

TeamSanJose™

Innovation starts here

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & GUIDE





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Social Media Policy & Guidelines

The following is a general overview of concepts to keep in mind while entering the world of Social Media.

The Purpose of Social media – The main focus of Team San Jose's Social Media should be the promotion of venues and events, consistent contact with clients and the community, with results that drive increased interest and traffic to our city.

Be responsible for what you write - people tend to interpret having the 'right' to express themselves online as implying a lack of consequences when they say stupid things. That's not the case.

Be authentic - Include your name and, when appropriate, your company name and your title. Consumers buy from people that they know and trust, so let people know who you are.

Consider your audience - When you're out in the blogosphere or Twitterverse or other social media channels, remember that your readers include current clients, potential clients, as well as current/past/future employees. Your audience should be considered before you publish and make sure you aren't alienating any of those groups.

Exercise good judgment - Refrain from comments that can be interpreted as slurs, demeaning, inflammatory, etc. The Internet is full of varied opinions, and it's okay to share yours, but you never, never, never want to be branded a racist or narrow-minded or an unstoppable hot-head. Bottom line: good judgment is paramount regardless of whether your online comments relate directly to your job.

Understand the concept of community - The essence of community is the idea that it exists so that you can support others and they, in turn, can support you. You need to learn how to balance personal and professional information, and the important role that transparency plays in building a community. Your community shouldn't be an environment where competition is encouraged or emphasized, but rather a platform where your customers or users feel comfortable sharing, connecting, and receiving help.

Protect confidential & proprietary information - Being transparent doesn't mean giving out the Colonel's special 11 herbs and spices used in KFC chicken or the recipe for McDonald's Big Mac special sauce.

Bring Value - Social media will more likely pay dividends for you if you add value to your followers, readers, fan, and users. Use your posts as a means to frame the conversation around specific issues and make sure that our position is heard and commented on or as a way to build buzz for upcoming products or services.

Productivity Matters - Talking to people (over social media or otherwise) is part of our jobs, but, your social media usage won't get you very far if you don't execute on the core competencies of your business. Remember that in order for your social media endeavors to be successful, you need to find the right balance between social media and other work.





The following are specific guidelines that apply to all employees or contractors who create or contribute to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other kind of Social Media. Whether you log into Twitter, Yelp, Wikipedia, LinkedIn or Facebook pages, or comment on online media stories — these guidelines are for you.

While all employees are welcome to participate in Social Media, we expect everyone who participates in online commentary to understand and to follow these simple but important guidelines. These rules might sound strict and contain a bit of legal-sounding jargon but please keep in mind that our overall goal is simple: to participate online in a respectful, relevant way that protects our reputation and, of course, follows the letter and spirit of the law.

1. Be transparent and state that you work at Team San Jose. Your honesty will be noted in the Social Media environment. If you are writing about Team San Jose or a competitor, use your real name, identify that you work for Team San Jose, and be clear about your role. If you have a vested interest in what you are discussing, be the first to say so.
2. Never represent yourself or Team San Jose in a false or misleading way. All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be substantiated.
3. Post meaningful, respectful comments—in other words, please, no spam and no remarks that are off-topic or offensive.
4. Use common sense and common courtesy: for example, it's best to ask permission to publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private or internal to Team San Jose. Make sure your efforts to be transparent don't violate Team San Jose's privacy, confidentiality, and legal guidelines for external commercial speech.
5. Stick to your area of expertise and do feel free to provide unique, individual perspectives on non-confidential activities at Team San Jose.
6. When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that looks as if it's becoming antagonistic, do not get overly defensive and do not disengage from the conversation abruptly: feel free to ask the Public Relations Department for advice and/or to disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on Team San Jose.
7. If you want to write about the competition, make sure you behave diplomatically, have the facts straight and that you have the appropriate permissions.
8. Please never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties Team San Jose may be in litigation with.
9. Never participate in Social Media when the topic being discussed may be considered a crisis situation. Even anonymous comments may be traced back to your or Team San Jose's IP address. Refer all Social Media activity around crisis topics to the Public Relations Department.
10. Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and Team San Jose's confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. Google has a long memory.

NOTE: Mainstream media inquiries must be referred to the Public Relations Department.





Introduction

This guide is designed to be used as a reference tool and not as an all-inclusive guide to social media mastery. While enough information is given for users to begin and develop their own personal strategies, if at any time you have questions or feel you would like advice on a certain topic, feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

How Long Will This Take?

If you follow everything in this guide, assuming you have no social media accounts currently, I'd estimate the better part of your work day for those who are tech savvy, though for some it may take longer. That said, not all of these suggestions need to be done, nor especially in one sitting, so if you find yourself overwhelmed, simply begin by just focusing 30 to 60 minutes to focus on the portions you feel will benefit you. Create or edit accounts that are important to your sphere of influence and grow from there.

