

How Federal Agencies Can Effectively Manage Records Created Using New Social Media Tools



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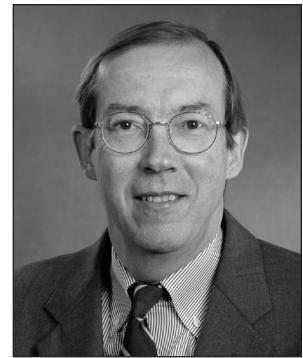
FOREWORD

On behalf of the IBM Center for The Business of Government, we are pleased to present this report, *How Federal Agencies Can Effectively Manage Records Created Using New Social Media Tools*, by Patricia Franks, at San Jose State University.

Since taking office in January 2009, the Obama administration has ramped up the use of Web 2.0 social media tools as a way of reaching out to citizens to engage them with government. Many agencies have created social media teams and have eagerly experimented with popular commercial tools such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. However, this has created a dilemma regarding compliance with federal laws relating to the preservation and storage of official government records. In fact, in some agencies, this dilemma has resulted in a reluctance to fully participate in the social media revolution.

Why this reluctance? Part of it is due to the still unanswered question of how to define a federal record in the Web 2.0 context.

Dr. Franks' report addresses the challenges of federal recordkeeping in the social media age. She describes the struggle of agency records managers to keep up with the information revolution, as well as the historical evolution of how records management and information technology have become both intertwined and yet separated by "silos" in many agencies. She identifies the governance challenges, the policy challenges, the technology challenges, as well as the capacity challenges to address these issues. She concludes with recommendations for improving social media records management, and offers a series of best practices based on interviews with dozens of records managers, Web masters, and social media managers across the federal government.

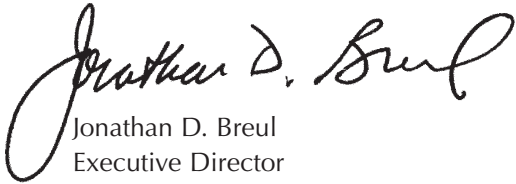


Jonathan D. Breul



Melissa Marroso

This report does not solve the many challenges it identifies. However, it serves as a useful guide for federal managers attempting to use social media to engage citizens while meeting the statutory requirement to preserve historical records for future generations. The report's insights and recommended strategies have wide applicability.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 21, 2009, his second day in office, President Obama issued a memorandum that instructed executive departments and agencies to use “innovative tools, methods, and systems to cooperate among themselves, across all levels of Government, and with nonprofit organizations, businesses, and individuals in the private sector.”

The emergence of social media tools is a relatively new phenomenon, and federal agencies are actively exploring ways to capitalize on the popularity of these tools to collaborate internally and to engage citizens and stakeholders. By June 2010, 22 of 24 major federal agencies were actively maintaining a presence on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Records management considerations, however, were not included in many of the initial projects. This report addresses the question of how government can more effectively respond to the increase in social media tools and the challenges that such tools raise for records management.

On July 22, 2010, the Information Policy, Census and National Archives Subcommittee of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee held a hearing on federal agency use of Web 2.0 technologies and the resulting records management implications. In his testimony, Gregory C. Wilshusen, Director of Information Security Issues for the Government Accountability Office, expressed two main concerns:

- Agencies must be able to identify records created by Web 2.0 technologies, and
- Agencies must put mechanisms into place to capture and preserve those records.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) provides guidance regarding management

of electronic records, including new social media records. A 2009 records management self-survey of federal agencies revealed that 79 percent of the agencies ranked themselves at medium to high risk of not complying with records management laws due to weaknesses in their programs, especially related to electronic records management and e-mail. Records created using social media tools raise many questions: What records should be kept? Should material created by non-government employees be included? What are the appropriate timeframes for long-term preservation of online records? How can limited resources best be used to deal with increasingly limitless online content?

The goal of this report is to provide:

- An *understanding* of the unique properties, or characteristics, of records resulting from social media use and the *challenges* they present.
- A *framework* for understanding records management issues and the change in the fundamental nature of information brought about by Web 2.0 and social media.
- *Recommendations* for transforming the way records and records management programs and practices are conducted across the federal government.

The data-gathering process for this report involved an analysis of federal agency websites and social media offerings, a review of literature related to social media and records management, and personal interviews with government employees responsible for social media and employees responsible for managing agency records.

The research conducted for this report found that the use of social media technologies is on the rise across

the federal government, both for work within and across agencies and for interaction with citizens. Social media teams are forming, and best practice suggests that records managers either serve on those teams or work closely with the teams to ensure that records created through social media technologies are managed according to the agency's records management policy. Examples of successful social media initiatives abound, but many of them are the result of the use of social media for traditional public relations efforts; for example, blogs are used to share recent events and official social networking sites are used to reinforce the agency's brand.

Web managers have been instrumental in the success of many of the social media initiatives, and most department and agency websites contain links to social media sites hosted elsewhere. Social media hubs within departments and agencies are beginning to emerge, which provide not only links to social media tools but also social media policies and training materials for specific departments or agencies.

This new media brings with it new challenges—especially for records managers struggling to apply existing records management laws and regulations to records created in a social media world. A series of best practices are included in Appendix II to assist agency employees responsible for records management, social media, compliance, information technology, human resources, and Web/social media production.

These new challenges cannot be met at the agency level alone. It is time for the federal government to dramatically transform records management by adopting the following government-wide recommendations:

Governance Recommendation

Recommendation One: The position of Chief Records Officer for the federal government should be established to elevate the status of records management across the federal government.

Policy Recommendations

Recommendation Two: The Chief Records Officer should convene a workgroup with representatives from government agencies and the private sector to

rethink the definition of records and the concept of records management in the Web 2.0 world.

Recommendation Three: The Chief Records Officer should work closely with the federal government's Chief Information Officer to ensure records management is integrated in an overarching Information Governance Structure for the federal government.

Technology Recommendation

Recommendation Four: Information technology offices should:

- Integrate records management solutions and incorporate the costs of records management requirements
- Undertake research initiatives for the preservation of digital objects created with new media
- Seek funding for these initiatives that is supported by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Capacity Recommendation

Recommendation Five: Records management training to mitigate the risks, such as posting incorrect or confidential information on social media sites, associated with emerging technology, should be developed or incorporated into existing training programs immediately.

Understanding Records Management within the Federal Government

The History of Records Management in Government

The nation's most precious document, the Declaration of Independence, has a storied history surrounding its conservation. Although it has faded badly due to poor preservation techniques during the 19th century, it is still available for viewing in the rotunda of the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

Historical documents today are more ephemeral, many existing only in electronic form. How can we ensure that historians will have access, for example, to the 2010 YouTube interview with President Obama* or that records related to federal agencies' deployment of social media to aid the January 2010 Haitian earthquake relief efforts don't disappear, literally, into thin air?**

Records management is intended to preserve and provide access to government documents and records for citizens today and for the future. Paradoxically, however, it can become a barrier to greater citizen engagement with their government if it is used to justify why agencies and their employees are not participating in the social media world in a more interactive, collaborative manner. Those agencies which do actively engage in a dialogue with the public face challenges involved in identifying, capturing, and preserving records resulting from their use of emerging technologies. This is due, in large part, to the lack of a governance framework, government-wide standards, and sufficient guidance and tools needed to carry out records management

responsibilities, together with the increasing volume and variety of information produced.

From the federal perspective, records management is:

The planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities involved in records creation, maintenance and use, and disposition in order to achieve adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of the Federal Government and effective and economical management of agency operations (44 U.S.C. 2901).

Originally, there was no central repository where valuable government records could be stored, and no guidance was provided to those storing records in basements, attics, and warehouses. Consequently, many records were lost, destroyed, or allowed to deteriorate.

Beginning in 1934, with the establishment of the National Archives, Congress has taken steps to ensure that significant government documents are identified, preserved, and managed in a way that makes them readily accessible to the public. The Presidential Records Act (PRA) of 1978 was passed in the wake of the controversy over President Nixon's records after he resigned the presidency in August 1973. The PRA made all presidential records created or received by the president or members of his staff after January 20, 1981, the property of the United States. Although there is no section on social media in the PRA, its emergence has created new

* www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1MGi12RspA

** <http://washingtontechnology.com/articles/2010/01/14/social-media-haiti-earthquake-relief.aspx>

forms of communication that must be preserved if they meet the Act's broad definition of presidential records.

Since 1985, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has operated as an independent agency responsible for the adequacy of documentation and records disposition; the General Services Administration (GSA), meanwhile, has assumed responsibility for economy and efficiency in records management.

Federal agencies that embrace social media for internal and/or external applications must manage the content created under the Federal Records Act and comply with NARA guidelines. Because the GSA leads efforts to identify and develop Web 2.0 platforms for agencies to use, agencies must also look to GSA for guidance related to social media technology and tools.

In 1995, Congress passed the Paperwork Reduction Act that requires agencies to obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) before requesting most types of information from the public. On April 7, 2010, the Office of Management and Budget issued a memorandum for the heads of executive departments and agencies, as well as independent regulatory agencies, to clarify when and how this act applies to agency use of social media and Web-based interactive technologies. It explains that under established principles, certain uses of social media and Web-based interactive technologies will be treated as equivalent to activities currently excluded from the Paperwork Reduction Act: general solicitations, public meetings, and like items. However, some activities will result in records that must be preserved. Although the OMB memo states that "some uses of social media may present novel records management issues," and refers to NARA's guidelines on implementing records management requirements of the Open Government Directive, which directs agencies to use emerging technologies to open new forms of communication with the public, no new NARA guidelines related to social media technology have been posted on the NARA website as of September 30, 2010.*

* www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/memos/nwm04-2010.html

Why Records Management?

The knowledge—and the history—of government agencies is often buried in the many memos, files, letters, forms, and other records they keep. This can range from the case files of the FBI, to the land records kept by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to completed census forms kept by the Census Bureau.

Records contain information valuable to an agency as well as to the public. Managing the vast holdings of records in the federal government is a formidable task, especially since some may be of enduring historical value. Those with historical value are transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to be permanently saved. Still, those with only temporary value are important for agencies to be able to conduct their business. Applications for resident status by immigrants, completed tax forms, and NASA's satellite data are all critical to completing agency missions and need to be protected and filed. These records are increasingly electronic in nature.

Public access to records also serves as an important accountability check on government operations. As a result, Congress has directed both NARA and individual agencies to develop records management systems. The Environmental Protection Agency has developed a "top ten" list for its employees as to why effective records management is essential (www.epa.gov/records/what/quest1.htm):

1. To control the creation and growth of records
2. To reduce operating costs
3. To improve efficiency and productivity
4. To assimilate new records management techniques
5. To ensure regulatory compliance
6. To minimize litigation risks
7. To safeguard vital information
8. To support better management decision making
9. To preserve corporate memory
10. To foster professionalism in running the business

Records management programs are not just a government requirement. All large private sector companies also have developed their own policies and procedures. In fact, there is an international standard for effective records management, ISO 15489.1, which provides guidance on managing records for organizations in both the private and public sectors.

Key Federal Statutes Related to Records Management

National Archives Act of 1934

Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, this act established the National Archives to centralize federal record keeping, with the Archivist of the United States as its chief administrator.

