NASA Guidelines to Remember When Using Social Media Technologies

The Federal Chief Information Officer, Vivek Kundra, recently announced the launch of Apps.gov, a web site that provides agencies computing services and applications via the internet. The GSA-run site highlights free, government-friendly access to multiple types of applications, including social media. Already, NASA had been on the forefront within the federal government in utilizing Web 2.0 technologies, and has embraced the use of social media technologies to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of the Agency's mission. By openly sharing knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned, we can provide more effective solutions and efficiencies to enhance mission excellence.

As such, this website provides NASA guidance on the use of social media technologies including, but not limited to, photo and video sharing, wikis, blogs, podcasts, mash-ups, Web feeds, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn), microblogging (e.g., Twitter), and other Web-based forums. Use of social media technologies in an official capacity is covered by existing NASA regulations and policies on information accessibility, records management, privacy, security, information quality, and release of information to news and information media.

NASA employees and contractors are reminded that they remain accountable for responsible, safe, and judicious use of these technologies, whether in an official or personal capacity. When using social media technologies to discuss NASA and its activities in their personal capacities, NASA employees shall clearly identify personal communications and personal opinion (versus Agency) and include a disclaimer such as "The statements and opinions posted by me are my own and do not necessarily represent NASA's positions, strategies or opinions." Also NASA employees and contractors should not use NASA identifiers, including the NASA Insignia (the "meatball"), mission patches, or program identifiers in connection with any personal communications or non-official representation. Finally, NASA managers and supervisors have the discretion to restrict personal use of social media technologies by employees during duty hours.

Guidelines:
- Know and follow NASA rules and regulations as stated in the policies above.
- Act responsibly—Think before posting. Even if a comment can be removed from a site, once it is posted it can be preserved by others and reposted.
- Unless you are officially representing NASA as a spokesperson (Official Use), do not represent yourself as speaking for NASA.
- Be yourself Use the first person and speak for yourself, not for NASA.
- Identify yourself—State your name and role when you discuss your work.
- Write what you know—Stick to sharing facts and opinions about your areas of expertise.
- You are personally responsible for the content you publish on blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated media.
- Be honest and transparent—Truth and sarcasm look the same on paper. The best way to make sure that you convey a truthful message is to be true.
- Be professional and respectful at all times.
- Contribute, engage, get involved—The unique value of social media is to interact with others by commenting, replying, giving feedback and letting your voice be heard. Without it, you're just broadcasting.
- Maintain and update content to ensure accurate and timely information.

- Correct and acknowledge mistakes—You might know that something you stated was not quite right, and have corrected yourself. But do others?
- Obey copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
- Be prepared to spend time providing answers and responses to questions posed by the public. If the questions wander outside the bounds of your expertise, politely decline and/or refer them to the Public Inquiries group in the Office of Public Affairs (public-inquiries@hq.nasa.gov).
- Any online communication regarding NASA financial data is strictly forbidden except via official NASA processes.
- Information such as NASA's or a contractor's intellectual property, trade secrets, ITAR, Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) and customer data are strictly forbidden from any online discourse except by authorized personnel in accordance with the specific NASA external communications process.
- Do not use a public social media service for a NASA-related activity or discussion that is not meant for total public access. If the topic is not for release to the public, use an internal social media tool.
- For reasons of liability, do not participate in any type of personal recommendation of another individual related to employment considerations. Follow NASA policy and refer all communication of this type to Human Resources for verification.
- Do not provide any type of endorsement of a product or company for reasons of liability. Follow NASA policy and refer all communication of this type to the Office of General Counsel for verification.
- Violation of NASA policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination or other intervention.
- Don't blog proprietary or privileged information. Don't assume you can "tweet" or blog the meeting you just attended. Ask the meeting leader.
- Don't cite or reference clients, partners or suppliers without their approval. When you do make a reference, link back to the source where possible.
- Don't use social media to release NASA "news." News can be any previously "unreleased information with the potential to generate significant media, or public interest or inquiry." Only official spokespeople are authorized to speak for NASA in an official capacity regarding NASA policy, programmatic, and budget issues. When in doubt, ask PAO.
- Don't forget your day job. You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job commitments. Your manager does have the right to limit the use of social media at work.

Applicable Policies and Guidelines:

NASA Policy on the Release of Information to News and Information Media

NPD 2540.1, Personal Use of Government Office Equipment Including Information Technology

NPD 2810.1, NASA Information Security Policy

NPR 1600.1, NASA Security Program Procedural Documents, Section 5.24 Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) Controlled Information

NM1382-42, NASA Principles and Policies on Scientific Openness

[14 CFR Part 1213, Release of Information to News and Information Media](#)

[5 CFR 2635, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch](#)

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