Do I have to Promote TSJ?

This guide is intended to promote the use of social media within the company. While you are free to have your own personal pages not affiliated with TSJ, we do ask that if you are going to be promoting TSJ on any of your pages that you adhere to the guidelines issued in the Social Media Policy. The resources listed in this guide are most useful to those promoting venues, though can be useful for anyone.

Miscellaneous Features

Phone Apps

I currently have a BlackBerry 8330. While I find many features and applications of my phone useful, the current Facebook and MySpace applications I find to run a bit slow and somewhat clunky. However, if you have better luck with them, then by all means feel free to use them.

Purchased vs. Free Features

While everything in this guide only focus' on free tools, many of these online resources and third party applications offer additional, paid, services. As you begin to utilize more and more within this guide, I do not believe you will have a need for the paid features of these services. However, if you feel it necessary for your outlet, feel free to contact me and we can discuss the specifics in more detail.

Our Big Four

While the popularity of social sites continues to evolve from year to year, sometimes faster, the current big three are considered to be Facebook, Twitter and Myspace. However, LinkedIn is still the number one choice for "professional" users, people looking to network specifically for business, services or job opportunities. While many other social networking sites exist, such as Bebo, Hi5, Orkut, Friendster and Ning; it's considered a best practice to focus social media efforts on a couple of sites consistently, rather than spread yourself out to all sites and not have enough time to respond to user feedback or requests. After all, a key part of social media is interacting and being social. Therefore, we will be mostly covering Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn within this guide.

As you proceed through this guide, please remember that people have a tendency to flock to social pages and profiles who have a solid foundation or large pool of friends and followers. Because of the diversity of our organization, there is little reason for those involved within the Sales, Marketing, Event Coordination or Public Relations to not have at least one account on the follow sites. In addition, it's important that all of us within the organization take the time to link up with each other and help build that solid foundation of friends and followers online. This will help to better entice outside users into becoming more interested in our projects. Each of these services will allow you to upload or connect with contacts from Outlook, Gmail, YahooMail, or other services. Therefore, after you create your account, it'd be a good idea to let your fellow coworkers, friends and business partners know.





MySpace

While MySpace is currently the second most used social media site next to Facebook, the purpose of this guide is to identify the key places to begin. Once you feel you have a solid foundation and are able to manage our time with these outlets, by all means feel free to branch out to sites like Myspace.

OpenID

As we go along in this walkthrough you may notice many of the sites mentioning "Login with your OpenID". OpenID is a way to login to multiple accounts with the same user name and password from another service. A full write up is found on the OpenID Foundation website at openid.net – whether you use it or not, chances are you already have one. For the purpose of this walkthrough you will not need one, nor will I recommend that as a preferred way to login to your accounts.





Creating a Twitter Account

Twitter is a popular site as it allows people to post quick messages, either as a journal, a reply to a friend or spread information quickly to other users. It has many third party applications and services we can incorporate into it which we'll cover later in this guide.

If you already have a twitter account, you may want to skim past this section.

Creating a Twitter account is a pretty straight forward process. From their home page you'll click on the link "Sign up now" and proceed to the next page where you will be asked for your name, a user id, email and password.

Once in you'll be taken to your "Home" page where you're asked the question "What's Happening?" This is where you'll post up to 140 character long entries. They can be about what you just ate to what event will be happening this evening in San Jose.





While there are many adjustments you can make to your profile as far as colors and backgrounds the first two items I recommend you look at are your “Settings” from the top menu and “Notices” from the Settings menu. Under “Account” it’s helpful for others to find your page if you have a complete profile filled out. Take some time to enter a bit of information into each field. Under “Notices” I recommend that you turn off all of the notifications, we’ll use another third party service (Social Oomph) later in this guide to notify us and it won’t clutter our inbox or phones with constant messages. I’m personally not a big fan of mobile notices either, as my phone gets my email and therefore doesn’t need to use up my text allowance.

The rest of the settings are all pretty self explanatory and the default will work for most people. If you want a custom background or color scheme for your page feel free to ask me for advice or recommendations.

If you have a lot of followers or begin to gain many followers I recommend you take advantage of Twitter’s new “List” feature. The “List” feature allows you to group Followers into their own categories, and ultimately makes it easier for you to keep track of them. For example, when you have, say 2,000 followers, and the tweets continue to constantly fill up your “Home” screen, it can be easy to miss something you may be interested in. Because of this I recommend putting Friends and Family into one List, Co-Workers and/or Business contacts into another List and then individual subject Lists, such as “San Jose Related”. Once a list is made you can select it and only see updates from the members in that Group.

A few Basic Commands. Other profiles you come across can be “Followed” which will basically put their profile (updates) onto your home page to view. You will be able to reply to them by typing “@username message” in your “What’s Happening?” field. Another popular command is “RT” for ReTweet, which allows you to repost a message on your profile that someone else has posted. Don’t feel you need to remember this though. If you hover over any message, two icons in the lower right hand corner will appear allowing you to click “Reply” or “ReTweet”.