Federal Records Act of 1950

The Federal Records Act, as amended, establishes the framework for records management programs in federal agencies. As the primary agency for records management oversight, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is responsible for assisting federal agencies in maintaining adequate and proper documentation of policies and transactions of the federal government. This is done by appraising records (determining record value and final disposition of temporary or permanent records), regulating and approving the disposition of federal records, operating Federal Records Centers and preserving permanent records.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) of 1966

The Freedom of Information Act, as amended, ensures public access to U.S. government records. FOIA carries a presumption of disclosure; the burden is on the government to substantiate why information may not be released. Upon written request, U.S. government agencies are required to disclose their records, unless they can be lawfully withheld from disclosure under one of nine specific exemptions in the FOIA. This law was most recently amended by the OPEN FOIA Act of 2009.

Privacy Act of 1974

The Privacy Act of 1974 establishes safeguards for the protection of records that the federal government collects and maintains on U.S. citizens and permanent residents. The Act mandates that the government must disclose what information is being collected, and how it will be used. It also bars agencies from maintaining information not directly related to their mission. The Act allows individuals to seek access to records retrieved by their name and personal identifier and to seek amendment of any inaccurate information.

Presidential Records Act (PRA) of 1978

The Presidential Records Act establishes ownership, possession, and control of presidential records as the domain of the United States. It includes provisions that state how such records are to be administered. It gives the president ultimate responsibility for the implementation of records management controls. The PRA of 1978 allows the president, in consultation with the Archivist of the United States, to dispose of those records that no longer have administrative, historical, informational, or evidentiary value. The Archivist must state that he/she will not take action to prevent such disposition. Responsibility for the custody, control, preservation of, and access to presidential records of past presidents lies with the Archivist.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires that agencies obtain Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval before requesting most types of information from the public. It requires the head of each agency to designate a Chief Information Officer to carry out the responsibilities outlined.

E-Government Act of 2002

The E-Government Act promotes the use of the Internet and electronic government services to make the federal government more transparent and accountable. In addition, it provides enhanced access to government information and services in a manner consistent with laws regarding protection of personal privacy, national security, records retention, access for persons with disabilities, and other relevant laws.

Note: Appendix I provides an overview of key provisions implementing these statutes.

The Evolution of Records Management and Information Management

As technology has evolved, the boundaries between paper-based records management (RM) and electronic-based information technology (IT) have blurred. Looking at records management apart from information management perpetuates the problems agencies face in dealing with electronic records, including social media records.

The move to electronic records became an issue only when the size and cost of computers decreased and both word processors and personal computers began to appear on the desks of government employees during the 1970s and 1980s. As the volume of records grew throughout the 1980s, organizations searching for more efficient means to store and manage information turned to document management systems. In addition to increasing accountability for the organization, these systems helped to enforce records management policies and procedures. A major problem encountered by users of electronic document management systems (EDMS) was the inability to access information when away from the office—a situation increasingly encountered by a more mobile workforce. Staff had to copy information to their laptops for use when out of the office and then upload files to the EDMS when they returned.

Throughout the history of the NARA, a growth in records was answered with a search for methods and technologies that could improve flexibility and efficiency. Records managers developed policies and procedures, trained staff, and in theory controlled the records when the organization had control of the files. In spite of these efforts, many within and outside of the federal government admit that there has been inadequate management of digital information between 1990 and the present. In a 1996 speech, then-Archivist of the United States John W. Carlin stated:

Electronic records pose a special problem. We have growing quantities of computer-generated records, ranging from millions of e-mail messages to vast scientific databases, all of which require new methods for appraisal, preservation, and public access.

In 1998, Carlin authorized exploratory research into the technological possibilities for handling the growing volumes and varieties of electronic records, including e-mail. This research led to what would become the Electronic Records Archives (ERA) program.

In describing the management of digital records during the past two decades, American author and journalist Alexander Stille wrote:

One of the great ironies of the information age is that, while the late twentieth century will undoubtedly have recorded more data than any other period in history, it will also almost certainly have lost more information than any previous era. (Stille, 2006)

Where Are We Today?

Evolving Role of the National Archives and Records Administration

The world of Web 2.0, Enterprise 2.0, and Government 2.0 is now awaiting guidance for Records Management 2.0. David Ferriero, sworn into office as the tenth Archivist of the United States on November 13, 2009, clearly recognizes the challenges before him. One of his stated goals is for NARA to become a “leader and innovator in all aspects of social media.” To this end, he has launched a blog, “AOTUS: Collector in Chief” available at <http://blogs.archives/aotus/>.

In testimony before the Information Policy, Census, and National Archives Subcommittee of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee on July 22, 2010, Archivist Ferriero acknowledged: “The most important inferences to records management relate to complexities inherent in Web 2.0 technologies that require careful exercise of agencies’ statutory responsibilities” (Ferriero, 2010, July 22). He vowed to assist federal agencies by creating new policies on the subject of Web 2.0 technologies. The “Bulletin on Web 2.0 and Social Media Platforms” is anticipated to be available to agencies by the end of 2010. However, the forthcoming Bulletin comes only after most agencies have already developed their own social media policies.

Improving Federal Records Management

In June 17, 2010 testimony before the Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census and National Archives, Carol Brock, a founding member of the Federal Information and Records Managers (FIRM) Council, spoke on behalf of the Authority on Managing Records & Information (ARMA International). She encouraged the use of ARMA's recently developed principles-based approach to recordkeeping to improve federal electronic records management. The eight Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles (GARP)[®] are:

- Accountability
- Transparency
- Integrity
- Protection
- Compliance
- Availability
- Retention
- Disposition

Appendix III contains social media considerations related to each of the eight GARP[®] Principles.

ARMA International (www.arma.org) is a not-for-profit professional association seen by professionals as the authority on managing records and information. Formed in 1955, ARMA International is the oldest and largest association for the information management profession with a current international membership of more than 10,000. It provides education, publications, and information on the efficient maintenance, retrieval, and preservation of vital information created in public and private organizations in all sectors of the economy. It also publishes Information Management magazine, and the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles[®] (GARP[®]). More information about GARP[®] can be found at www.arma.org/garp.

See Appendix III for a discussion of GARP[®] principles and social media considerations.

Evolving Governance Model

The historically decentralized approach to records management, when combined with the rapid changes underway in the use of social media by agencies, suggests the need to consider the development of a comprehensive Records and Information Management Governance structure which directly addresses social media. Records management

should be considered during the planning stages of new social media initiatives.

Gartner, an information technology research and advisory firm, defines governance as an accountability framework that “includes the processes, roles, standards, and metrics that ensure the effective and efficient use of information in enabling an organization to achieve its goals.” The Gartner concept of a governance model is one with which the first Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the United States, Vivek Kundra, is very likely familiar. Appointed by President Obama in March 2009, Kundra was given oversight of federal technology spending, as well as responsibility for making government information systems more interoperable while ensuring security and privacy standards. This is an important step towards making federal government agencies operate more effectively.

But as far as records management is concerned, it is not enough. NARA is responsible for safeguarding and making available only those records that must be retained permanently, about one to three percent of all documents and materials created in the course of business conducted by the federal government. Designating a Chief Records Officer (CRO) would provide dedicated records management assistance to work with the Archivist or OMB. The CRO could additionally work with the federal CIO to integrate records management in all government information systems.

Evolving Guidance from NARA and the General Services Administration

The NARA records management guidance related to a records lifecycle model emphasizes the development of disposition standards, submission of schedules using those standards, and workflow designed to track processing of records and their transfer to NARA. More attention is paid to what should be kept, for how long, and how to dispose of it than to how it is used to “enable the organization to achieve its goals.”

In a 2003 report, *Electronic Records Archives Benchmark Report on Records Lifecycle Management*, NARA identified five barriers to successful records management that have not yet been removed:

- Lack of management support for records management programs

The Quest for an Information Governance Framework

An information governance model is now needed to provide a context to discuss social media initiatives and resulting records management considerations. This framework could, as well, address all types of information, whether meeting the criteria established for a record or not.

Three basic elements pertaining to records management should be incorporated in an information governance framework that includes social media: social media policy, controls around social media, and operational guidelines.

Policy: A social media information governance framework relies, first, on a comprehensive social media policy that draws on best practice and can be adapted for almost any circumstance. It must address roles and responsibilities, communications and training, and metrics and monitoring. The social media policy must refer to the requirements for records management resulting from such initiatives. And the records management policy must acknowledge the additional considerations to be addressed when managing such records. Social media teams must include input from records management. In addition, other stakeholders should be consulted; for example, information technology, legal and/or compliance, human resources, marketing and/or public relations, and representatives from business units. See Appendix IV for a partial list of social media policies and guidelines now in place in federal government departments and agencies.

Controls: Controls around social media include establishing acceptable use agreements, providing legal guidance, and adhering to agency branding and style guide requirements. Agencies must adhere to applicable legislation, laws, regulations, and standards. Agencies work under the assumption that a records retention schedule is “media-neutral” and that retention requirements must be met. At the same time, social media initiatives must be reviewed to determine if new records are created and, therefore, new records schedules will result. Automated processes should be utilized when possible for such tasks as moderating content to be posted, capturing and categorizing content from the social media site, and applying records retention and disposition requirements.

Operational Guidelines: Operational guidelines set out best practice for social media activity and records management practices. These include guidelines for the use of blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. The guidelines govern selection of appropriate media to accomplish the core mission of the agency and address issues such as who is permitted to speak on behalf of the agency. Guidelines and best practices for the use of virtual worlds are beginning to emerge.

- Lack of funding to support records management programs
- Rigid procedures that do not allow the records management program to adjust to meet the business needs of the customer agency
- Rigid procedures that force records management staff to spend time creating documentation that is not used later
- Traditional records management practices that do not make sense to continue

In July 22, 2010 testimony before the Information Policy, Census, and National Archives Subcommittee of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Dr. David L. McClure, Associate Administrator for Citizen Services and Innovative

Technologies of the General Services Administration, addressed *Government 2.0: Federal Agency Use of Web 2.0 Technologies*. In his testimony, he stressed that although records and information management are not within his office’s purview, GSA’s role in provisioning Web 2.0 tools across the government may provide perspective for how other agencies look at this issue.*

Though NARA carries primary responsibility for guiding federal records management for Web 2.0 tools, it is itself currently occupied with learning to use these tools and discovering what they mean for records management, both within NARA and across federal agencies.

There is therefore a disconnect between social media and website development teams’ role in

* www.scribd.com/doc/34747484/072110-IP-David-McClure-GSA-072210-1

establishing agency social media presences, GSA's role in providing Web 2.0 technologies, and NARA's position of providing guidance *after* social media initiatives have already been implemented in many federal agencies.

Pending Legislation

In order to ensure the implementation of strict records management practices for electronic communications, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1387, the Electronic Message Preservation Act, on March 17, 2010. This legislation would amend Title 44 of the U.S. Code to strengthen the Federal Records Act and the Presidential Records Act by increasing NARA's oversight of federal agencies with regards to electronic records retention and accessibility for electronic messages considered records.

The Electronic Message Preservation Act would apply to all federal agencies and the Office of the President and would require that agencies invest in a records management system that facilitates the capture, management, and preservation of electronic messages that are records in line with the current obligation for physical records. This requirement affirms the need to manage government records regardless of format and inextricably links records management and information management. As of September 2010, the Senate had not yet acted on it.

This legislation would specifically define electronic messages as e-mail and other electronic messaging systems used for the purpose of communicating between individuals. Electronic records other than electronic communications are addressed with the following statement: "*To the extent practicable, the regulations promulgated under subsection (a) shall also include requirements for the capture, management, and preservation of other electronic records.*"

Adoption of this legislation would represent one step forward in meeting the challenges posed by electronic records, but it will not be a complete solution. Additional steps will need to be taken in the future to ensure that other forms of electronic records not considered electronic messages—such as those created through emerging technologies including wikis, blogs, and social networking sites are also captured, managed, and preserved.

