t/community_guidelines

■ **Twitter** http://twitter.zendesk.com/forums/26257/entries

■ **Facebook** http://www.facebook.com/terms.php?ref=pf

AIR FORCE BLUETUBE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

These guidelines set the expectations for submitting videos to the Air Force's YouTube presence, known as Air Force BlueTube (www.youtube.com/AFBlueTube).

Air Force BlueTube is the official Air Force site on YouTube for Airmen to share their stories with other Airmen and the public through the use of video. Informative, humorous, exciting or fun videos are all welcome. Specific YouTube guidelines should be followed before sending a video. Some of their basic common-sense rules follow (you can read the full details at www.youtube.com/t/community_guidelines), and Air Force-specific guidelines are listed after.

AIR FORCE POLICIES EXPAND UPON INDUSTRY RULES

EXCERPTS FROM "YOUTUBE GUIDELINES"

■ Don't post pornography.

■ Don't post videos showing illegal activities.

■ Don't upload videos you didn't make, or use content in your videos that someone else owns the copyright to, such as music tracks, snippets of copyrighted programs, or videos made by other users, without necessary authorizations.

■ Don't post hate speech (which attacks, demeans groups based on race or ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, age, veteran status, and sexual orientation/gender identity).

GUIDELINES FOR POPULAR SITES

AIR FORCE BLUETUBE

Air Force BlueTube videos represent the Air Force. Videos that discredit the Air Force won't be posted.

■ It is OK to want to tell the Air Force story, but classified or sensitive information (for example, troop movement, force size, weapons details, etc.) will not be posted.

■ Be cautious of how something can be interpreted by the public. If there is any concern on how it will be interpreted, it will not be posted.

■ Do not cross the line between funny and distasteful.

Follow the rules: your video will be reviewed and rejected if it violates the guidelines and the rules of common sense and decency. Do not put the Air Force in a situation that may result in account termination. Remember that these rules apply to all videos you upload on your own to YouTube.
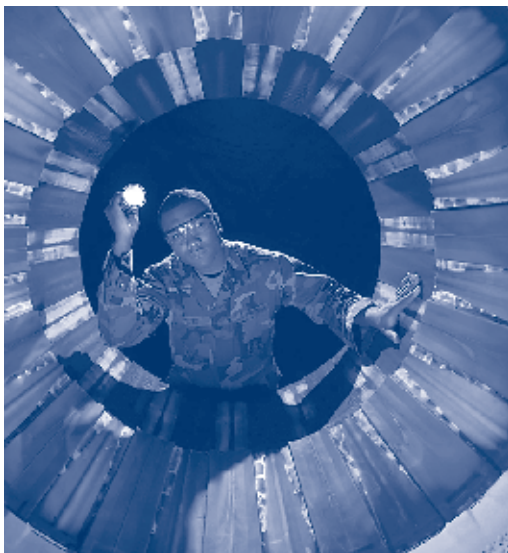
WIKIPEDIA

Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) is a resource for conducting research and a community of people with similar interests who help shape and guide what is posted under entries online. Wikipedia has a strong set of rules for editing entries. Airmen can't post a statement such as, "The Air Force is the biggest, best Air Force in the world." That would constitute opinion and bias. If there is a reference

DO NOT CROSS THE LINE BETWEEN FUNNY AND DISTASTEFUL

to back up your information, be sure it's included. Posting entries to Wikipedia can be achieved by visiting: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About#Contributing_to_Wikipedia

Wikipedia Policy is available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About

Wikipedia's Law of Unintended Consequence states, "If you write in Wikipedia about yourself, your group, your company, or your pet idea, once the article is created, you have no right to control its content, and no right to delete it outside our normal channels.

Content is not deleted just because somebody doesn't like it. If there is anything publicly available on a topic

that you would not want included in an article, it will probably find its way there eventually. Therefore, don't create promotional or other articles lightly, especially on subjects you care about."

PHOTO SHARING

Two popular social photo-sharing Web sites, Flickr and Picasa, allow users to post pictures that are generally visible and available to everyone else, because anybody can view and download these photos. It is important to abide by the community guidelines and be cautious of what you upload. Guidelines are available at www.flickr.com/guidelines.gne and www.google.com/. Always check the Terms of Use.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Airmen are advised to be careful of the details, text, photos and video posted to profiles on MySpace and Facebook and other social networks. Employers and adversaries can search these sites and there are numerous examples of people losing a job due to their inappropriate photos or comments. It is highly recommended that users set privacy settings to "private" so that only your 'friends' can see profile specifics.

OTHER GUIDELINES ARE AVAILABLE AT:

www.facebook.com/terms.php

As indicated in the guidelines, the corporate policies are taken seriously on social media sites. Inappropriate posting and copyright infringement are two of the most serious infractions. Ensure posts don't endorse one product. Keep in mind, these policies are not written to restrict postings, rather they are written to protect people and help keep Airmen out of trouble.

POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITES

DIGG

Digg is a social bookmarking Web site that allows people to share and view content from all over the Web. All material is user submitted, and then is voted upon by visitors. The more Diggs (votes) a story receives, the higher up it goes, ultimately heading to the front page for maximum coverage. Viewers can also bury a story.