As you use Twitter more you’ll discover many new functions you can do, however most are not necessary. The last command I will recommend though is the Hash “#”. Hash’s add keywords to Twitter’s search engine, as well as, other third party Twitter search engines, such as Twubs.com allows users to search for terms designated with a “#”. A good way to use it would be “Hey Mike, did you catch the concert at the #CivicCenter last night?” Notice that I did not put a space between Civic and Center, this is because when you use a Hash “#” it takes only the first word as a search term. So make sure you type #SanJose and not #San Jose (which would only put #San in the search terms). Also, be careful not to overuse Hashes, as others may find it annoying when reading your posts.





Adding Automation

If you're like everyone else in the world you'll find that days are always shorter than you need, and getting in front of your computer to post updates or comment on other peoples posts isn't always a top priority. That said, there are a few tools that can automate much of the "busy work" associated with Twitter.

One such tool is SocialOomph.com, a site that allows us to manage multiple Twitter accounts from a single point of entry, it will auto follow and unfollow those who follow and unfollow us, and we'll also be able to send out messages automatically to those who do follow us.

To begin we'll start by creating an account, with the usual fields, name, email, password, etc. Some features, like Bit.ly we can skip for now, there will be another app we can take advantage of to help us with this URL shortening later on.



Once you are logged in, you can begin adding your Twitter accounts by selecting "Accounts" and then "Add Account". You'll notice you can add a Facebook account as well as many other PAID features of the SocialOomph Professional. I don't see a need to pay for any of the extra features, instead I recommend staying with the free services, which is what we'll cover here.





Once you have added an account, you can access the options page for it by selecting the "edit" button on the right hand side of the account. If you don't see your account(s) select "Accounts" and "List Accounts" from the menu.

What we'll want to select here is the "Auto Welcome" and then type in a message, such as "Thank for following us at the Civic Center, to learn more about upcoming events check out <http://www.sanjose.org>"

I also recommend to select Auto Follow and Auto UnFollow as this saves you from having to approve each request that comes in. I typically only look through my followers about once a month to discard anyone who I don't want to follow.

Lastly at the bottom, we'll choose to receive one email a day that will include within it all of the @replies and DM (Direct Messages) we've received for this account. This way we're able to cut down on the clutter in our inbox.





Managing Friends & Followers

There are many available resources for Managing your Friends and Followers for Twitter, but I cover the two I feel are the most useful as well as popular.

For those with less than 100 followers I'd recommend FriendorFollow.com, a site that is simple, yet incredibly useful. You simply type in your username, select submit, and it will show you who you are following that is not following you back.

The other site, which is similar but far more robust, is ReFollow.com. By logging in with your Twitter account you can add in various search criteria to search your friends and followers and prune away. By selecting a different user to inspect in the "Show Me" box you can find other users who have similar interests and see who is following them. This is useful for those of you who have just made a new Twitter account and want to find like-minded people.



WARNING: ReFollow allows for the mass Follow of users, as well as, the bulk Unfollow of users. With Twitter's recent guideline change it is strongly recommended that you do not follow or unfollow more than 100 people in a month using this tool. This rule does not apply to the natural addition of followers from the Twitter site and those managed by SocialOomph.

Purging

While I'm a believer in being social with Social Media tools, at some point you may find that you are following users who are not adding as much value as you expect from their tweets or perhaps it's just because they seem to keep posting about "Be a millionaire in 10 days" or some such nonsense. Regardless of what the reason is, I recommend spending a little bit of time about once a month to reevaluate your followings.





Finding You & Others

Now that you have a twitter account you'll want to start Following people, those who follow you back are considered "Friends", as you do this, others will start to notice you and follow you if they are interested in your tweets.

I typically recommend posting each day for at least a week before you start to Follow anyone other than your friends, as people may see you and think negatively of you for not having any content for them to look at. The last thing you want is for someone to mistake you for spam.

After a week, you can start to branch out, and a few of the places to get yourself listed with then are Twibes.com, Twellow.com and WeFollow.com - each of these directories will give your Twitter page an opportunity to be found by others interested in similar subjects. All three of these sites will use your Twitter login and password to access them, you will not need to register.

Twibes

Twibes is an online collection of Twitter Groups. If you're Twitter page is about the San Jose Ballet, it would be a good idea to add yourself to groups interested in Ballet, Dance, San Jose Events, etc.

Twellow

Twellow is much like the Yellow Pages phone book. Once you add yourself to the appropriate listings, such as Arts, Entertainment, etc. you can write a brief biography on your twitter page, why it was made, what it's for and include links to your other social media outlets such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

WeFollow

WeFollow is the simplest of the three, in that you add yourself to a directory where you are able to select three key words/terms to associate with your profile. The more specific the better, as general tags are easily lost in a sea of users. An example of a bad tag is "Ballet" an example of a better tag would be "Downtown-San-Jose-Ballet)





Twitter Apps

With the popularity of twitter growing, many third parties have begun to create software to integrate with Twitter and potentially allow for easier facilitation of single accounts and management of multiple accounts.