Records Managers Struggling to Keep Up with Technology

What is Social Media?

The ultimate goal of President Obama's January 21, 2009 Memo on Transparency and Open Government was to ensure that executive departments and agencies take specific actions to encourage the sharing of information and ideas within the federal government and with citizens. The three main tenets of the directive are that government should be transparent, participatory, and collaborative.

According to some insiders, this directive created a "Wild West" atmosphere in which eager individuals, embracing the freedom to innovate, moved quickly to use social media both within their departments and agencies and with the outside world. Early government enthusiasts of social media endeavored to establish a presence without first identifying a goal. Only recently have those responsible for social media initiatives begun to ask what needs to be accomplished before selecting the appropriate tool for the task.

Social media task forces and social media teams, also called *new media teams*, have been formed in many departments and agencies. These groups often work independently of the information technology office and without the involvement of records management personnel. It is not surprising that many of the early social media initiatives were implemented without addressing the resulting records management challenges.

In an attempt to maintain control of their information, some government agencies have taken a more cautious approach by implementing their own in-house versions of popular networking platforms. Examples include NASA's Spacebook; the State Department's

Statebooks; and GSA's latest e-government project, FedSpace. While providing the agencies with more control over the content and therefore the "record," government agencies may be in danger of creating a different type of challenge—Gov2.0 silos.

It is instructive to compare definitions of social media:

- **Blossom definition.** John Blossom, author of *Content Nation*, defines social media as "any highly scalable and accessible communications technology or technique that enables any individual to influence groups of other individuals easily." (Blossom, 2009) This calls to mind the successful use of social media by the Obama presidential campaign.
- **United States Air Force.** In "Social Media and the Air Force," social media is defined as "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." (Air Force Public Affairs Agency, 2009, November)
- **General Services Administration.** GSA uses the terms "social media" and "Web 2.0 technologies" interchangeably. GSA defines social media as "the collection of Web tools that facilitate collaboration and information sharing. Web-based communities and hosted services include social-networking sites, video and photo sharing sites, wikis, blogs, virtual worlds, and other emerging technologies." (GSA Social Media Handbook, 2009).

Although the previous definitions may differ slightly, it is evident that "social media" encompasses a number of emerging technologies that facilitate

interaction between individuals and groups both inside and outside an organization. The best return on an agency's investment of resources in social media is realized when the goal of the social media initiative is clearly identified and clearly related to the agency's core mission.

Websites and Social Media

The General Services Administration in June 2010 identified four guidelines for implementing social media initiatives. These should also be considered by those responsible for records management:

- Understanding social media
- Defining a strategy
- Selecting the right tools for the job
- Securing the resources to implement the plan

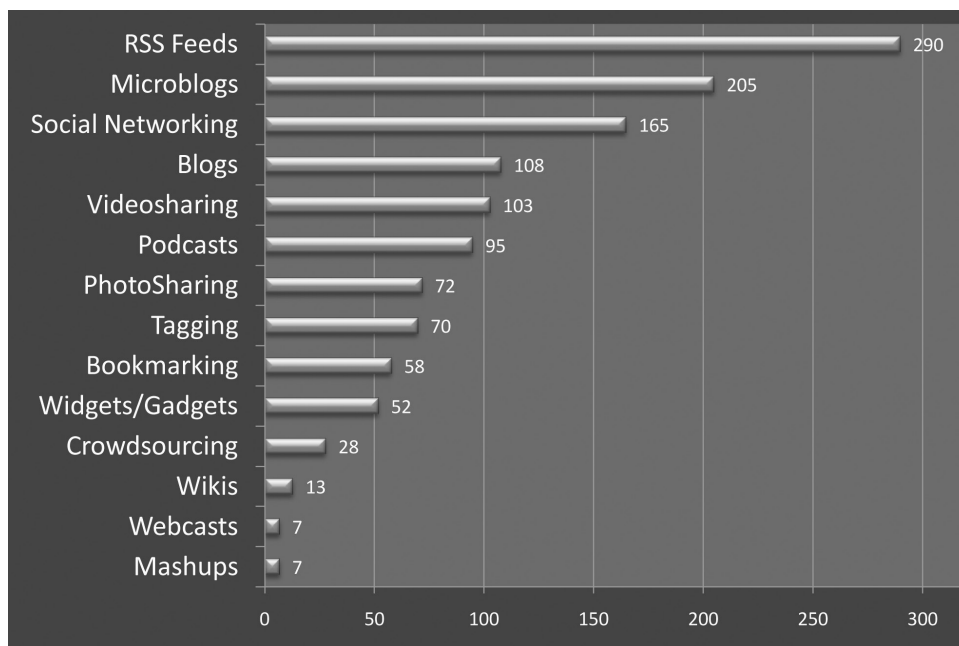
NARA's 2006 publication, *Implications of Recent Web Technologies for NARA Web Guidance*, explores the applications that characterize the emerging Web and their impact on records management. Specifically, it analyzes the characteristics of four specific applications—portals, RSS feeds, Blogs, and Wikis. It answers questions for content managers regarding their interactive/collaborative nature and how the content might be managed by an agency's

records management program. This is a good place to begin when analyzing the type of content contained within social media tools and how records might be categorized, managed, and transferred to NARA.

According to Tim Barnes and Len Sipes, public affairs and IT specialists at the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, "There is no formula or specific definition for a successful social media strategy; it depends entirely on your circumstances and what you want to accomplish. The heart of the philosophy of social media is the willingness to interact with your customers to establish a dialog. It's an even exchange; you give them neat and interesting content and they give you information to improve what you do." (Barnes and Sipes, 2010, January 8)

Examples of some of the social media tools and technologies in use by the White House and the 15 departments in the Executive Branch as well as their agencies and sub-agencies are shown in Figure 1. The information was gathered through a variety of means including online research of 261 department and agency websites and the USA.gov website. Figure 1 reflects only those social media initiatives publicly visible on the Web.

Figure 1. Use of Social Media by Executive Branch Agencies



Source: Franks, research conducted for this report. Number of publicly visible social media tools in use by White House and the 15 Departments in the Executive Branch on June 26, 2010.

Agencies have rapidly adopted a wide range of social media tools, but five seem to dominate:

- RSS feeds
- Microblogs
- Social networking sites
- Blogs
- Videosharing

All the above tools have something in common; they are easy to use and therefore popular with early adopters of social media. But, as long as comments are not enabled on social networking sites or blogs, there is no interactive experience for the user. Departments and agencies taking a conservative approach to the use of social media often control the message by treating these tools as one-to-many publishing initiatives, similar to e-mail marketing campaigns.

An emerging trend is to replace e-mail with information shared through social networking and microblogging. Those departments and agencies already employing these tools have positioned themselves to become even more effective in reaching out to citizens in the future. Although the volume of e-mail continues to grow, alternatives are growing faster. In a list of five new predictions about social software, Gartner predicted that by 2014, social networking services will replace e-mail as the primary communication tool for 20 percent of business users (Ha, 2010, February 3). Changes in the private sector will impact practices in the public sector.

The Role of the Web Manager

Social media technology is Internet-based technology, with many users accessing the information provided through the use of a Web browser. Not surprisingly, Web content managers often play a key role in social media initiatives. Government websites already familiar to citizens provide a logical platform within which to integrate links to a variety of social media tools.

Members of Web teams understand how to reach a target audience and analyze the effectiveness of outreach initiatives. For example, the NASA.gov Web Team analyzed traffic patterns on the official NASA website and found that some visitors were not

selecting links to NASA's Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube pages, and other social media options. Further analysis of terms used on other sites revealed that the label "Connect" had become a de facto standard on websites linking to social media. Re-labeling the link from "Collaborate" to "Connect" was a simple but important move designed to increase use of NASA's social media tools. (Townsend, 2009, November 6)

The relationship between Web content managers and social media teams not only impacts the success of the social media initiative, but also results in stronger records management programs for several reasons:

- Federal Web managers are already familiar with *NARA Guidance on Managing Web Records* published in 2005.
- *Implications of Recent Web Technologies for NARA Web Guidance*, published in 2006, provided additional records management guidance related to Web portals, RSS, blogs, and wikis.
- The Federal Web Managers Council, an inter-agency group of senior federal government Web managers, promotes the exchange of ideas and best practices to improve the online delivery of U.S. government information and services.
- WebContent.gov, a website maintained by the Web Managers Council, is a valuable resource for Web content managers, providing information about training and workshops, examples of existing Web policies, and checklists that stress the importance of compliance with FOIA and records management requirements.
- Web content managers have experience in capturing and managing Web content to meet records management requirements.

Emma Antunes, Web manager at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, was project manager for Spacebook, NASA's internal social networking tool, and is an advocate for the use of Web 2.0 tools to help government agencies become more efficient and effective. According to Antunes, "The agency Web manager needs a good relationship with the records manager." (Personal communication, May 5, 2010) The opposite is also true; the records manager must proactively seek a working relationship with the Web manager and members of the social media

team as well as those in the information technology office. (See Appendix V for Social Media Policy Considerations for the Records Manager.)

Before one can address the implications of social media for records management practices within the federal government, it is important to understand how records managers themselves evaluate their current procedures and practices.

Records Management Self-Assessment Conducted by NARA

In September 2009, the National Archives and Records Administration issued a mandatory records management self-assessment survey to 242 agencies. Twenty-one agencies did not comply with the request by the deadline and were not included in the results.

The survey primarily focused on traditional electronic records and e-mail. It did not address social media records. However, the responses to questions could have implications for the successful management of social media records. The responses to the sections on Program Management, Electronic Records and E-mail Records in particular have social media implications.

The report based on the survey, released in spring 2010, categorized agencies as having low, moderate, and high levels of records management-related risk based on their placement on a 100-point scale. Agencies scoring 90 or above were at low risk; 60-89 were at moderate risk; and 59 or below were at high risk (Table 1).

Seventy-nine percent of more than 200 federal agencies that responded to the survey were found to have records management programs that presented moderate or high levels of risk.

The overall department scores reveal that only one, the Department of State, was at a “low level of risk” due to its records management programs and practices. When comparing overall scores, two are shown to be at high risk levels: the Executive Office of the President and the Department of Defense. The remaining departments were at “moderate levels of risk” due to their records management programs. By law, the head of each federal agency is charged with making and preserving records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, and essential transactions of the agency. Departments should be held accountable for the poor performance of units under them, and going forward the current scores should be considered a base for continuous improvement.

The self-assessment survey questions were developed to evaluate records management risk in five types of records programs and practices:

- Program Management
- Records Disposition
- Vital Records
- Electronic Records
- E-mail Records

The self-assessment indicates that almost 31 percent of the respondents believe they are at high risk due to their management of vital records. Considering the fact that vital records are necessary to continue operations without delay in an emergency, this situation is alarming.

A majority of respondents reported that they felt electronic records and e-mail records pose moderate to high levels of risk. Sections two through five—records disposition, vital records, electronic records

Table 1. Summary of Risk Identified (rounded to the nearest 100th of a percent)

Category	Low Level of Risk	Moderate Level of Risk	High Level of Risk
Program Management	40% (88)	39% (86)	21% (46)
Records Disposition	65% (143)	13% (28)	22% (49)
Vital Records	61% (135)	8% (17)	31% (68)
Electronic Records	44% (96)	18% (39)	39% (85)
E-mail Records	26% (57)	27% (59)	48% (105)

Source: Franks from Records Management self-assessment document. Compilation of ratings provided in self-assessment for each of the five sections.