DELICIOUS

Delicious is a social bookmarking service that allows users to tag, save, manage and share Web pages from a centralized source. Users post links to stories or other media, write a brief description, and include tags that help when somebody searches for a topic.

FACEBOOK

A free, social media and networking site, allows commentaries, virtual gifts exchanged between friends, and photos posted with captioning and commentaries. Facebook had approximately 250 million users in 2009, and 70% of users are outside the United States.

MYSPACE

Similar to the Facebook network, MySpace had 117 million users in June 2008. MySpace overall ranking dropped to 14th.

> "THE NEWEST COMPUTER CAN MERELY COMPOUND, AT SPEED, THE OLDEST PROBLEM IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN HUMAN BEINGS, AND IN THE END THE COMMUNICATOR WILL BE CONFRONTED WITH THE OLD PROBLEM, OF WHAT TO SAY AND HOW TO SAY IT."
>
> EDWARD R. MURROW, JOURNALIST

TECHNORATI

Technorati is an Internet search engine specific to blogs. Everyday Technorati indexes 1.5 million new blog posts on the Blogosphere. Its tools are useful and can be retained as a bookmark and source of research. It's a recommended product when determining 'authority' of a blog site for proactive engagement.

TWITTER

Twitter is a microblogging site that asks the question, "What are you doing?," and allows short (140 characters) text updates to be published and viewed by the author's followers immediately. Updates can be posted on the Web or via mobile phones. The site is useful for linking to other Web sites and as a simple customer service tool. Twitter's user base is estimated to reach 26 million by the end of 2010.

YOUTUBE

A site where users can upload, view and share videos. Keywords, tags, drive the search function and it is highly recommended the tag fields of all videos be populated with useful keywording. YouTube had 100 million US viewers and 14.8 billion videos viewed since January 2009. The Air Force presence on YouTube is Air Force BlueTube.

*Always consult the Terms of Use agreements.

AIRMEN SOCIAL MEDIA METRICS

ON INFO WARS

"In this battlefield, popular perceptions and rumor are more influential than facts and more powerful than a hundred tanks."

David Kilcullen, Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency

The rapid pace by which Public Affairs is impacted by social media is staggering. Today's social media metrics will morph into something completely new tomorrow.

The addition of new blogs, to the tune of nearly a 185,000 per day, shows there is no one person at the helm of any of these conversations, and that public perception is directly derived by the participants in the blogosphere. Mainstream media currently mines the blogosphere to capture the latest news with more than 50 percent of current reporters using blogs to derive new content.

How does Airmen use of social media affect the public perception of the Air Force? Nearly 70 percent of Airmen use YouTube to load their videos and share others, nearly 50 percent use
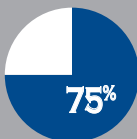
Airmen using YouTube

70%
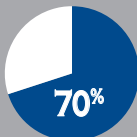
Airmen using Facebook

50%

Airmen using MySpace

75%

"Air Force Social media Survey, October 2008"

Facebook, and 75 percent of enlisted Airmen use MySpace. Fifty percent of Airmen want the Air Force to take a more active role in social media.

Public opinion and institutional standing are evaluated daily through social media postings by Airmen. Now the Air Force is meeting this challenge and engaging online discussions by committing each Airman to act as a communicator to be the voice of the Air Force in the blogosphere and in their social media outlets.

AIRMEN ENGAGE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA
AIR FORCE SOCIAL MEDIA USE SURVEY

MILITARY DATA

- 60 percent of enlisted Airmen said they use MySpace.

- 21 percent of officers said they use Facebook.

- 71 percent – 96 percent of E-2s through E-6s use YouTube.

- 51 percent of Airmen surveyed said they might use Social Media, "depending on what is offered", while 40 percent said, "they won't use it."

- Airmen stationed overseas said they would use social media.

- 69 percent of Airmen use YouTube; 48 percent said they use MySpace; 15 percent said they use Blogger and 8 percent said they use Facebook.

INDUSTRY DATA

- 55 percent of all adult Americans have a high-speed internet connection at home (Pew Research Center, July 2008).

- 30.6 percent of 18–24 year olds and 19.3 percent of Hispanics are cell phone only users (Pew Research, May 2008).

- 62 percent of all Americans are part of a wireless, mobile population that participates in digital activities away from home or work (Pew Research Center, March 2008).

46% OF E-2s AND 60% OF 2ND LTS USE FACEBOOK

75% OF E-2s AND E-5s USE MYSPACE WITH 43% USING IT SEVERAL TIMES A DAY, MOST LIKELY FROM CELL PHONES OR HOME-BASED COMPUTERS

49% OF AIRMEN WANT MORE OF AN AIR FORCE SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

- "Ninety percent of people in the Blogosphere don't care about your message, nor will they ever read it. Nine percent will read it, but will not engage you or act on your product/service/stance. One percent will read it and actively engage you on the subject you're writing about." (Metrics expert, K.D. Paine)

- Once a YouTube video receives 50,000 views, it's moved to the front page. (YouTube Guidelines for usage).