TweekDeck

The first application I will cover is TweetDeck, which allows for easy display of a single Twitter account without any registration. Simply install the software, login using your Twitter information and away you go. However, if you choose to register on their website you will be able to add additional capabilities, such as displaying multiple Twitter accounts through the display. This application is powered by Java and runs on any version of Windows or OS X.



Nambu

The next application is Nambu, an OS X only tool that allows for the multiple displays of Twitter, Facebook and other Social Media accounts. There is no registration required, simply install and you'll be able to add multiple accounts and customize what parts of the accounts are displayed. If you want to see only Replies from a certain account and not Direct Messages, simply close the windows in the display and it will store your changes. You can always undo any changes by going into the applications preferences.





Creating a Facebook Page

Facebook has been the site to surpass the formerly almighty MySpace, and offers many features for individuals to connect and promote their venues, services or products. Similar to the other signups you'll be asked for an email, password, etc. As an individual you'll also have the ability to customize your URL, so that you can make a profile that is easy to remember, such as <http://www.facebook.com/username>

You can do this on "company" pages, though you need to have at least 25 fans before you're allowed to do it. For company sites you are allowed different features at different tiers of fans. This is why many people find it easier to promote their interests via their personal pages, rather than spend the time collecting fans for company pages.

How much or how little of the profile you fill out is up to you, though remember that anything you post online can be seen by others, unless you keep your account private. However, I do recommend that under contact information you put in important websites, such as www.sanjose.org





Creating a LinkedIn Profile

The account creation process once again works similar to all others, requiring a name, user name, password and email.

LinkedIn profiles are different from many of the more popular social media pages and profiles because the purpose of LinkedIn is to develop professional connections. Because of this, the profiles function more like an online resume than as a social page. However, like all social sites, what you put on there will be seen by many users, so take notice of what photo and comments you make.

Like with all of the previous mentioned sites, the more information you have, the easier it is for people to find you and your services. Besides your profiles general information, job history and current positions you'll want to add in multiple email addresses you may have. This is a unique feature to LinkedIn as many people may

have two or more email addresses that people can find them at. For example, my work email is mhurston@sanjose.org, my personal email is mhurston@gmail.com, but my portfolio/freelance email is mgh@michaelghurston.com. Because people may only know one of my emails, by adding them all to my account, when any of these emails are searched for they'll be directed to me.

To add multiple emails, select "Account & Settings" from the very top right hand side of the page once you are logged in. Then select "Email Accounts" under the heading "Personal Information".

Recommendations is another one of the unique features of LinkedIn, where you can find people you have worked with and leave comments (Recommendations) on their profiles. For example, if you really enjoy the food at YourFavoriteRestuarant and are friends with the owner who has a profile on LinkedIn you can recommend them by saying something such as "John Doe has always taken great care of us when my family and I have dined at his restaurant. He greets us and thanks us before and after our time there, and also checks in with us during our meal to see how we are doing."

Joining LinkedIn groups

If you're looking to make new contacts or simply want to keep up with various happenings in your field of expertise, it's suggested to join some of the groups found on LinkedIn, or perhaps make your own. While anymore than four groups can be a bit much to consistently participate in on a regular basis, the members of LinkedIn do not typically look down upon anyone who joins a group and isn't active within it. So feel free to add yourself to many, but choose maybe three that you'll really want to focus on from time to time.





Social Bookmarking

Social Bookmarking is a way to share sites you find interesting with other people. While the following sites are beneficial if you have a lot of links you want to try and drive people too, they will require more involvement from you, with the exception of Delicious, which can be integrated into the Ping.FM service we'll use later to mass-update all of our social sites.

Delicious

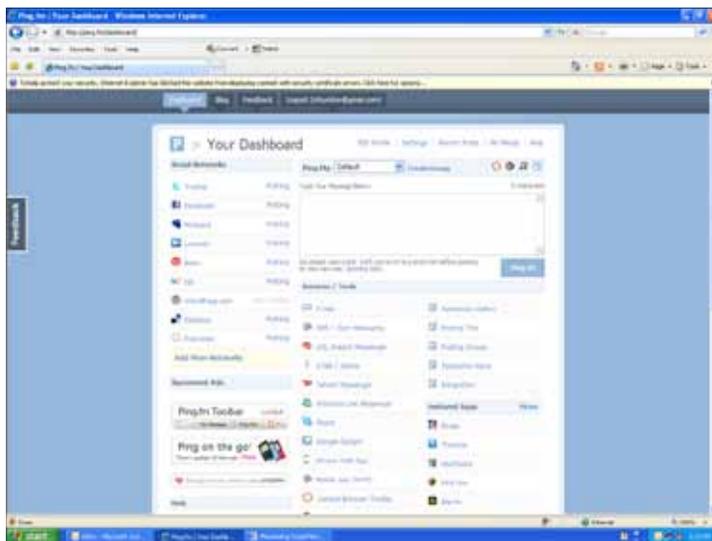
With Delicious, every website description and link has a chance at appearing on the front page, which is great for bringing in new visitors, as well as helps to build our Search Engine Marketing.