E-mail Records

The Presidential Records Act of 1978 governs the official records of Presidents and Vice Presidents created or received after January 20, 1981. It changed the legal ownership of the official records from private to public and established a new statutory structure under which Presidents must manage their records. "It is meant to open a window into the government for the benefit of the people. And the spirit of this law should shape policies about retention or destruction of information about [and for] citizens." (Lathrop & Ruma, 2010, pp. 318-319)

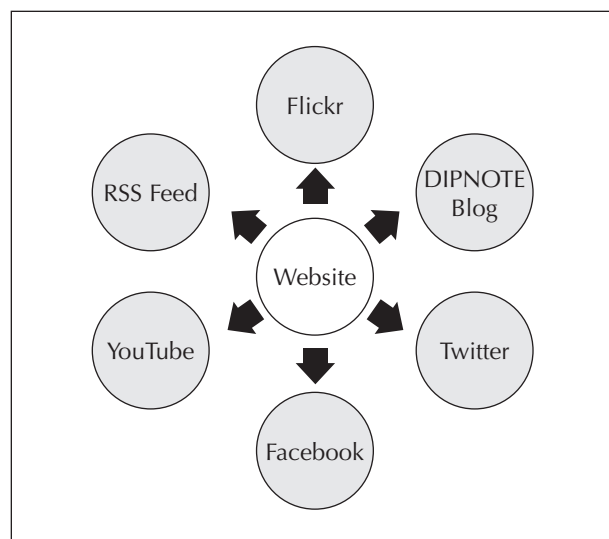
NARA's Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR 1236, contains requirements affecting federal agencies and their Electronic Records Management programs. Criteria for managing federal records created in an electronic mail system are found in 36 CFR Part 1236, § 1236.2. In essence, as e-mail messages are potential federal records, employees must know how to identify these records. E-mail records must be stored in an appropriate record-keeping system; e-mail messages sent or received via a non-government e-mail system must be preserved; and e-mail federal records must be copied from an e-mail system that is not a recordkeeping system to a recordkeeping system.

E-mail records management was the main focus of the 2009 self-assessment. Despite the guidance provided by both the Presidential Records Act and 36 CFR 1236, the results of this section of the survey revealed that almost 75 percent of the respondents felt their organizations were at moderate or high risk due to e-mail. Challenges posed by capture and management of e-mail records will be compounded by social media, as private firms develop products that can capture and manage at least some of the information created through social media sites using the same solutions they employ for e-mail and instant messaging.

and e-mail records—are specific facets of a records management program. It is not surprising, then, to see that 60 percent of the respondents indicate medium or high level of risk attached to program management itself.

Even though 65 percent of the respondents indicated a low level of risk related to records disposition, questions remain as to the scheduling of program records on their websites. A significant number of agencies state they do not maintain program records on the Web and view their website as a means of distributing information. Still others state that the

Figure 2. Staying Connected with www.state.gov



schedules for Web records were pending, and a few questioned why Web records were not covered by media-neutral records schedules, which specifically excludes programmatic Web content records.

This is a surprising situation given that NARA provided guidance approximately six years ago with its publication, *NARA Guidance on Managing Web Records*.

The questions surrounding programmatic records on websites will be compounded with the implementation of social media initiatives, which are increasingly becoming integrated with or linked to from the department, agency, and sub-agency websites.

When planning for Web harvest or screen capture of websites, questions will arise as to whether the information added through links to social media should be considered part of the Web harvest or screen capture procedures or if other methods should be employed to capture and preserve records on social media sites. (See Appendix VI for social media considerations for website records management.)

Agency Compliance with the E-Government Act of 2002

In December of 2005, NARA issued *Bulletin 2006-02, NARA Guidance for Implementing Section 207(e) of the E-Government Act of 2002* which established a September 2009 deadline for all federal agencies to submit records schedules to NARA for all

existing electronic records and the scheduling of new electronic records systems as they developed.

In a June 2010 report, *NARA's Electronic Records Project, Summary Report: FY 2005-FY 2009*, NARA detailed the extent to which federal agencies complied by the September 2009 deadline. The results revealed that electronic records scheduling reports were received from 160 of 240 federal agencies, a 67 percent response rate. Of the reporting agencies, 25 percent were categorized as moderate to high risk, having submitted records schedules for less than 90 percent of their electronic records.

Between FY 2005 when the initial bulletin was issued and the FY 2009 deadline, 2,404 separate record series were approved, but few addressed social media. The Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), a subdivision of the Department of the Treasury, is one of the first agencies to address blogs and other social media in a records control schedule submitted on July 2, 2009 as part of the schedule for the CDFI Public Website.

One of three actions that NARA has undertaken in order to better manage electronic records is to “review areas where it may be useful to clarify the direction in which the federal government must move to improve the management of electronic records, while analyzing the costs and benefits of different approaches.” To this end, two broad areas are being examined that indicate the troubling state of affairs in which the federal agencies find themselves in with regard to electronic records, and in particular social media records:

- Most agencies have “print and file” policies for managing their e-mail
- Under existing rules, agencies can retain permanently valuable records for more than thirty years or when no longer needed for agency business purposes

If preservation issues are not considered when the records are created, these records are at risk due to obsolete software, hardware, and file formats (Wester, Jr., 2010, June 17). Valerie C. Melvin, Director of Information and Human Capital Issues with the Government Accountability Office, expressed her views on the challenges of electronic records and e-mail:

Electronic records pose major management challenges: their volume, complexity, and the increasingly decentralized environment in which they are created. E-mail epitomizes the challenge, as it is not only voluminous and complex, but also ubiquitous” (Melvin, 2010, June 17).

Social media, especially when accessed by mobile devices, will present even greater challenges.

Differences Between E-mail/Instant Messaging and Social Networks

Effective management of social media records relies upon the implementation of a solid records management program for all records, regardless of medium. It is impossible to build a strong program to address the challenges of emerging technology on a shaky foundation.

Social media present unique challenges because of key differences between them and other electronic systems, such as e-mail and instant messaging. Table 2 compares e-mail and instant messaging systems to social networks:

- E-mail and instant messaging can be controlled by the agency. Servers can be managed within the agency, or services can be outsourced. Popular social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, can't be placed on an enterprise server. Capturing records residing in these third-party social media tools can be labor-intensive, inefficient, and duplicative.
- E-mail standards have not changed in 10 to 15 years, so once policies are in place, they are fairly stable. Social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn do not share the same standards, and new features and terms-of-use policies and privacy settings change often.
- Both e-mail and instant messaging are used to communicate and share content. But social media involves both content and activities based on actions of others. For example, “liking” a comment on Facebook or “re-tweeting” a tweet in Twitter are actions that can be interpreted as endorsements of the original comment or tweet.

Table 2. Comparison of E-Mail and Instant Messaging Systems to Social Networks

	E-mail/IM	Social Networks
Standards based	Yes	No
Pace of change	Little to none	Weekly
Corporate Controls	Yes	No
Audience	Tightly controlled	Viral, network-based
Content oriented	Yes	Yes
Activity oriented	No	Yes

Source: Reprinted with permission from Socialware, the Social Middleware Company. (www.socialware.com)

- Content on social media sites changes frequently, and comments are often added daily. The dynamic nature of such sites requires agencies to determine if the interactions need be captured as part of the record and, if so, how frequently such capture should take place.

Federal agencies struggling to address these and similar challenges posed by emerging technology are hampered by records management programs that have failed to adequately manage electronic records in the past. The most important lesson learned as a result of this research project is that “without changing recordkeeping policies to reflect the current environment, while simultaneously also supporting the development and deployment of more robust electronic recordkeeping systems, the permanent record of our nation that is in electronic form will be compromised.” (Wester, 2010, June 17)

Agency Responses to Implementing Social Media

While waiting for additional guidance from NARA, OMB, or GSA, many agencies have moved ahead with implementing social media and developing social media policies for their organizations. The following section presents brief descriptions for agencies which are now developing their own internal policies for social media:

- National Archives and Record Administration
- Internal Revenue Service
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Defense

National Archives and Records Administration

NARA’s internal social media team is responsible for social media initiatives undertaken under the direction of the U.S. Archivist, who communicates with the public through his blog, *AOTUS*, in his role as *Collector in Chief*.

While other groups within NARA concern themselves with assisting other federal agencies, the Social Media Team’s sole responsibility is to the agency itself. Jill Reilly James, the Social Media Team Leader, explained that NARA uses social media for outreach to citizens, internal work, and intra-agency collaboration. (Personal communication, 2010, May 3) The NARA Flickr account has been live since July 2009. Blogs are created using WordPress, with some, like NARAtions—the main blog—being public, while others are on the Intranet. The Office of Public Relations operates the agency’s Facebook account, which had 4,000+ fans at the time of the interview with the author. Both internal and external wikis are created using Wikispaces. Wikis are hosted outside of the firewall but password protected for some projects. Ideascale is used for gathering comments and voting; for example, input was solicited and encouraged when developing the agency’s Open Government plan.

NARA staff can access social media for personal use only during breaks or at lunch. Staff can access social media for professional use at work; for example, sites published by professional associations related to their jobs. Not all staff engage in outreach to the public; this must be approved by a supervisor.

Staff members can make a proposal and seek permission to use social media for professional purposes. Part of the proposal process is to explain if records are created and, if so, how they will be managed.

National Archives Study on Use of Web 2.0 by Federal Agencies

In mid-2010, The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) released a study on federal agencies' use of social media technologies, and the associated records management challenges. The study, *A Report on Federal Web 2.0 Use and Record Value*, is based on numerous interviews within six federal agencies, including the Department of State, on the cutting edge of using Web 2.0 tools, as well as a focus group of employees from 19 other agencies.

With the flood of information generated by the new social media tools, NARA has been concerned about how agencies will decide what constitutes a valuable public "record" that should be archived permanently.

The report is based on a series of interviews with six federal agencies that are on the cutting edge of using Web 2.0 tools, such as the State Department. It also draws from a focus group of employees from 19 other agencies to understand some of the broader trends across government, as well.

"From a records value perspective," the report observes, "Web 2.0 content is best analyzed based on the function and use of the information, not solely by the platform or tool."

NARA's concern is that "The web landscape is evolving so rapidly that if we neglect to address these issues, we risk losing the truly valuable materials created by the Federal government." The study concludes that while "the concepts of temporary and permanent value have not changed," they have become harder to manage. In response, the report offers several recommendations for future action by Congress, NARA and other agencies:

- NARA may need to clarify how the definition of a federal record applies to Web 2.0 content. This might include updates to the existing statutory definition.
- NARA and agencies need to clarify for the public what constitutes a temporary versus a permanent record, for example, public comments on federal social media sites.
- NARA and agencies must recognize that a vast majority of Web 2.0 records do not have permanent value, and this needs to be clarified in the General Records Schedule.
- NARA and agencies need to determine how some records deemed of permanent value are to be preserved and transferred to NARA, for example, interactive maps or dialogues.
- Agency records officers need to determine which version of a Web record is the most authoritative version to retain.
- Agencies need to integrate records management requirements into their social media policy development and planning processes.
- NARA should work with other agencies to identify best practices for capture and management of social media records.

When asked about the agency's approach to social media projects and records management challenges, James shared NARA's philosophy:

"In our approach to social media projects, the National Archives has been thinking about records management from the beginning. Our records managers are involved in the National Archives Social Media Working Group and are kept in the loop on current and upcoming projects. We believe it is important to capture and document the

ways our agency is using new media communication tools to do our business with the public and other government employees."