- Asia has 14 percent of its population connected (World Internet Usage Statistics News and Population Stats).

- Internet use in the Middle East grew 1,176 percent since 2000 (World Internet Usage Statistics News and Population Stats).

INDUSTRY IMPORTANCE

■ **75 percent** of respondents, ages 35 – 64, are more likely to believe what they see or hear about a company or product if another person "like them" mentioned it to them (Edelman's 2008 Trust Barometer).

■ **78 percent** of consumers trust other consumers "like them" (Nielsen's Trust in Advertising).

■ **66 percent** of Internet users under 30 are Social Networkers (Stelter, NY Times).

■ **70 percent** of Americans 15 to 34 are actively involved with social networks (Mike Spataro in PR Week).

■ **500,000** – The number of people joining MySpace and Facebook daily.

TECH/NET INFLUENCERS SPEND NEARLY 10 HOURS PER WEEK USING THE WEB FOR PERSONAL REASONS

SHIFTING TRENDS

■ **65 percent** of the general U.S. population still views major network television news programs as their source of information, while 61% view the local news as their source of information (University of Southern California/Ketchum Communications study).

■ **62 percent** of people in the United States say their local newspaper is a credible source of information (USC/ Ketchum Communications study).

■ **61 percent** of Americans rank word- of-mouth as a credible source of information (USC/Ketchum Communications study).

Tech/net influencers are a powerful group defined by three key attributes
- They have at least 75 friends
- They respond almost every day,
- They spend more than 10 hours per week using the Internet for personal reasons.

TOP 10 TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

1
DON'T GIVE CLASSIFIED INFO

Don't divulge classified, FOUO or sensitive materials, photos or video. OPSEC is crucial to our mission, think before you speak or film—if you're not sure, ask someone! A harmless video of an Airman dancing on the flightline could be sensitive if it's a deployed environment showing bombers on the flightline. Be smart. Security is at the source.

2
STAY IN YOUR LANE

If you're an aircraft mechanic, you're well suited to communicate messages about aircraft maintenance. If you're an aircraft mechanic blogging about legal issues—reconsider your blog.

3
DON'T LIE

Credibility is critical, without it, no one cares what you have to say…it's also punishable by the UCMJ to give a false statement.

4
GIVE YOUR OPINION

Yes, tell them what YOU think…just make sure you state that this is your opinion and not that of the organization. Also, be sure to identify what is your opinion and what is factual.

5
ALWAYS IDENTIFY YOURSELF

Identification makes your post more credible.

6
SAFETY

Videos that get widespread attention, or become "viral," feature death-defying stunts or acts that are considered "extreme" in nature. Don't let the desire to get your message across compromise your consideration for safety.

7
BE AWARE OF THE IMAGE YOU PRESENT

If using a visual medium, don't let your message get overshadowed because the viewer's attention is drawn to your improperly worn uniform or something occurring in the background. The image you present will set the tone for your message and often mean the difference of whether or not people listen to your message. Your tactical representation could have strategic and international consequences for the Air Force and the nation.

8
USE COMMON SENSE

This is the bottom line. If you wouldn't say it in front of your mother, you probably shouldn't say it on YouTube. Realize that your words and images will go out to thousands and possibly millions of people around the world instantly and once it's out there, it's out there for good. Your unit Public Affairs shop should always be a source of advice and guidance in this medium. Also, be careful what personal information you divulge, such as address, phone numbers or any information that could aid identity thieves or the enemy.

9
DON'T BE AFRAID TO TAKE CALCULATED RISKS

Military life often deals in ambiguity: In order to make the best decision, it's recommended to take in as many variables as possible in order to make the most accurate decision.

10
THE ENEMY IS ENGAGED

The enemy is engaged in this battlespace and you must engage there as well.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

CONVERGENCE: NAME OF THE GAME

A converged product employed by the Air Force Public Affairs Agency was a collaboration of internal and external print, photos and social media efforts. It highlighted an impromptu memorial in the Area of Responsibility (AOR) for a fallen Soldier, who was the brother of an Air Force U-2 crew chief. Photos were e-mailed to AFPAA and were posted on various Web sites, including CNN's iReport. The photos and story were then posted to Reddit, LinkedIn, StumbleUpon, Delicious, Digg and other social media sites, with the whole process taking three hours. In less than a week it had been viewed hundreds of times. The photo was eventually the lead photo for CNN.com.

SOCIAL MEDIA HAS GIVEN THE AIR FORCE A NEW VOICE TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH THEIR COMMAND AND THE PUBLIC THEY SERVE

AIR MOBILITY COMMAND

Air Mobility Command, Public Affairs took the initiative to develop a narrated video, "Portraits in Courage," which was posted to their public Web site. Collaborating with the Public Affairs and social media team, it was also loaded to CNN's iReport, YouTube and other social media sites, resulting in hundreds of hits and comments.