The best way to use Delicious and any other Social Bookmarking sites is when a new article or website goes live, provide a short bi-line and a link to the source.

Digg & StumbleUpon

Both Digg and StumbleUpon work the same way as Delicious, with the exception that sites you bookmark will require mini "reviews" as well as need to be placed into appropriate categories before they will have a chance to be shared among others. While the sites require more involvement than Delicious, they do have a bit of a social networking aspect, in that they will allow you to add people to your "friends" list who will be shown your "favorite sites" anytime they login, much like seeing other peoples comments or status updates on Facebook and LinkedIn.





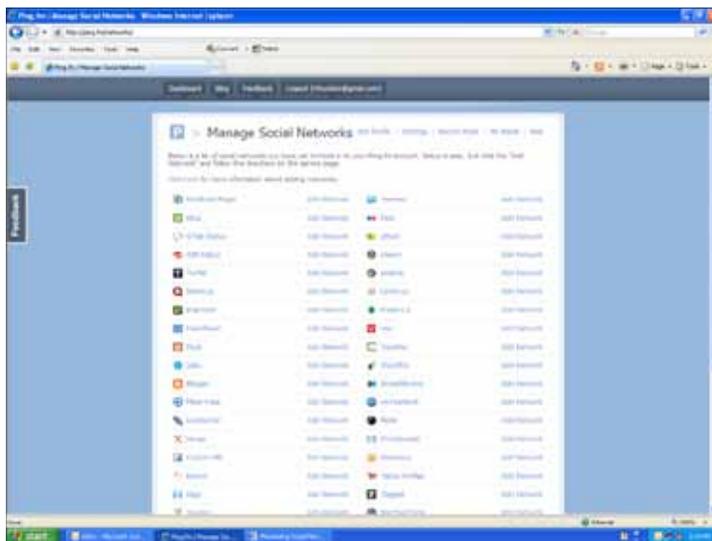
Ping.FM

By now you should be asking yourself and maybe me “How am I possibly going to have the time to update each of these everyday? I’m a busy person Mike, get off my back!” This is why Ping.FM was invented.

The good news is you don’t have to update each of these each day, in fact, you may not even have to visit anything other than Ping.FM (<http://www.ping.fm>)

Ping.FM will allow you to post to all of your social network pages, blogs, social bookmarking sites, etc. from one simple interface. In addition, if you have a URL in your message that is long, it will automatically shorten it for you.

Once you have created an account at Ping.FM you can select “Add More Networks” from the menu on the left hand side of the screen, you should be on the main “Dashboard” page.



You’ll now see a list of all the services Ping.FM can connect too. Simply select “Add Network” next to the service you would like Ping.FM to post too. You’ll be asked for that services login and password. Depending on the service you add, you may be asked if you want to post to the Status Updates or Microblog sections. I usually suggest posting updates in your Status Updates section, though feel free to adjust as you feel necessary for you. Continue to add in the services you have. Now whenever you post from Ping.FM, all of your accounts will be updated within an hour or sooner.

If at any time you want to make a post that doesn’t go to a particular service, simply click on the “Settings link from your dashboard and uncheck the box on the left hand side next to the service name, and select “save”. The “posting” link will then change to “not posting”.





TwitterFeed & RSS Feeds

TwitterFeed currently has a misleading name. When the service first started it was designed specifically for the purpose of posting RSS feeds to Twitter. However, over the last year it has evolved and grown and now is able to feed many services. The one we care about automating though is Ping.FM, since that will replicate out to all of our other outlets. This is one of the most used services by News Aggregators and Affiliate Marketers.

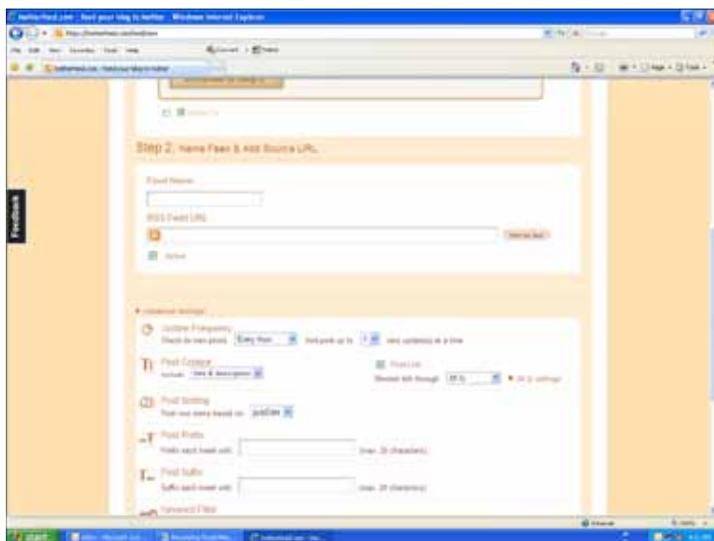
The following may not be something you will use now, but it will be a feature you'll want to take advantage of once the new sanjose.org website rolls out in February.