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

While many agencies are waiting for NARA to produce guidance on this topic at the end of 2010, other agencies are developing their own methods to utilize social media while addressing records management rules and regulations. The Internal Revenue Service is one such agency. The IRS has a clear,

unique mission. Its culture is often described as conservative and “risk aware.” Social media is used, but such use must be mission-related. A *new media team* has been formed, and a representative from the 20-member records office charged with supporting the agency and its 100,000 employees is involved.

The agency has experience in managing electronic files, including e-mail. They utilize a functional analysis approach to developing their records retention schedule; for example, communications is one records category. Rather than use the same retention periods that govern paper records, they use a big-bucket approach to e-mail. Three buckets were created: 1) transitory, 2) permanent, and 3) for everything else (retain for six years plus the remainder of the current year). Metadata is used to pull transitory e-mail out of the repository, and transitory records are disposed of when no longer useful.

The IRS experience with electronic records and e-mail is being tapped to deal with social media. The IRS reports that its Office of Records and Information Management has established basic guidelines for the management of records created using social media tools based on current records management rules and regulations (i.e., 44 USC 3301, definition of federal records, and NARA guidance in 36 CFR 1220-1239).

In an interview, Stephanie Griffith, Senior Records Analyst at the IRS, discussed the following records management challenges facing IRS:

- Difficulty in identifying and classifying data that meets the definition of a federal record
- Capture of the data identified as federal record material when platforms are owned by a third party
- Overall management of the identified record material

The IRS Records Management staff, according to Griffin, is now working with the IRS New Media Task Force to establish proper rules and regulations for the use of social media tools within IRS.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the Department of Health and Human

Services has prepared a number of documents to assist those engaging in social media on behalf of the CDC, including *CDC Virtual World Requirements and Best Practices*. The guidelines and best practices prepared by the CDC uniformly require that the proposing entity clearly define its objectives, know its target audience(s), and determine the content clearance process. Almost all social media initiatives also require proposers to determine resource needs and evaluate the social media activities using pre-defined metrics.

Department of Defense

Most departments and agencies are moving toward consolidating information about social media into one page or a series of pages on their website. The most recent example is the Department of Defense (DoD) Social Media Hub. DoD has developed a redesigned Social Media Hub (see Figure 3) which is meant to serve as an online toolbox for individuals who want to find out how to register their own page, voice social media-related questions, or just stay up-to-date on the latest DoD social media news.

The text introducing the resources on the home page of this hub indicates that members of the DoD community share responsibility, both in official and unofficial capacities. The website categorizes resources in three distinct ways:

- The *Learning and Resources* category is further divided into education and training, social media and links to examples from department itself and each of the services.
- The *Collaborate and Connect* category allows visitors to the site to engage in discussions, review FAQs, and ask questions of the experts.
- The *Policies and Procedures* category is geared to those who manage an official DoD social media presence and includes a link to the user agreement, a form to register the social media page, and a link to the social media policy. Concerning this policy’s relation to records management, Jack Holt, Chief of New Media Operations at DoD, says: “We launched...our Social Media Hub as a resource to bring social media issues, training, and discussions in one place. We hope that it helps to not only inform but educate our workforce, both uniform and civilian, and to dispel some of the misconcep-

Figure 3. DoD Social Media Hub Home Page



tions about 'social' media and to open some discussions on just what is a 'community.' There is great power in transparency, but also great responsibility. It is now the job of each and every one of us to look out for each other and our communities in whatever forms they take."

Understanding the Characteristics of a Record

Because of the volume of records created in electronic form and the increase in both FOIA requests and e-discovery requests for “information” and not “records,” a growing number of individuals in the private and public sectors believe it is time to revisit the traditional definition of a record. Archivist Ferriero stated the following at a hearing on Government 2.0: Federal Agency Use of Web 2.0 Technologies on July 22, 2010: “Every new technology provides new challenges to what is a record.”

Until the government changes the way it identifies and classifies records, however, agencies must work within the current structure. Therefore, it is important to recognize the characteristics of a record, especially if we are to identify records created through the use of social media.

As with definitions of social media, it is also instructive to contrast definitions of records:

- **The Federal Records Act.** The Act defines a federal record as “...all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the U.S. Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of the data in them.” (44 U.S.C. 3301, Definition of Records) This is a detailed definition that attempts to be all-inclusive. But few employees within any agency understand or feel comfortable using this definition to

identify electronic records, especially social media records.

- **Freedom of Information Act.** The definition of a record under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is broader than the definition under the Federal Records Act and refers to “records” and “information” interchangeably.
- **International Standards Organization.** Recognized as the leading standards body for records management, the International Standards Organization (ISO) produced ISO 15489-1, the International Standard for *Information and documentation—Records management*. The ISO standard defines records as “Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.”
- **Sedona Conference.** Another perspective on the definition of a record comes from The Sedona Conference®, an organization with the mission of allowing leading jurists, lawyers, experts, academics and others to come together in conferences to move the law forward. The definition of a record offered by The Sedona Conference® is “Information, regardless of medium or format, that has value to an organization.”

The more complex the information environment, the greater the need for a simple definition that can be applied easily by those responsible for creating and managing records.

An accompanying challenge once the definition is agreed upon is to accurately identify a record regardless of the medium. Due to the volume of

records generated and the complexity of the platforms and formats, an automation process is desirable to avoid human error and allow staff to focus their efforts on the core mission of the agency.

Regardless of the definition used, in general a record should contain content that correctly reflects what was communicated or decided or what action was taken; and it should support the needs of the business to which it relates, so that it can be used for accountability purposes. The record should contain or be linked to or associated with the metadata necessary to document the transaction so that the structure remains intact, the business context is apparent, and the links between documents that may be held separately or combined to make up a record. The record should be:

- Authentic
- Reliable
- Usable, and
- Demonstrate integrity

Each of the above characteristics is discussed in detail below. An agency's ability to follow the Best Practices provided will depend upon a variety of factors, such as whether the social media tool is hosted by the agency or by a third-party. The Best Practices should serve as a basis for each agency to formulate its own social media and records management strategy.

Authenticity

Definition (from the ISO 15489 standard): An authentic record can be proven to be what it purports to be, to have been created or sent by the person purported to have created or sent it, and to have been created or sent at the time purported.

Record System Characteristics: The records system must ensure authenticity by meeting the condition as described in *DoD 5015.2-STD for Electronic Records Management Software Applications* by proving that a record is genuine based on:

- Its mode (i.e., a method by which a record is communicated over space or time)
- Form (i.e., the format or media that a record has upon receipt)

- State of transmission (i.e., the primitiveness, completeness, and effectiveness of a record when it is initially set aside after being made or received)
- Manner of preservation and custody

Implications for Social Media: Policies and procedures must be developed to control the creation, receipt, transmission, maintenance, and disposition of records. Creators must be authorized and identified. Records must be protected against unauthorized addition, deletion, alteration, use and concealment. Audit trails or other methods to demonstrate that records were protected from unauthorized addition, deletion, use and concealment should be implemented.

Best Practices for Achieving Authenticity in a Social Media Environment:

- Develop a social media policy that addresses security, privacy, and communications issues to minimize risk to staff who use social media on behalf of the agency and the agency itself.
- Develop a social media policy that acknowledges records management considerations and refers to the agency's records management policy.
- Involve records management personnel in the development of the social media policy.
- Review and revise, if necessary, the records management policy to address the use of social media.
- Develop social media initiatives designed to assist the agency achieve its core mission.
- Use official agency accounts that clearly display branding used on agency websites, including the agency logo.
- Designate responsibility for official agency records created, received, and transmitted via social media sites.
- Authenticate employees and usernames for social media.
- Monitor content on official agency social media sites.
- Ensure that content from social media sites is downloaded and stored in a way that prevents modification of the record.

- Develop a process for capturing metadata from content downloaded from social media sites.
- Develop a process for further identifying the content from social media sites by affixing additional information necessary to manage the record.

Reliability

Definition (from the ISO 15489 standard): A reliable record is one whose contents can be trusted as a full and accurate representation of the transactions, activities or facts to which they attest and can be depended upon in the course of subsequent transactions or activities.

Records system characteristics: The record system should capture all records within the scope of the business activities it covers, organize the records in a way that reflects the business process of the records' creator, protect the records from unauthorized alteration or disposition, routinely function as the primary source of information about actions that are documented in the records, and provide ready access to all relevant records and related metadata.

Implications for Social Media: Records should be created at the time of the transaction or incident to which they relate, or soon afterwards, by individuals who have direct knowledge of the facts or by instruments routinely used within the business to conduct the transaction; for example, tweets reporting earthquakes being automatically captured by USGS and integrated with mapping software as soon as they are posted.

Best Practices for Achieving Reliability in a Social Media Environment:

- Identify and assume responsibility for records created, received, and transmitted via social networking websites "before" they are created by including a plan for records management in the initial social media program proposal.
- Analyze the type of content included on each social media site and determine where the original file resides. For example, many agencies upload copies of videos to YouTube or Vimeo, but the original files are considered to be those on the agency servers.
- Reuse content residing in content management systems when possible. Products like the social media dashboard HootSuite can send the same message to multiple social networking sites, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and MySpace.
- Automatically capture and classify social networking data. For example, capture not only specific tweets but also updates to profiles in LinkedIn.
- Appoint staff to speak on behalf of the agency when appropriate; for example, select one or more persons to submit blog entries or post tweets.
- Enter into Terms of Service agreements, working through GSA when possible, which ensure content hosted is accessible and stored in non-proprietary formats while residing in the third-party system, or can be converted to non-proprietary formats for download by the agency.
- Determine how social media records will be downloaded from the social media site for temporary or permanent retention.
- Use official agency accounts rather than employee personal accounts for agency business so that the agency can decide when to close or delete an account after considering records management requirements.
- Determine a policy for comments posted to the social media sites that includes what information will be gathered and stored, how it will be used and for how long, and the method of disposition.

Usability

Definition (from the ISO 15489 standard): A usable record is one that can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted.

Records system characteristics: Records systems should provide timely and efficient access to, and retrieval of, records needed in the continuing conduct of business and to satisfy accountability requirements.

Implications for Social Media: Present the record as directly connected to the business activity or

transaction that produced it. Contextual linkages should carry the information needed for an understanding of the transactions that created them. The record must be identifiable within the context of broader business activities and functions. Links between records that document a sequence of activities should be maintained. Content must be archived, supervised, and made discoverable.

Best Practices for Achieving Usability in a Social Media Environment:

- Social media efforts should relate back to the agency's core mission and a specific objective.
- For each new social media initiative, develop a formal proposal and get approval. The proposal should explain whether records will be created by or posted to social media, and if so, how they will be managed.
- Social media initiatives can be analyzed to determine if they are similar to other non-social media activities; for example, blogs are often nothing more than press releases written to convey a message with no or limited opportunity for users to comment. Static content should receive pre-approval before being posted.
- Categorize content posted to blogs and other social media based on existing categories (and retention requirements) when possible. For example: one staff member noted that diaries are administrative records, and some blogs are diaries. It may be possible to categorize those blogs as "administrative" files and use the same retention requirements.
- Determine if social media initiatives involve more than one social media tool—such as the "democracy" contests held by the State Department that require content posted to the website but also involve the use of Facebook, Twitter, and/or YouTube.
- Provide native support for discovery of all captured social networking content. Allow filter searches by keyword, date, user, network or content type once captured.
- Provide ability to export all captured data in a structured XML format, which could be filtered by network, user, date range or content type.
- Capture tags added by users of the social media system, and utilize a blend of taxonomy and

social tagging (folksonomy) to improve findability. Consider using a tag-influenced taxonomy to assist users in locating information based on their vocabulary as well as the agency's controlled vocabulary.