INTERNET MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

A traditional media's Internet blog, targeted towards military readers in Florida, actively blogged about issues of importance to family members and offers a discussion board for families and active-duty servicemembers. The blog specifically focused on MacDill AFB and Central Command Headquarters' readers. The submissions usually don't appear in print but receive many comments. Air Force recommended Public Affairs offices and leaders in Florida engage the bloggers.

SUPPORTERS OR DETRACTORS

Supporters or detractors of U.S. military members now have the ability to speak out in support of, or against, any issue. For example, a video showing deplorable conditions at Fort Bragg, originally filmed, edited and posted on YouTube April 28, 2008, by Ed Frawley, the father of Sgt Jeff Frawley at Fort Bragg, NC, has been viewed 476,000 times as of February, 2009. It urges viewers to, "call Senators, Congressmen and the media," and has received video responses from people all over the world, including the U.S., Canada, Australia, Germany and South Korea.

It has influenced hundreds of traditional news stories in print and broadcast, and has received direct responses from the Fort Bragg commander and Secretary of the U.S. Army. It's received 4.5 of 5 stars on YouTube's rating system.

ALASKA COMMAND

The 2008 Northern Edge exercise used social media and digital technology to target online audiences in order to educate them on the benefits of the Alaskan exercises. Alaska Command's Public Affairs Office focused efforts to educate the social-media environment by dual-purposing traditional public affairs products while populating sites like MySpace, YouTube, iReport, Discovery Channel online, Wikipedia, Flickr and other communication venues on the Internet.

WHEN HURRICANE DOLLY STRUCK THE GULF COAST, THE AIR FORCE LEVERAGED COVERAGE BY RELEASING PHOTOS AND STORIES TO CNN's iREPORT

They achieved 287 MySpace visits; two favorite photos on Flickr from 31 photos posted; and 1,737 views of 17 videos on YouTube with 6 rated 4 out of 5 stars.

WATCH THE NEWS

When Hurricane Dolly was fast-approaching the Gulf Coast, it seemed inevitable that the Air Force would assist with rescue and evacuation efforts and traditional PA coverage would follow.

Air Force Public Affairs leveraged coverage of the Air Force story through the local media to create "bounce" from the other reporters' stories, both internally and externally. Once a story and photos were released to AF Link it was quickly loaded to CNN's iReport, and in two days it was viewed hundreds of times. Link to the story: www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-48720.

CURRENT PRODUCTS

The Air Force currently engages in basic Web 2.0 and is researching ways to leverage more of what is available. When thinking about using digital technology, remember that the primary goal of social media is to engage in conversations with others. The secondary goal is to use a new voice to tell the Air Force story and share it with the public, and other Airmen. Below is a broad list of products the Air Force uses.

AIR FORCE LINK

Air Force Link (http://www.af.mil) is the primary public Web site of the Air Force. The site offers news stories, photos, video, Podcasts, shared technology and RSS feeds. These features are the most basic of Web 2.0 offerings. They allow for a simple multimedia experience. All news stories and photographs have the ability to be linked on hundreds of other online social media sites using the "share" tab.

WIKI TECHNOLOGY

Most pages on the Air Force Communities of Practice (CoP) employ a wiki. The wiki allows you to collaborate with other Airmen and share your wisdom with them. There is also an Air Force entry in Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/US_Air_Force). Get involved with the wikis on the CoP and share your knowledge. Also, since the Air Force does not own its Wikipedia entry, anyone can make changes to the page.

If you see something incorrect, let your PAO know about it so they can make the changes.

PHOTO SHARING SITES

The Air Force has an official Flickr page: (http://www.flickr.com/photos/usairforce and is using it to tell its story by sharing imagery. Airmen and the public can view Air Force photos through tags that are placed on each picture.

VIDEO SHARING SITES

The Air Force has a presence on YouTube, called Air Force BlueTube (http://www.youtube.com/afbluetube). Air Force BlueTube focuses on everything Air Force. It is a place for Airmen to share their videos and stories ranging from funny, to poignant, and everything in between. Become part of the video conversation by creating and submitting videos to Air Force BlueTube. Family and friends are welcome to submit as well. Public Affairs recommends submitting all videos to Air Force BlueTube and not creating additional unit-level YouTube channels.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

In addition to individual pages maintained by various Air Force units, the Air Force has an official Facebook fan page: http://www.facebook.com/usairforce. This is a place to share information and interact with the pubic and with Airmen from all over the world. Consider creating a Facebook page for your local wing or base to collaborate with colleagues. Invite unit members to join. Use the Air Force Facebook page as a template.

PODCASTS & VODCASTS

There are currently ten Podcasts or vodcasts (video Podcasts) being produced by the Air Force. Pod- and vodcasts are a great way to tell a story using voice and/or video. Visit http://www.af.mil/rss for a list of available Podcasts and instructions on subscribing to them. There is simple plug and play software that is available for creating a Podcast and it costs nothing to upload. Consider sites like http://www.blogtalkradio.com to start an Internet radio station for free.