Once you have created your TwitterFeed Account you'll want to select "Create Feed" where you will be given the options of Twitter, Facebook and "Show More Services". Select Show More Services and choose "Ping.FM"

At this point it will ask you for your Ping.FM Application Key, it's similar to a Wordpress or Google API key, but don't worry if you don't know it. Click on the "Ping.FM Application key" link and you will have another window open that will prompt you for your Ping.FM login. Login and you will be shown your Key, it's a long series of numbers and letters and you'll want to copy and paste this back into the TwitterFeed field.

Select "Get Application Methods" and you'll be given a pull down menu of options: Blog, Status, Etc. The only one we're interested in is "Status", short for Status Updates.





After naming your feed and placing in the url, remember to use http:// and not feed:// in your url, then you can select "Advanced Settings" and adjust them as you see fit. For news I typically recommend every 12 hours, with at least 4 feeds, or every 6 hours with 2 feeds. For specific products you may want to do 1 an hour if you have a lot of new items that are always becoming available.

If at this point you're asking yourself what an RSS feed is I'll explain. The acronym is short for Really Simple Syndication, and is a technology used by many Web 2.0 sites to populate their information instantly to many related aggregators at once. It can also allow for the tracking of subscribers and syndicators.

For an example, let's look at the popular Social Media news site Mashable.com and select the RSS icon (usually looks like a little square, orange icon with a radio signal at the top of your browser). This particular feed is being tracked with Google Feedburner, which we can tell from the URL of <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/Mashable> in the address field. Sometimes the RSS links may change the url to feed://url.com. This link is the RSS feed, and it displays all of the most recent information from the Mashable Website as it's posted and updated.



If you have additional questions about RSS feeds or Google Feedburner, feel free to shoot me an email or give me a call.





Non-Social Media Specific Resources

Google Alerts

A simple, yet useful resource for keeping track of your favorite internet topics that Google has introduced is Google Alerts.

Simply enter in your search terms, select what type of alerts you want to hear about, how often, your email and you'll receive updates on when those terms start to pop up in Google. Great if you want to see who is talking about the San Jose Sharks or Christmas in the Park.

VFlyer

VFlyer is a great tool to use for those who want to promote a venue or service on multiple classified sites at once. With VFlyer you can create a great looking "Virtual Flyer" that automatically is posted to Oodle, Google base, Vast, Geebo, and OLX. If you have a paid account it will automatically post to Backpage and Craigslist, however, if you have a free account you are still given the Backpage and Craigslist code to create your posting yourself on these two sites. Due to the code issue, anyone who wants to use this service is welcome to contact me to help them with their postings.

Once your posting is done it will take up to 48 hours before it goes live, after which time you will be able to track its activity and eventually, as needed, repost it automatically when it begins to get lost or is pruned from the sites.





Flickr & YouTube

As we begin to approach the launch of our new Team San Jose website we'll be trying to incorporate many photos and videos taken by team leaders, their friends and family into our site. If you think you would like to have your photos and/or videos featured on our website simply provide me with a link to your Flickr or YouTube account and I'll be able to incorporate it into our User Generated Content Areas. If you do not have a Flickr or YouTube account, you can either sign up for one or simply send me your photos and videos for inclusion into our general "Life in the Bay" section.





Connecting with Colleagues

It's important as Team San Jose begins to become more involved with Social Media outlets that we all remain connected to each other. There is no reason why someone in Marketing shouldn't be connected online from someone in Finance. The following are some instructions for staying connected with your work mates.

While adding links to your Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn profiles in your signature is a great way to get noticed in clients and potential clients eyes, it may easily be skimmed over when emailing work related topics within the office. Because of this I strongly recommend you take the time to export your Outlook contacts to a CSV and Excel file. You can check with the IT department to learn how to do this if you are unfamiliar with the process, or request the CSV file of TSJ's roster from me.

While Facebook and LinkedIn may be easiest to import contacts too, Twitter will only allow you to link yourself automatically to people in address books that are within Gmail, Yahoo Mail or AOL Mail. They do not have Outlook access yet. That said, if you have your Outlook contacts in CSV or Excel format you should be able to upload them into your Gmail or Yahoo Mail accounts easily enough.