Integrity

Definition (from the ISO 15489 standard): The record must be protected against unauthorized alteration.

Records system characteristics: Control measures such as access monitoring, user verification, authorized destruction and security should be implemented to prevent unauthorized access, destruction, alteration or removal of records. The controls may reside within or be external to the records system. The organization may need to prove that any system malfunction, upgrade or regular maintenance does not affect the records' integrity.

Implications for Social Media: Protect against unauthorized alteration. Policies and procedures should specify what additions or annotations are permissible after a record is created, under what circumstances, and who is authorized to make them. Practices must be put into place to trace any authorized annotation; addition to or deletion of a record should be explicitly indicated and traceable. Access controls will ensure the integrity of the record.

Best Practices for Achieving Integrity in a Social Media Environment:

- Automatic discovery of social network accounts across any regulated employee. System will detect and enforce compliance rules defined by the organization.
- Automated routing of social networking messages that require pre-approval. Your compliance solution should capture content based on keywords before it posts, route it to a defined moderator, and once moderated, capture the associated details for downstream audits.
- Automatic posting of moderated social networking messages once approved. (one-click publishing on behalf of the user).
- Ability to restrict access to social networking features on a user-by-user basis. Blocking acceptance of recommendations on sites like LinkedIn

helps ensure against inadvertently violating compliance policies. Be sure you have the flexibility to block features impacted by all applicable compliance policies.

- Ability to scan for a custom list of keywords and phrases to ensure brand protection. This avoids having unacceptable content being posted and spreading quickly. Scanning and capturing content that doesn't pass your filters for appropriateness is invaluable.
- Capture metadata associated with a social network post or activity, providing context. Capture additional details such as enterprise user credentials, URL of the page and the reference post when making a comment.
- Integration support for enterprise archival and data leakage prevention tools. Social networking solution should provide an extensive Application Programming Interface (API) to access the data needed and offer the ability to route requests to existing enterprise systems.
- Built-in reporting capabilities on usage, captured content and moderation activity. Need real-time insights to individual and group usage, rule violations and moderation queues.

Records Management Challenges Facing the Federal Government in a Social Media World

The following challenges address both weaknesses in the current approach taken to manage federal records and the unique issues presented by social media technologies.

Governance Challenges

Challenge One: Records management authority and responsibility is fragmented and ineffective.

Some federal agencies seem to disregard the authority of the National Archives and Records Administration. This is evident in the fact that not all agencies complied with NARA's mandatory Records Management Self-Assessment, or the statutory September 2009 deadline to submit records schedules to NARA for all existing records and new electronic records systems.

Federal agencies must look to several sources for records management guidance, including NARA, agencies which set information policy like the OMB and GSA, and the formal advisory or policymaking groups such as the CIO Council, the Federal Records Council, and others. Gathering information from disparate sources and incorporating them into a coherent records management program is further complicated by numerous directives and memos of clarification being released in relation to the Open Government Initiative and the use of social media.

Policy Challenges

Challenge Two: The fundamental nature of information has changed, necessitating a fundamental change in methods used to manage records throughout their lifecycle.

Recent tectonic shifts in the relationship between information and society call for the following questions to be revisited:

- **What constitutes a record (capture)?** The definition of a "record" is difficult to apply to information produced by emerging technologies and may be irrelevant given that even digital records deleted by agencies will likely live on in another system not under the agency's control.
- **How do you determine the value of a record (appraisal)?** Traditional records management requires retention of records that have administrative, fiscal, legal, and historical value. Some researchers advocate keeping everything because it is impossible to know today what might have historical value in the future.
- **How do you access and retrieve records necessary to carry out the agency's core mission and in response to e-discovery and FOIA requests (access/retrieval)?** The volume of information and variety of file formats produced today make it increasingly difficult to locate the desired information stored in agency systems using traditional taxonomies and categorization schemes. Records created through the use of social media tools residing on third-party servers pose additional challenges related to proprietary file formats, tools to capture information, frequency of capture, questions regarding the boundaries of a record, and concerns over the ability to maintain the "context" of the record.
- **How do you decide on disposing of temporary records (retention/disposition)?** Once traditional records are identified, they are associated with a records retention schedule that specifies the length of time the record must be retained and the method of disposition. The increasing volume of information produced electronically and the lowered cost and increased capacity of storage devices have prompted discussion of at

least two alternative options for retention: 1) big buckets or 2) keep everything.

- **How do you preserve permanent records (preservation)?** NARA accepts a limited number of electronic records formats but recognizes that the volume, variety of formats, and third-party servers will further complicate preservation efforts. The Electronic Records Archives project that promised to serve as a repository for both records schedules and electronic records transferred to NARA is over budget, behind schedule, and on the 2010 list of 26 highest-risk federal information technology projects. NARA has no research and development budget to fund projects to develop new methods of managing federal records.

Challenge Three: Records management programs across the federal government comprise a patchwork of individual agency policies, lacking a standard, principles-based foundation and consistent measurements.

The head of each federal agency is charged with establishing and maintaining an active, continuing program for management of the records of the agency. Departments can employ one or more Federal Agency Records Officers who assist the agency in implementing policies and programs that comply with NARA's requirements and guidance. NARA specifies the "what" and "why" and agencies provide the "how" for their individual programs. This approach results in a patchwork of individual agency policies that lack a standard, principles-based foundation.

Records management program evaluations are infrequent and inconsistent; therefore, there is no basis upon which continuous improvement can be established or measured. In 1999, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommended that NARA conduct a government-wide survey of electronic records management capabilities and programs of all federal agencies. The first annual records management self-assessment was conducted in 2009 and released in the spring of 2010. The self-assessment survey questions were developed to evaluate records management risk in five different types of records programs and practices: Program Management, Records Disposition, Vital Records, Electronic Records, and E-mail Records. The focus of the 2010 self-assessment is records management training. This approach does not indicate the development of a

model that will provide a consistent basis upon which to evaluate recordkeeping programs and practices and to measure improvement. Neither study addressed the agency's plans to manage social media records.

Technology Challenge

Challenge Four: Current technology is not up to the challenge of capturing, managing and preserving electronic records, especially social media records.

A number of technological challenges face those responsible for capturing, managing, and preserving electronic records. These challenges are being addressed on the federal agency level and have the potential to duplicate efforts, create silos, and result in solutions that may be sufficient in the short-term but that do not meet long-term needs.

- Information technology has a lifecycle and quickly becomes obsolete, requiring agencies to seek solutions involving conversion, emulation or migration.
- Agencies report having migration plans and strategies based on systems purchased but some report losing data when attempting to move information from one system to another.
- Government employees express frustration at being unable to locate information in a timely fashion in response to FOIA requests.
- Agencies have technology to capture and store large volumes of information (raw materials), but they don't yet have the tools to analyze that information.
- Methods to collect and tag metadata automatically and accurately do not yet exist.
- It is difficult if not impossible to determine the best ways to capture all records from all social media technology in use today in a format that maintains the content, context and structure.
- Federal agencies use systems, including commercial social media sites, that produce records in a variety of formats; but NARA accepts a limited number of file formats, necessitating conversion by agencies and motivating agencies to retain records in their native format within their own systems.

Capacity Challenges

Challenge Five: Adequate funding for records management solutions is not available in a fiscally constrained environment.

Financial challenges face both NARA and individual federal agencies, especially in this budget-cutting environment. NARA does not have a research and development budget to develop adequate solutions or expertise to help agencies meet electronic records management challenges.

Within many federal agencies, while the mission may be funded, the records management compliance is not. Additional financial pressure will also result from the Office of Management and Budget directive that federal agencies cut discretionary spending in fiscal year 2012 budgets by five percent.

Agency budget requests include requests for agency-specific information technology spending. This current agency-specific budget and planning process discourages joint information technology solutions that span agencies and, thus, result in unintended consequences, such as promoting silos.

Challenge Six: Records management training for agency personnel is insufficient or non-existent.

Federal employees at all levels of an agency have a role to play in creating and managing records. Use of commercial Web 2.0 tools poses additional risks, including those related to privacy and security. However, most agency personnel, including high-ranking officials, do not understand their records management obligations.

Findings from the NARA self-assessment indicate that 73 percent of the agencies responding provide regular training to all agency personnel on their records management responsibilities, including identification of federal records, in all formats and media. However, many of the respondents consider *ad hoc* training consisting of information posted to websites and disseminated through e-mail sufficient. Records related to such training are not retained, so that it is not possible to know how many employees received records management training each year and whether such training improved their ability to manage records.

Recommendations to Transform Records Management for a Social Media World

Sound records management is the backbone of a transparent and accountable government. Records management must be given the same level of respect, attention, and resources as other business operations, including financial accounting and information technology. Those charged with records management responsibilities must be given the authority and resources to accomplish their mission.

Specific records management and social media recommendations are provided in Appendix II. The lists are by no means exhaustive but will provide various department and agency stakeholders a basis for further discussion when developing an approach to the management of social media records today.

However, when taking into account the federal government's failure to effectively manage records in the past, the challenges presented by social media technologies and tools today, and the uncertainty surrounding emerging technology in the future, it is apparent that a fundamental transformation in the way the government conducts its overall records management responsibilities must take place.

Governance Recommendation

Recommendation One: The position of Chief Records Officer for the federal government should be established to elevate the status and impact of records management programs across the federal government.

Policy Recommendations

Recommendation Two: The Chief Records Officer should convene a workgroup with representatives from

government agencies and the private sector to explore the concept of records management in the Web 2.0 world, including the need for a new, simplified definition of a record and the development of a standardized core records management taxonomy that, when integrated with user-generated tags, would improve the agencies' ability to locate and retrieve information.

Recommendation Three: The Chief Records Officer should work closely with the federal government's Chief Information Officer to ensure records management is integrated in an overarching Information Governance Structure for the federal government.

Technology Recommendation

Recommendation Four: Information technology offices should:

- Integrate records management solutions and incorporate the costs of records management requirements
- Undertake research initiatives for the preservation of digital objects created with new media
- Seek funding for these initiatives that is supported by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Capacity Recommendation

Recommendation Five: Records management training to mitigate the risks associated with emerging technology should be developed or incorporated into existing training programs immediately; the development of training programs on common topics, including social media records management that can be utilized across agencies, should be centralized.

Social media policies that address behavioral norms, risk management considerations, and security issues as well as records management guidance must be developed and made available. Training is necessary to ensure that employees are aware of agency policies and accountable for adhering to them.

Appendix I: Key Federal Provisions Governing Records Management

Code of Federal Regulations relating to Records Management (36 CFR 1220-1239)

Subchapter B—Records Management (Parts 1220-1239) of the NARA regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations contains regulations affecting Federal agencies and their records management programs.

Definition of records (44 U.S.C. Chapter 33 §3301)

Definition of “records” as used in statutes and regulations, including the Federal Records Act and the Freedom of Information Act. This definition is used by federal agencies to identify records and governs agencies’ records management responsibilities.

Records Management by the Archivist of the United States and by the Administrator of General Services (44 U.S.C. Chapter 29)

Divides general responsibility for records management between the United States Archivist and the General Services Administrator. The Archivist assumes responsibility to provide guidance and assistance to federal agencies with respect to ensuring adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of the federal government and ensuring proper records disposition. The Administrator assumes responsibility to provide guidance and assistance to federal agencies to ensure economic and effective records management by such agencies. Enumerates additional responsibilities each party will assume when carrying out their primary obligation to provide guidance and assistance to federal agencies.