SOCIAL BOOKMARKING

The Air Force bookmarks news stories on Digg, Delicious, Reddit, Newsvine, and other sites, and also via the "share" button on Air Force Link. Create a base PA Profile on the sites listed above and share information with your colleagues at your local base. Make a simple username and password so anyone from your unit can post and share a story of interest.

And in the end the communicator will be confronted with the old problem of what to say and how to say it

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Current technology allows a user to create a blog entry from mobile phones and post on the Web. Microblogging allows short text updates to be published and sent to friends immediately. The most popular service is Twitter (www.twitter.com).

Social networking Websites like Facebook, MySpace and LinkedIn use micro-blogging with their "status update" features.

PRODUCTS TO FOCUS ON

Engage bloggers. Social media applications are shaping the way people across the world communicate and influence traditional media, thus reaching a larger audience allowing the Air Force message to be told with less resources (thereby saving the taxpayers money and PA office time). To engage others, focus on top-ranked blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Picasa. visit http://www.af.mil/socialmedia.asp for a directory of official Air Force social media sites.

Always consult terms of use with JAG.

MEASUREMENT

Measurement and evaluation are part of all Air Force communication campaigns. Counting is easy, yet measuring the success of communication efforts is not. Effective measurement drives evaluation and resources; potential steps to measuring campaigns are to:

■ Perform a communication audit across all products to understand the perception of the information consumer and identify inconsistencies;

■ Define measurement benchmarks through detailed and achievable qualitative and quantitative metrics;

■ Communicate the economic impact to leadership; and

■ Study the success of past measurement programs.

Any and all communication programs can and should be measured or evaluated: social media is no different. The impact of target markets, advocacy movements and stakeholder

engagement should be tracked and followed up on to ensure adequate resources are being allocated per project. Determining the effect/effects to be achieved and how to measure the success of achieving those effects should be planned well before execution; thus, the success of the plan and measurement will shape future engagements, planning and budgeting. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to measuring effectiveness of a communication program. Simple analytics like counting hits, viewers and positive and negative comments are easy ways to show how social media can help define your story and will help your leadership see the value of what, and how, you're communicating.

Resources on measurement include Icerocket, Technorati, Google analytics, Blogpulse, and CustomScoop.

Ask: How much coverage was generated and how much of that was in non-traditional formats? Did the right target markets get the message? Were command messages in the product? Did third-party spokespeople carry those messages to other venues? How many bloggers quoted your article? Were they considered useful? How many visitors read your blog? Learn more about measurement at: http://www.thenewpr.com/wiki/pmwiki.php/Main/HomePage?pagename=PRMeasurement.HomePage.

CONCLUSION

This guide does not advocate a major shift in resources from traditional media to social media. Rather it endorses the belief that digital communication provides a new toolset that commanders can use to achieve military objectives.

Results from the University of Southern California and public relations company Ketchum indicate major network and local network news programs, and local newspapers, are still ranked very high as a credible source of information. However, in the report, Ben Smith, a blogger with Politico newspaper, said, "I only have a fraction of blog readers than print-readers; however, I know my readers are reading my story, not skimming to the sports section." And Teri Daley, senior vice president with Ketchum's Wireless Technology division, notes there's a paradigm shift taking place now with more and more communication becoming a two-way street instead of a message-pushing process.

There are movements within DoD to explore a broader, more aggressive and holistic approach that must be developed and employed in order to integrate communicators. The rules of the game have clearly changed. Until now, the Air Force has not had an official stance on engaging bloggers, social media and Web 2.0 initiatives. However, by being a part of this trend, PA is embarking into a new world of communication for the Air Force. Because Airmen are

THERE IS A PARADIGM SHIFT TAKING PLACE NOW WITH MORE COMMUNICATION BECOMING A TWO-WAY STREET INSTEAD OF A MESSAGE PUSHING PROCESS

the voice of the organization, PA has the responsibility to tell the Air Force story in a thoughtful, engaging and exciting manner—by taking advantage of the same popular Web 2.0 tools and services used by corporate and industry leaders.

The Air Force Public Affairs Agency will assist in many ways. First, this book gives you a brief overview of how to navigate through some of the Web 2.0 offerings, a list of Web 2.0 products and services (and where to find them on the Internet), and a glossary of social media and Web 2.0 terminology. Second, guidance outlines how to communicate in this space and how social media can assist the Air Force in leveraging Web 2.0 in order to tell the Air Force story. Lastly, education is planned for individuals across the communication spectrum, starting at the formal level in the Defense Information School, for those beginning their careers in PA, and ongoing and continuing formal education in the form of Webinars and teleconferences available to Public Affairs offices.

GLOSSARY

ADVOCACY
Creating a movement of net-fluencers to influence conversation, actions or motives in support of one's objective.

AGGREGATION
Gathering and remixing content from blogs and other Web sites that provide RSS feeds; typically displayed in an aggregator like Bloglines or Google Reader, or directly on your desktop using software (often also called a newsreader). Beneficial for breaking news. CNN and OASD/PA have effective tools like these.

ALERTS
Search engines, like Google, allow you to specify words, phrases or tags that you want checked periodically, with results of those searches returned to you by e-mail.