From Facebook, select "Friends" and "Invite" from the top pull down menu, then click on the "Import Email Addresses" link on the right hand side. A window will pop up and you will see the option in the middle "If you use Microsoft Outlook, you can import your contacts into Facebook automatically." Select this option and follow its instructions.

From LinkedIn click on "Contacts" on the left hand menu, then select "Add Contacts" from the right hand menu. You will see a link that says "Import your desktop email contacts" which will allow you to upload a CSV file to your LinkedIn account.





Additional Resources

FriendFeed

FriendFeed is a resource that allows you to consolidate all your Social Media feeds into one. Essentially creating a place where you can view responses and messages from your friends and colleagues on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and many other services. The idea is that this will allow you to respond to others quicker and in a more efficient way. While it's definitely not an essential tool, but it may be worthwhile to spend some time with it and see if it works well for you.

Squidoo

While Squidoo is not a social media tool per se, it is a good resource if you are trying to promote either yourself or a place. On Squidoo, users create what they call Lenses. A Lens is simply a one page write up on a person or place. The site allows you to incorporate some external information as well, such as displaying your Twitter updates and Delicious bookmarks, in addition, the site also offers a public guestbook. On the downside, Squidoo will populate your Lens with Google and Amazon ads on the side, as well as Ad links within your content, however, they are very good about making these ads relevant to what the page is about.





Wikipedia

While many people may have mixed feelings about Wikipedia, the site has dominated search engines in that when searching for individuals or places its Wiki pages tend to come up within the top three links on Google, Yahoo and Bing. For this reason alone it makes the site a resourceful tool to promote your venue by writing about its history, current projects and future endeavors.

About US

Aboutus.org is a site that will generate a pretty accurate snapshot of your website once you have asked it to look at it, which is done by simply typing the URL into the search field and hitting "Find". Once a site is listed, you can create an account and edit the page, much like Wikipedia. Since the site's results are beginning to get noticed more and more in search engines, it is important to make sure your sites information is current and up to date on here.





Reviews & Feedback

Whether you've mastered your social media outlets and are conversing with thousands or not interested in checking out Facebook and Twitter just yet, you'll want to take a look at these three sites.

More importantly, you'll want to make sure your customers are looking at these sites:

Yelp.com

Yelp is currently the most popular online review site, from restaurants, to convention center facilities and everything else. If a business or facility exists, someone can write up a review on it for others to see. I'd recommend that anyone who has friends, family, colleagues or business partners that have visited one of our managed locations be asked to post their remarks on the site.

Google Reviews

While this site is a little clunky to those who don't constantly explore the world of all things Google, every time a location is mapped via Google Maps you have the option to review the facility. For example if you mapped the San Jose convention center, you can select on the highlighted space "A" and choose "Write Review" from the information bubble that pops up.