Records Management by Federal Agencies (44 U.S.C. Chapter 31)

Charges the head of each federal agency with making and preserving records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, and essential transactions of the agency. Requires each federal agency head to establish and maintain an active, continuing program of management of the records of the agency in cooperation with both the Administrator of General Services and the Archivist of the United States. Requires the head of each federal agency to provide for the transfer of records to a records center maintained and operated by the Archivist or, when approved by the Archivist, to a center maintained and operated by the head of the federal agency.

Appendix II: Best Practices: Records Management and Social Media in Departments and Agencies

Agency-specific social media tools, like SpaceBook (NASA), can be managed more easily by an agency than a commercial Web-based solution such as Twitter or Facebook. Although many of the following best practices will be of use to agencies utilizing commercial social media technology, all will apply to federal departments and agencies using Web-based social media technologies. The lists are by no

means exhaustive but should give the various stakeholders a basis for further discussion on these and related topics.

The following best practices are based on the author's interviews with government employees responsible for the use of social media in their respective agencies.

Social Media Recommendations
Don't block social media because of perceived risks; but do control it from a governance perspective.
Develop social media policies that address security, privacy, and communications issues, as well as records management considerations.
Develop social media initiatives around specific business needs/core mission rather than around the technology.
Select the right technology for the task.
Review existing Terms of Service negotiated by GSA and accept or modify. If none exist, contact GSA for assistance in negotiating TOS.
Look to exemplars of social media initiatives, policies and procedures already developed by federal government agencies. Valuable information, such as that found at the Department of Defense Social Media Hub and the HHS Center for New Media, should be leveraged.
Integrate records management into the social media initiative.
Start with a conservative approach, for example by not allowing comments on blogs, and add features as lessons are learned.

Records Management Recommendations
Review and revise records management policies to address social media.
Become an active member and/or valuable resource of social media teams.
Manage e-mail messages and other communications sent or received via social media sites according to existing policies on e-mail management.
Evaluate the social media tools used to determine if actions taken by users will result in a record (for example, “liking” a post or “re-tweeting” a tweet).
Associate the records with the current agency records schedule—if a new record category will be produced, determine the retention period and schedule the record.
Treat a site that functions as a form of content management (for example, a blog that unites related information from diverse sources) as one discrete record to retain the integrity of the record.
Institute a process to capture records and associated metadata and manage them during their entire retention period. Options may include capturing pre-post, as posted, or at a predetermined period after the fact.
Determine who is responsible for ensuring permanent records are transferred to NARA in what sustainable format.

Compliance Recommendations
Designate responsibility for official agency records created, received, and transmitted via social media sites.
Monitor content on official agency sites.
Determine a policy for comments posted to the social media sites that includes what information will be gathered and stored, how it will be used and for how long, and the method of disposition.
Automatic discovery of social network accounts across any regulated employee. System will detect and enforce compliance rules defined by the organization.
Automated routing of social networking messages that require pre-approval. Your compliance solution should capture content based on keywords before it posts, route it to a defined moderator, and once moderated, capture the associated details for downstream audits.
Automatic posting of moderated social networking messages once approved (one-click publishing on behalf of user).
Adopt a solution to capture and retain all social networking activity and associated metadata about the content and archive this content in a structured fashion to facilitate recovery for e-discovery and FOIA.
Adopt a solution that selectively disables certain features. For example, ability to accept or request LinkedIn recommendations; ability to republish comments from a third party, such as re-tweeting; or ability to “favorite” a post on Twitter or “like” a comment on Facebook to avoid the perception of endorsing that content.
Build in reporting capabilities on usage, captured content and moderation activity. Need real-time insights to individual and group usage, rule violations and moderation queues.

Information Technology Recommendations
Authenticate employees and user names for social media.
Adopt a solution that will allow searches of captured content filtered by keyword, user, date, network, or content type.
Automatically capture and classify social networking data. For example, not only specific tweets as posted but also updates to profiles in LinkedIn.
Adopt a solution that provides the ability to export your data at any time into a flexible XML structure filtered by network, user, date range or content type.
Determine how social media records will be downloaded from the social media site for temporary or permanent retention.
Capture metadata associated with a social network post or activity, providing context. Capture additional details such as enterprise user credentials, URL of the page and the reference post when making a comment.

Information Technology Recommendations
Integration support for enterprise archival and data leakage prevention tools. Social networking solution should provide an extensive Application Programming Interface (API) to access the data needed and offer the ability to route requests to existing enterprise systems.
Create a data map either manually using a spreadsheet or by using automated software, include a layer for data residing in social media technologies, and implement a process to keep it current.

Human Resources Recommendations
Develop and conduct training for all users and send regular awareness communications regarding policies and risks.
Solicit input from all stakeholders when developing training programs to ensure all relevant topics are covered.
In policies and training, address policies that address posting of work-related information.
In policies and training, specify how employees can use agency-related images, logos, intellectual property, and other digital assets in their online presences.
Training programs must address appropriate and inappropriate use of social media technology.
Penalties for misuse of social media must be included in the social media policy and in the employee training program.
A social media hub developed for the department or agency must include links to policies, procedures, training programs (including podcasts and videos), as well as resources.
An accurate record of employees who have received training must be retained.

Web / Social Media Production Teams Recommendations
Incorporate links to social media tools on every page of the website; for example, the FDIC website contains a social media toolbar in the upper right corner of each page.
Clarify responsibilities for content; for example, determine who will provide the content for the blog entries, post messages on the walls of social networking sites, or share information through Twitter.
Work with the records manager to determine if, when and how the content will be captured for records retention; for example, pre-determined dates for screen captures or Web harvest.
Establish a process to capture both static (e.g., profiles) and interactive (e.g., comments) content from social media tools; automate the process as much as possible.
Establish and analyze metrics for success, such as the number of “friends” in Facebook or comments posted on a blog, that can be used to determine if the use of specific social media tools should be discontinued.
Develop a social media hub (web page) on your site that provides not only links to social media tools but also access to policies and procedures and learning resources that will be of value to both staff and citizens; include a link to the records management policy or records management guidance for staff who use social media.
If responsible for a blog (or other social media site) that allows comments, include a “comment policy” that explains the comments posted may be considered part of the agency record and preserved permanently.
Comply with records retention requirements by removing records from the website or within the social media tools on third-party sites (if such agreements are in place) that need no longer be retained; although copies of content may remain on the Web indefinitely, this action reduces the volume of agency-controlled records that must be searched in response to an e-discovery or FOIA request.

Appendix III: GARP® Principles and Social Media Considerations

<p>Accountability: A senior executive (or person of comparable authority) oversees the recordkeeping program and delegates program responsibility to appropriate individuals. The organization adopts policies and procedures to guide personnel, and ensures the program can be audited.</p>	
<p>Social Media Considerations</p>	<p>Each department and agency should have its own records manager. But the ultimate responsibility for records management resides with the head of the department or agency. Records management procedures are as vital to the department or agency as human resources or finance and should be treated in such a manner. Policies for social media are being developed by social media teams. Care should be taken to include input from those responsible for the core mission of the department or agency, information technology representatives, records management, compliance, marketing, and other stakeholders. Records management policies should be examined and revised if necessary to address the unique records management challenges posed by social media. Individuals authorized to speak on behalf of the department or agency should be designated. Practical guidance must be provided to all personnel, as well as vendors and temporary workers, to ensure they understand not only the reward but also the risks posed by social media use and what they can do to mitigate those risks.</p>

<p>Transparency: The processes and activities of an organization’s recordkeeping program are documented in a manner that is open and verifiable and is available to all personnel and appropriate interested parties.</p>	
<p>Social Media Considerations</p>	<p>Each department and agency is required to have an Open Government Plan that formalizes how it will integrate openness, transparency, and collaboration into every-day operations. Records management is a necessary part of a comprehensive Open Government Plan because it serves as evidence of actions taken. A statement related to records management within the Open Government Plan should include a link to the Department’s records management site, which includes policies, procedures, records schedules, and more. Comment policies, such as the one posted on the USDA social media page, are necessary to explain the department or agency’s policy related to posts made by citizens. Examples of unacceptable behavior should be included. Users should be made aware of privacy considerations and cautioned not to reveal personally identifiable information.</p>

<p>Integrity: A recordkeeping program shall be constructed so the records and information generated or managed by or for the organization have a reasonable and suitable guarantee of authenticity and reliability.</p>	
<p>Social Media Considerations</p>	<p>Automate processes as much as possible to provide automatic discovery of social networking accounts for any regulated employee, automated routing of social networking messages that require pre-approval, automatic posting of moderated social networking messages once approved, controls to restrict access to social networking features on a user-by-user basis, and more. Policies and procedures should specify what additions or alterations are permissible; for example, updating an existing profile for a social networking site may not be permissible without pre-approval since that is considered static content.</p>

Protection: A recordkeeping program shall be constructed to ensure a reasonable level of protection to records and information that are private, confidential, privileged, secret, or essential to business continuity.	
Social Media Considerations	Designate authorized individuals to participate in social media initiatives on behalf of the organization. Provide the ability to scan for custom list of keywords and phrases to avoid unacceptable content from being posted and spreading quickly. Build in reporting capabilities on usage, captured content, and moderation activity. Ensure real-time insights to individual and group usage, rule violations and moderation queues. Develop social media policies which address security, privacy, and communications issues to minimize risk to the agency as well as to staff who engage in the use of social media on behalf of the agency.

Compliance: The recordkeeping program shall be constructed to comply with applicable laws and other binding authorities, as well as the organization's policies.	
Social Media Considerations	The agencies can exert specific control over the use of social media through the organization's social media and records management policies. In addition, social media initiatives must comply with a number of laws and authorities; for example, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. General records management guidance comes from two international standards, ISO 15489-1 and ISO 1549-2 (Information and documentation—Records Management—Part 1 General and Part 2 Guidelines). In addition, records management compliance within the federal government, departments and agencies is provided by NARA, OMB, and GSA. NARA Basic Laws and Authorities, February 2008 revision, provides links to applicable NARA and non-NARA statutes, including Federal Register (44 U.S.C. Chapter 15), Records Management NARA/GSA (44 U.S.C. Chapter 29), and Presidential Records (Title 44, Chapter 22).