ARCHIVE
May refer to topics from an online discussion that has been closed but saved for later reference. On blogs, archives are collections of earlier items usually organized by week or month. You may still be able to comment on archived items.

AUTHENTICITY
The sense that something or someone is "real." Blogs enable people to publish content, and engage in conversations, that show their interests and values, and so help them develop an authentic voice online. Airmen should always be transparent and authentic while online.

AVATARS
Graphical images representing people within the social media arena. You can build a visual character with the body, clothes, behaviors, gender and name of your choice. This may or may not be an authentic representation of yourself. (View Secondlife.com for more information.)

AVI – (AUDIO VIDEO INTERLEAVED)
A Microsoft Corporation multimedia video format. It uses waveform audio and digital video frames (bitmaps) to compress animation.

BACK CHANNEL COMMUNICATIONS
Are private e-mails or other messages sent by the facilitator or between individuals during public conferencing. They can have a significant effect on the way that public conversations go.

BANDWIDTH
The capacity of an electronic line, such as a communications network or computer channel, to transmit bits per second (bps).

BLOG CONTROL
Social networking is difficult to control because if people can't say something in one place they can blog or comment elsewhere. That can be challenging for hierarchical organizations used to centrally managed Web sites.

BLOGS
Web sites with dated items of content in reverse chronological order, self-published by bloggers. Items—called posts—may have keyword tags associated with them, are usually available as feeds and often allow commenting.

BLOGOSPHERE
A term used to describe the totality of blogs on the Internet, and the conversations taking place within that sphere.

BLOGROLL
A list of sites displayed in the sidebar of a blog, showing who the blogger reads regularly.

BOOKMARKING
Saving the address of a Web site or item of content, either in your browser, or on a social bookmarking site like Delicious. If you add tags, others can easily find your research too, and the social bookmarking site becomes an enormous public library.

BROWSER
The tool used to view Web sites, and access all the content available there onscreen or by downloading. (e.g., Microsoft Explorer, Firefox and Chrome.)

BULLETIN BOARDS
The early vehicles for online collaboration, where users connected with a central computer to post and read email-like messages.

CATEGORIES
Pre-specified ways to organize content—for example, a set of keywords that you can use but not add to when posting on a site.

CHAMPIONS
In order to get conversations started in an online community, you need a group of enthusiasts willing and confident to get things moving by posting messages, responding and helping others.

CHAT
An interaction on a Web site, with a number of people adding text items one after the other into the same space at (almost) the same time. A place for chat, a chatroom, differs from a forum because conversations happen in "real time," similar to face to face.

COLLABORATION
Social media tools from e-mail lists to virtual worlds offer enormous scope for collaboration. Low-risk activities like commenting, social bookmarking, chatting and blogging help develop the trust necessary for collaboration.

COMMENTS
Blogs may allow readers to add feedback comments under posts, and may also provide a feed for comments as well as for main items.

ONLINE COMMUNITIES
Online communities are groups of people communicating mainly through the Internet. View a Second Life community, Huffman Prairie, at www.secondlife.com.

COMMUNITY BUILDING
The process of recruiting potential community or network participants, helping them to find shared interests and goals,

use the technology and develop useful conversations.

ONLINE CONFERENCE
Happens in a Web forum: it is the conversations of those involved, organized around topics, threads, and a theme or subject.

CONSTRUCTIVES
The science of applying social media viral mapping to a specific public affairs issue to determine a projected outcome—educating readers on projected paths.

CONTENT
Text, pictures, video and any other meaningful material that is on the Internet.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
Software suites offering the ability to create static Web pages, document stores, blogs, wikis and other tools.

CONVERSATION
Through blogging, commenting or contributing to forums, is the currency of social networking, which puts the "social" in this form of media. A popular perception of bloggers is of people ranting on a virtual soapbox without knowing who is listening.

COOKIE
Information (in this case URLs, Web addresses) created by a Web server and stored on a user's computer. This information lets Web sites the user visits keep a history of a user's browsing patterns and

preferences. People can set up their browsers to accept or not accept cookies.

COPYRIGHT
Sharing through social media is enhanced by attaching a Creative Commons license specifying, for example, that content may be re-used with attribution, provided that a similar license is then attached by the new author. This work is under that type of license - Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike 2.5 License.

CROWDSOURCING
Crowdsourcing refers to harnessing the skills and enthusiasm of those outside an organization who are prepared to volunteer their time contributing content and solving problems.

CREATIVE COMMONS
Creative Commons is a not-for-profit organization and licensing system that offers creators the ability to fine-tune their copyright, spelling out the ways in which others may use their works. For more information, visit: http://creativecommons.org.

CYBERCULTURE
A collection of cultures and cultural products that exist on and/or are made possible by the Internet, along with the stories told about these cultures and cultural products. Visit http://rccs.usfca.edu/intro.asp.

DECONSTRUCTIVES
Systematically working back from a specific issue to identify influencers through viral mapping.

DEMOCRACY

Social networking and media are potentially attractive to those who want to revive representative democracy, and those who promote participative approaches or both. Social media offers politicians and their constituents another communication channel. It also offers a wide range of methods for people to discuss, deliberate and take action.