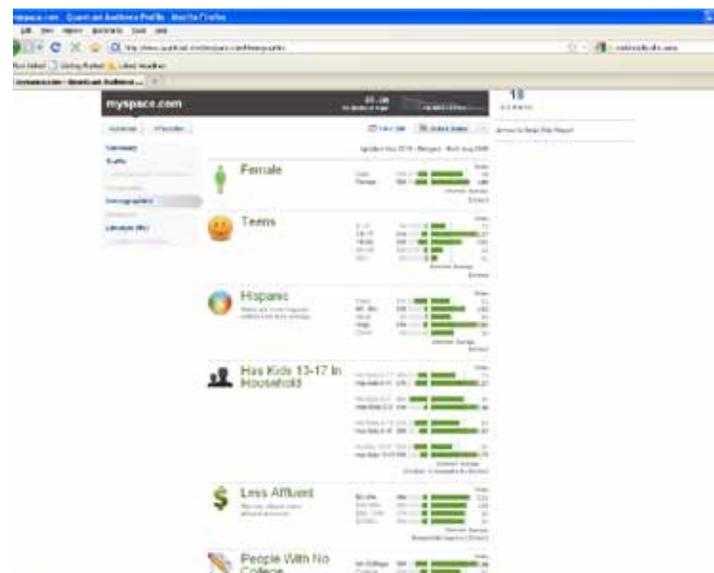
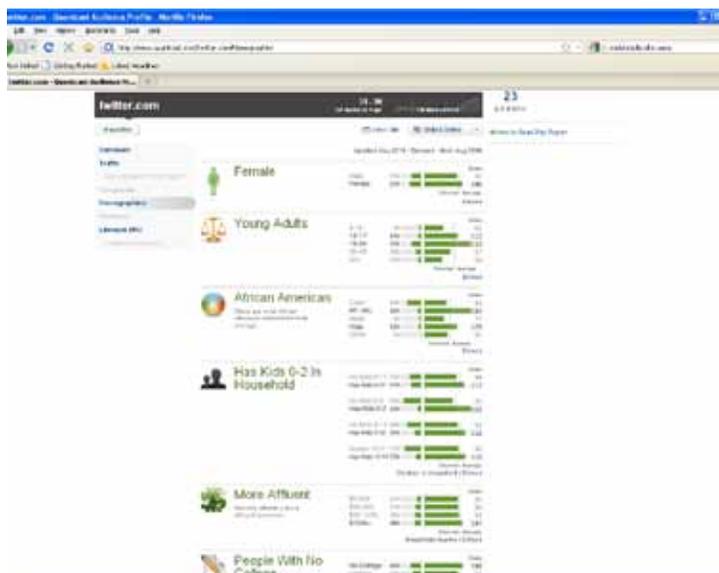
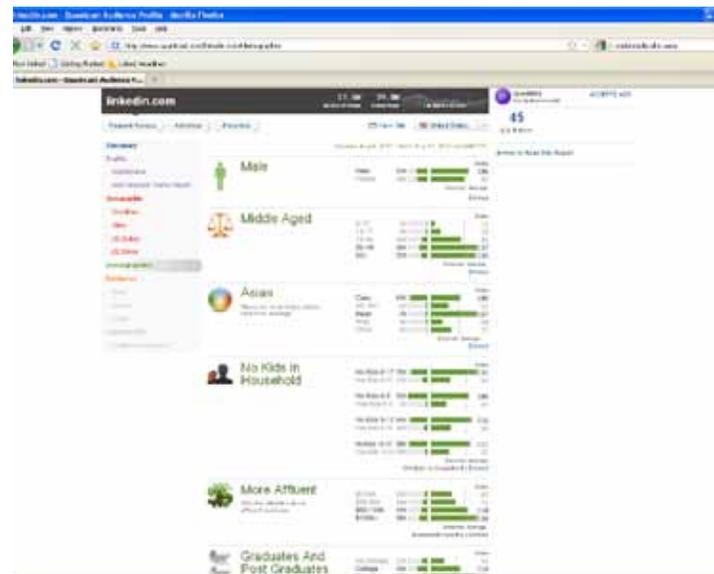
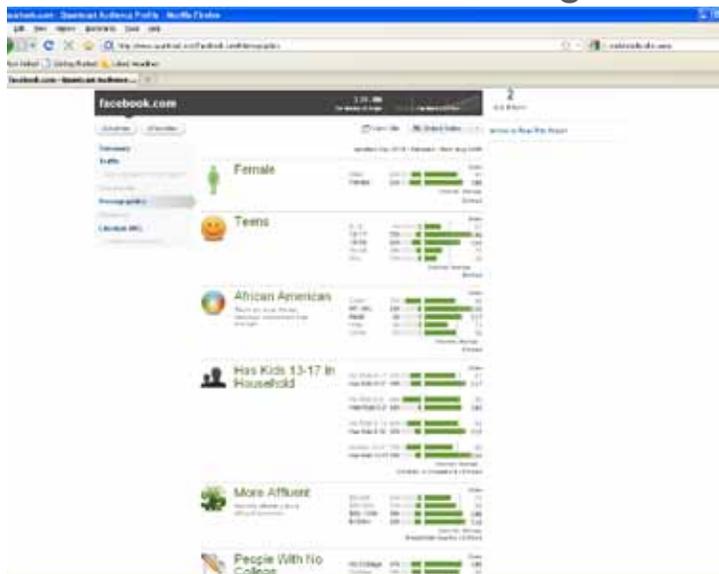
ECompliments.com

This site is my least favorite of the three, but may be a place some of your clients may already frequent. While all reviews on this site have to be complimentary to the business in order to be posted, it's still worthwhile, especially if you're looking for people you may want to contact for testimonials.





MID YEAR 2010 Social Media Big Four Demographics





Social Media for Public Relations

There was an article I read a while back that I thought would be good to revisit for our Public Relations department. I took a look through the sites it mentioned and updated the links below (some had moved since the article was written). I pulled out the ones I think would be most useful and listed them here. The ones I left out I think could have some value for someone trying to gain new media contacts, but when you already have a solid set of contacts, then the sites don't really offer much. <http://mashable.com/2008/10/30/best-social-media-tools-for-pr-professionals-and-journalists/>

Help a Reporter

I like the idea behind this site, but there is not currently a way to receive only Bay Area related topics. However, according to their most recent email, they are implementing a system where you will be able to sign up for specific area and topic information. <http://www.helpareporter.com/>

Pitch Engine

There are a few sites similar to this one, but this is one of the most popular ones. It allows you to create an online Press Release that incorporates video, pictures, external links for additional information and it's easily sharable to any social networking site. <http://www.pitchengine.com/>

Twittering Journalists

The site offers a consolidated list of Journalists in the US that use Twitter. I listed it here because I thought it was more interesting than extremely useful, as it goes back to my statement earlier about contacts. <https://twitteringjournalists.pbworks.com/>