Availability: An organization shall maintain records in a manner that ensures timely, efficient, and accurate retrieval of needed information.	
Social Media Considerations	<p>Agencies should take advantage of the Terms of Service Agreements negotiated through the General Services Administration (GSA). As of April 28, 2010, GSA had negotiated terms of service agreements with Facebook, MySpace, Flickr, YouTube, blip.tv, Blist, Slideshare, and ADDThis and was in discussion with other new media providers. Agencies could sign the same agreement if they meet their legal requirements or negotiate additional terms if necessary. A model TOS agreement provided by GSA includes language specific to access and use of information while under the social media provider's control:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Company acknowledges that the Agency's use of Company's site and services may energize significant citizen engagement. Language in the TOS allowing Company to terminate service, or close the Agency's account, at any time, for any reason, is modified to reflect the Parties' agreement that Company may unilaterally terminate service and/or terminate Agency's account only for breach of Agency's obligations under the TOS or its material failure to comply with the instructions and guidelines posted on the Site, or if Company ceases to operate its site or services generally. Company will provide Agency with a reasonable opportunity to cure any breach or failure on Agency's part.</p> <p>When content is downloaded to the agency's servers, access and retrieval issues must be addressed. Provisions should be made for automatic download, classification, and movement to the appropriate records repository.</p>

<p>Retention: An organization shall maintain its records and information for an appropriate time, taking into account legal, regulatory, fiscal, operational, and historical requirements.</p>	
<p>Social Media Considerations</p>	<p>SF 115 Request for Records Disposition Authority specifies the description of items and proposed disposition (retention requirement). Departments and agencies are just now beginning to create records schedules for social media content, and a best practice is to tie this to the department or agency website records schedule where possible. For example, the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) submitted an SF 115 for the CDFI Public Website that describes the schedule as media-neutral and applicable to all predecessor and successor systems serving the same functions. The systems addressed are “Web 2.0” systems developed and designed to facilitate communication, secure information sharing, interoperability, and collaboration on the World Wide Web. These include social-networking sites, video-sharing sites, wikis, blogs, and other such systems.</p> <p>Terms of Service Agreements address provisions for departments and agencies to use “crawlers” or “spiders” to harvest its pages to fulfill federal laws and regulations, such as obligations under the Federal Records Act.</p>

<p>Disposition: An organization shall provide secure and appropriate disposition for records that are no longer required to be maintained by applicable laws and the organization’s policies.</p>	
<p>Social Media Considerations</p>	<p>Terms of Service agreements not only address Access and Use while information resides in the third-party provider system but also access to data upon termination of service. Data must be provided to the department or agency in a commonly used file or database format so that the information can be retained in order to meet the records schedule requirements for retention and, therefore, disposition.</p> <p>Note: Records schedules are required by NARA for each record type regardless of media. However, some decisions are being made without consideration for these schedules because of the ubiquity of information. For example, the Library of Congress is archiving all tweets without regard to disposition requirements of posting entities. Websites are retaining all information posted to them since their inception without regard to retention schedules because they are still considered of value to visitors for research purposes. And even if departments and agencies adhere to their retention schedules by removing information from sites, copies may exist elsewhere.</p>

Appendix IV: Governmental Social Media Policies and Guidelines Now in Place

Department/Agency	Title of Document (may be policies, guidelines, or other social media guidance)	Link to Document
USDA – Department of Agriculture	Social Media Tools and Resources	www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=USDA_STR
Department of Defense	DoD Social Media Hub	http://socialmedia.defense.gov/
Department of Defense	Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) 09-026 - Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities	www.defense.gov/NEWS/DTM%2009-026.pdf
U.S. Air Force (policy and guidelines)	New Media and Web 2.0 Guidance	www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-090406-036.pdf
U.S. Army	New Media and the Air Force	www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-090406-036.pdf (refers to DoD DTM 09-026)
U.S. Army (memo 2010)	SAIS-GKM Subject: Responsible Use of Internet-based Capabilities	http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e1/download/smRespUse.pdf (refers to DoD DTM 09-026 as well as CIO/G-6 Memorandum, Use of Social Media Tools, 27 August 2009.)
US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District (guidelines)	Social Media User Guidelines	www.saj.usace.army.mil/Documents/JaxDistrictSocialMediaUserGuidelines.pdf
GoARMY.com (recruitment)	Chat Privacy & Security Policy Notice	www.goarmy.com/privacy/chat_privacy_and_security.jsp
U.S. Coast Guard (memo)	Subject: Social Media – Unofficial Internet Posts	www.uscg.mil/ANNOUNCEMENTS/alcoast/ALCOAST45708.txt
U.S. Marines	Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities	www.marines.mil/news/messages/Pages/MARADMIN181-10.aspx (refers to overall DoD policy and repeats “ REF (H) FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT.”)
Navy.mil	Navy.mil Social Media Directory	www.navy.mil/media/smd.asp This is a social media directory that provides some information about use but does not contain a link to a social media policy.
Navy (memo – 20 October 2008)	Web 2.0 Utilizing New Web Tools	www.doncio.navy.mil/PolicyView.aspx?ID=789
Department of Energy	Guidelines for Secure Use of Social Media by Federal Departments and Agencies (Federal CIO Council)	www.management.energy.gov/documents/SecureSocialMedia.pdf This link leads to the pdf document posted by the CIO Council

Department/Agency	Title of Document (may be policies, guidelines, or other social media guidance)	Link to Document
Department of Energy	Appropriate use of the Internet & Electronic Mail	http://cio.energy.gov/cybersecurity/appropriate_use.htm
United States Geological Survey (Department of Interior)	Social media page—Interim social media policy in place. Social media policy will be published when Records Management and other stakeholders approve. RM is working on that piece now.	www.usgs.gov/socialmedia/
Federal CIO Council (guidelines)	Guidelines for Secure Use of Social Media by Federal Departments and Agencies	www.cio.gov/Documents/Guidelines_for_Secure_Use_Social_Media_v01-0.pdf
General Services Administration (policy)	CIO 2106.1 GSA Social Media Policy	www.gsa.gov/graphics/staffoffices/socialmediapolicy.pdf
General Services Administration (policy and guidelines)	CIO P 2106.2 GSA Social Media Handbook	www.gsa.gov/graphics/staffoffices/socialmediahandbook.pdf
Health and Human Services (HHS)	HHS Center for New Media	http://newmedia.hhs.gov/
*Health and Human Services (HHS)	HHS General Guidance for Utilization of New and/or Social Media (off main page above)	www.newmedia.hhs.gov/resources/general_guidance/
*Health and Human Services (HHS)	HHS Center for New Media (off main page above)	http://newmedia.hhs.gov/standards/
U.S. Department of HHS – Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	Policy for Social Media Technologies Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration (OASA) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Project: HHS OCIO Policy Document Number: HHS-OCIO-2010-0003	www.ahrq.gov/news/privacyact/hhssocmedia.htm
CDC Social Media Tools Guidelines & Best Practices	Link to guidelines and best practices for buttons & badges, health-e-cards, microblogs, motion graphics, text messaging, virtual worlds, and YouTube—as well as social media security mitigations.	www.cdc.gov/SocialMedia/Tools/guidelines/
Department of Justice	Privacy policy, Section E, “Our Social Network Policy”	www.justice.gov/privacy-file.htm
Department of Treasury – Internal Revenue Service (IRS)	Part of Communications (Public and Media)	www.irs.gov/irm/part11/irm_11-001-003.html Social Media is defined under Media along with traditional media.
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)	Link to Help for First Time Users	www.fdic.gov/help/#socialmedia
U.S. EPA (guidelines) – Independent Agency	Blogging at EPA for Greenversations	www.scribd.com/doc/13232289/Blogging-At-EPA-Guidelines

Appendix V: Social Media Policy Considerations for the Records Manager

Activity	Description
Identify	Identify those with primary responsibility for social media. Often these teams have a close relationship with marketing.
Engage	Meet them to understand their role and offer to assist them with records management issues.
Understand	Survey staff members to understand who else (besides the social media team) is using social media, how, and if records are being created that should be addressed by the records retention policy. Link the use back to the business process to help those involved identify records and understand their retention requirements.
Integrate	The social media policy may stand alone or serve as part of a larger electronic communications policy, but it must complement the records management policy. Review the social media policy and determine if it meets the legal and operational requirements.
Encourage	Determine ways to encourage compliance so that the policy is widely used and accepted and that records are managed according to the existing records management policy.
Train	Staff training in social media may take place separately from training in records management responsibilities. Take a proactive approach by volunteering to contribute to the training from a records management perspective.

Source: Franks, P. (2009). *Understanding Web 2.0 and Challenges for the Records Manager*, Information and Records Management Annual 2009, 107-121.

Appendix VI: Social Media Records Management Considerations for Website Managers

Website Records Management involves ...	Social Media Considerations are ...
Website records contain information that can be accessed via a Web browser over a network such as an intranet or intranet and coded in browser-supported language such as HTML, XHTML, Java, and JavaScript.	Technically most social media tools or sites can be accessed via a Web browser, but they may or may not be part of website.
Organizations create and publish information on websites that were formerly created and managed in paper-based or even electronic recordkeeping systems.	New types of records, for example as a result of mash-ups, are created on the fly by employees and citizens using new technology.
Website records are identified as information posted to websites or dynamically created through business processes where information resides in databases or content management systems.	Records that need to be identified may reside “in the clouds” and may become part of a public archive where it will live regardless of the firm’s disposition schedule. (See Google’s “Replay it: Google” to zoom to any point in time and “replay” what people were saying publicly on Twitter.)
Website content management systems could be integrated with recordkeeping systems.	Records reside within third-party systems that are not integrated with a records management system.
Information is posted to websites residing on servers controlled by the organization.	Information is floating in a “cloud.” Information resides on servers of service providers (e.g., Google Apps).
Websites can act as an electronic marketplace offering services and conducting business transactions.	Social media tools are more often used as communication and collaboration spaces.
Risk Management considerations relate to static information and dynamic Web pages for e-commerce usually published through a process that involves prior approval. Because visitors “came to” the site to access information, it was possible to catch and correct errors before they caused widespread damage to the reputation of the organization.	Organizations lose control of content posted to commercial social media sites. Once information is released, it is widely distributed and can live forever. (Note Google’s latest feature: Real-time search that provides access to content from Facebook, MySpace, and Buzz in 40 languages as posted.)
Risk posed by the website or its constituent sections are related to content posted to the website.	The nature of content posted to social media sites may be beyond the control of the organization. Employee training programs must emphasize acceptable human behaviors. Risk management (compliance) is an issue that must be weighed against the benefits of collaboration.
Parties involved in Web-based creation and management: Website managers, content providers (working with managers), records managers, legal services, librarians & archivists, users (says responsibility of users is to “use” the information—organization’s Web records).	Users creating new records—contributing to the records of/about the enterprise. These often don’t go through website managers. Social media teams may be formed outside of IT as well. Many social media initiatives are launched without consideration of records management issues.

Website Records Management involves ...	Social Media Considerations are ...
<p>Records Retention Issues (scheduling, access, disposition & preservation, metadata). Mandatory/automatic and manually entered. Focus on recordkeeping metadata.</p>	<p>Metadata may be manually entered, but traditional metadata schema may not be adequate. Folksonomy and social tagging must be considered. Retention issues remain but are much more complex. Information posted to third-party providers may live on if captured by others, such as every public tweet in the Library of Congress. Information posted to third-party providers may be disposed of prematurely if the account is under the control of an individual who deletes or closes the account.</p>
<p>Media and file formats must be considered in migration, but the organization stores and controls the files and formats.</p>	<p>Organizations may not be in control of records to migrate. Records management must be included in agreements with service providers. Processes for capturing records stored in the clouds are necessary. Need to provide enterprise-wide versions of software being used now by public to provide similar environments for employees but retain control for sensitive projects.</p>
<p>Technology. Content management system, capturing or harvesting websites. Screen shots may be scheduled. Subscription services like Archive It! provided by the Internet Archive can be used.</p>	<p>Technology: Software-as-a-service providers and Web services must be considered along with blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, collaboration tools, document sharing, folksonomy, and user-provided content. Service providers can be used to move the contents of specific social media sites to a digital archive. One example is the agreement with Signiant of Massachusetts to deliver Twitter content to the Library of Congress.</p>
<p>Websites provide a picture of the public face of an agency at any point in time. When captured, they preserve that public face.</p>	<p>Social media provide a glimpse into social interactions among users throughout time. When captured with existing solutions, the social interactive environment is lost and all that remains is a static version of a point in time.</p>
<p>Conclusion—Find a way to control every aspect of records management.</p>	<p>Another new paradigm! Give up total control!!</p>

Source: *Developed by author.*

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