DIGITAL STORY

A digital story is a short personal nonfiction narrative that is composed on a computer, often for publishing online or publishing to a DVD. They are told from the narrator's point of view and the subject is generally about something the maker experienced personally. For example, see Center for Digital Storytelling: (http://www.storycenter.org/), Creative Narrations (http://www.creativenarrations.net/).

DOMAIN NAME

A method of identifying computer addresses. Your e-mail address has a domain address. If there is an ".edu" at the end of your e-mail address that means your account is affiliated with an educational institution. A ".com" extension means the account is business related and a government account has a ".gov" suffix.

E-MAIL LISTS

Important networking tools offering the ability to "starburst" a message from a central postbox to any number of subscribers, and for them to respond.

EMBEDDING

The act of inserting video or photos to a Web site or e-mail.

FACE-TO-FACE

Used to describe people meeting offline.

FACILITATOR

Someone who helps people in an online group or forum manage their conversations.

FEEDS

The means by which you can read, view or listen to items from blogs and other RSS-enabled sites without visiting the site, by subscribing and using an aggregator or newsreader.

FLASH

Animation software used to develop interactive graphics for Web sites as well as desktop presentations and games.

FORUMS

Discussion areas on Web sites, where people can post messages or comment on existing messages asynchronously—that is, independently of time or place.

FRIENDS

On social networking sites, contacts whose profile you link to in your profile, thereby creating your network. On some sites people have to accept the link, in others, not.

GROUPS

Collections of individuals with some sense of unity through their activities, interests or values. They are bounded: you are in a group, or not. They differ from networks, which are dispersed, and defined by nodes and connections.

HYPERLINK

Text, images or graphics that, when clicked with a mouse (or activated by keystrokes), will connect the user to a new Web site. The link is usually obvious, such as underlined text or a "button" of some type, but not always.

INSTANT MESSAGING (IM)

Chatting with one other person using an IM tool like AOL Instant Messenger, Microsoft Live Messenger or Yahoo Messenger. The tools allow you to indicate whether or not you are available for a chat, and if so can be a good alternative to e-mails for a rapid exchange. Problems arise when people in a group are using different IM tools that don't connect.

LISTENING

In the blogosphere, the art of skimming feeds to see what topics are bubbling up, and also setting up searches that monitor when an organization is mentioned.

LISTSERV

A list of e-mail addresses of people with common interests. Software enables people who belong to a list to send messages to the group without typing a series of addresses into the message header.

LURKERS

People who read but don't contribute or add comments to forums. The one percent rule-of-thumb suggests that one percent of people contribute new content to an online

community, another nine percent comment, and the rest lurk.

MASHUPS
Mixes of technology, audio, video and maps combining several tools to create a new Web service. See www.popfly. com for free development.

NETWORKS
Structures defined by nodes and the connections between them. In social networks, the nodes are people, and the connections are the relationships that they have. Networking is the process by which you develop and strengthen those relationships.

NEWSGROUP
Internet "site" centered around a specific topic or course. Some newsreader software can "thread" discussion so there can be various topics centered around a central theme.

NEWSREADER
Web site or desktop tool that acts as an aggregator, gathering content from blogs and similar sites using RSS feeds so you can read the content in one place, instead of having to visit different sites.

OPEN-SOURCE SOFTWARE
Software that is available under a license that permits users to study, change and improve the software, and to redistribute it in modified or unmodified form. It is often developed in a public, collaborative manner.

PEER-TO-PEER
Refers to direct interaction between two people in a network. In that network, each peer will be connected to other peers, opening the opportunity for further sharing and learning.

PERMALINK
The address (URL) of an item of content, for example a blog post, rather than the address of a Web page with lots of different items. You will often find it at the end of a blog post.

PHOTOSHARING
Uploading images to a Web site like Flickr or Picasa, adding tags and offering people the opportunity to comment or even re-use your photos if you add an appropriate copyright license.

PODCAST
Audio or video content that can be downloaded automatically through a subscription to a Web site so you can view or listen offline.

POST
Item on a blog or forum.

PRESENCE ONLINE
Has (at least) two aspects. One is whether you show up when someone does a search on your name. The second is whether you use tools that show you are available for contact by instant messaging, voice over IP, or other synchronous methods of communication.

PROFILES
Information that users provide about themselves when signing up for a social networking site. As well as a picture and basic information, this may include personal and business interests, a "blurb" and tags to help people search for like-minded people.

REMIXING
Social media offers the possibility of taking different items of content, identified by tags and published through feeds, and combining them in different ways.

RSS
Short for Really Simple Syndication. This allows subscribers to receive content from blogs and other social media sites and have it delivered through a feed.

SHOCKWAVE
A three dimensional (3D) animation technology/format.

SHARING
Offering other people the use of text, images, video, bookmarks or other content by adding tags, and applying copyright licenses that encourage use of content.

SMARTMOB
When users get together for an activity or event as a result of an online connection or network.

SOCIAL MEDIA
Tools and platforms people use to publish, converse and share content online. The tools include blogs, wikis, podcasts and sites to share photos and bookmarks.

SOCIAL NETWORKING
Online places where users can create a profiles, and then socialize with others using a range of social media tools including blogs, video, images, tags, lists of friends, forums and messages.

STREAMING MEDIA
Video or audio that is intended to be listened to online but not stored permanently.

TAGS
Keywords added to a blog post, photo or video to help users find related topics or media.

THREADS
Strands of conversation.

TRACKBACK
A facility for other bloggers to leave a calling card automatically, instead of commenting. Blogger A may write on blog A about an item on blogger B's site, and through the trackback facility leave a link on B's site back to A. The collection of comments and trackbacks on a site facilitates conversations.

TRANSPARENCY
Enhances searching, sharing, self-publishing and commenting across networks, makes it easier to find out what's going on in any situation where there is online activity.

TROLL
A hurtful, but possibly valuable, person who, for whatever reason, is both obsessed by and constantly annoyed with, and deeply offended by everything you write on a blog. One may not be able to stop the commenting of trolls on your blog, but you can't ban them from commenting on other sites and pointing back to the blog, and they can't be banned from posting things on their own blog that point back to your site.

URL
Unique Resource Locator is the technical term for a Web address like http://www.af.mil.

USER-GENERATED CONTENT
Text, photos and other material produced by people who previously just consumed information. See content.

VIRTUAL WORLDS
Online places like Second Life, where you can create a representation of yourself (an avatar) and socialize with other residents. Basic activity is free, but you can buy currency (using real money) in order to purchase land and trade with other residents. Second Life is being used by some organizations to run discussions, virtual events and fundraising.

WEB 2.0
A term coined by O'Reilly Media in 2004 to describe blogs, wikis, social networking sites and other Internet-based services that emphasize collaboration and sharing, rather than less interactive publishing (Web 1.0). It is associated with the idea of the Internet as platform.

WIDGETS
Stand-alone applications, that can be embedded in other applications, like a Web site or a desktop, or viewed on a PDA. These may help accomplish missions like subscribe to a feed, do a specialist search or even make a donation.

WHITEBOARDS
Online are the equivalent of glossy surfaces where one can write with an appropriate marker pen and wipe off later. They are tools that enable one to write or sketch on a Web page, and as such are useful in collaboration online.

WIKI
A Web page—or set of pages—that can be edited collaboratively. The best known example is Wikipedia, an encyclopedia created by thousands of contributors across the world. Once people have appropriate permissions —set by the wiki owner—they can create pages and/or add to and alter existing pages.

XML
(Extensible Markup Language) System for organizing and tagging elements of a document so that the document can be transmitted and interpreted between applications and organizations. Human readable XML tags defines "what it is," and HTML defines "how it looks." XML allows designers to create their own tags.

DISCLAIMER

The appearance of social media companies, logos, and web links in this publication does not constitute endorsement on the part of the Air Force Public Affairs Agency, the United States Air Force, or the Department of Defense, of the external Web site, or the information, products or services contained therein. For other than authorized activities such as military exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) sites, the United States Air Force does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations.

To see our Air Force Videos visit:
www.youtube.com/afbluetube

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To read our Blog visit:
airforcelive.dodlive.mil

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Visit us on Facebook:
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For more information, call AFPAA at 703-696-1158

AIR FORCE WEB POSTING RESPONSE ASSESSMENT
AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS AGENCY – EMERGING TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

DISCOVER

WEB POSTING
Has someone discovered a post about the organization?
Is it positive or balanced?

YES

"Produced by Air Force Public Affairs Agency. This product is public domain and may be used freely."

NO

EVALUATE

"TROLLS"
Is this a site dedicated to bashing and degrading others?

MONITOR ONLY
Avoid responding to specific posts, monitor site for relevant information and comments. Notify HQ.

YES

NO

CONCURRENCE
A factual and well-cited response, which may agree or disagree with the post, yet is not factually erroneous, a rant or rage, bashing or negative in nature.

You can concur with the post, let stand or provide a positive review.

Do you want to respond?

"RAGER"
Is the posting a rant, rage, joke or satirical in nature?

NO

FIX THE FACTS
Do you wish to respond with factual information directly on the comment board?

NO

"MISGUIDED"
Are there erroneous facts in the posting?

YES

YES

LET STAND
Let the post stand— no response.

NO

"UNHAPPY CUSTOMER"
Is the posting a result of a negative experience?

YES

RESTORATION
Do you wish to rectify the situation and act upon a reasonable solution?

YES

RESPOND

NO

SHARE SUCCESS
Do you wish to proactively share your story and your mission?

FINAL EVALUATON
Write response for current circumstances only.
Will you respond?

YES

RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS

TRANSPARENCY
Disclose your Air Force connection.

SOURCING
Cite your sources by including hyperlinks, images, video or other references.

TIMELINESS
Take time to create good responses.
Don't rush.

TONE
Respond in a tone that reflects highly on the rich heritage of the Air Force.

INFLUENCE
Focus on the most used sites related to the Air Force.