

SOCIAL MEDIA in New Jersey Municipalities

NJLM Annual Conference, November 20, 2013
Morris A. Enyeart, Ed.D.
City Connections LLC
Enyeart@citiesnj.com

Municipal Use of Social Media

Have Municipalities Gone “ALL-IN”?



At last Count there are 292 ways to share content

Municipal Use of Social Media

In early 2011
A study of 200 NJ Municipal
Websites found only 30%
Used Social Media

Facebook
21%

Twitter
9%

Google +
1%

Municipal Use of Social Media

In 2012

Monmouth University

Polling Institute & Graduate Program in Public Policy

Studied 540 NJ Municipal Web Sites

Facebook
18%

Twitter
14%

Google +
N/A

Also recorded use of Blogs, Photo Sharing, Videos (You Tube, etc)

Accounted for less than 10% of the total score

Municipal Use of Social Media

What About the Monmouth University
Top 10 – Were they more involved?

Facebook

8 out of 10 had a Facebook page

1 had Share buttons, but did not appear
to have a social media page

1 had no social media or share buttons

Twitter

4 out of 10 had a Twitter link

Municipal Use of Social Media

In 2013 did we see an

Explosion

or a

Paradigm Shift



Municipal Use of Social Media

In 2013

City Connections

Studied the same 540 NJ Municipal Web Sites

Use of Social Media was designated by presence
of one or more of the following:

Included

Facebook

Twitter

Google +

YouTube

Not Included

Blogs

Photo Sharing

LinkedIn

Videos (non-YouTube)

RSS

Flickr

Pinterest

Tumblr

Municipal Use of Social Media

In 2013

City Connections

Visited the same 540 NJ Municipal Web Sites,
but focused on the use of Social Media

**33% (177) of Municipalities
used Social Media**

Facebook

31%

Twitter

21%

Google +

1%

Municipal Use of Social Media

In 2013

City Connections

Study of 540 NJ Municipal Web Sites

Of the 177 municipalities
that used Social Media

- Facebook (169), Twitter (107),
Google+ (2), YouTube (20)
- 8 Sites used only Twitter

Municipal Use of Social Media

In 2013

City Connections

Study of 540 NJ Municipal Web Sites

On the 177 municipalities
that used social media

There were links to
305 Facebook & Twitter accounts

Municipal Use of Social Media

But was it Social?
(2-Way Communication)

On the 169 municipalities
that used Facebook

150 allowed public comments

Municipal Use of Social Media

In 2013

City Connections

Study of 540 NJ Municipal Web Sites

Most Common Social Media sites

➤ **Facebook** - **Municipal**
- **Recreation**
- **Police/OEM**

➤ **Twitter** - **Police/OEM**
- **Recreation**
- **Mayor**

Municipal Use of Social Media

WAS THERE AN

Explosion

or a

Paradigm Shift



Municipal Use of Social Media

The Answer is no

In an **EXPLOSION** we would have seen a significantly higher overall percentage of municipalities involved with Social Media.

That has not happened.

Municipal Use of Social Media

The answer is NO

In a PARADIGM SHIFT we would have seen a move of how and what municipalities are doing with Social Media.

That has not happened.

Municipal Use of Social Media

What caused the apparent drop and rise in the use of Facebook by municipalities from 2011 to 2013?

Year	Facebook %	Twitter %	Overall %
2011	21	9	31
2012	18	14	
2013	31	21	33

Municipal Use of Social Media

The answer?

- Many of the links to the social media website were hard to find.
- Both the 2011 and 2013 study spent more time on each website searching for just social media links.
- In the 2012 study, social media accounted for less than 10% of the final score. In the 2011 and 2013 studies, it was the only facet being studied.

Municipal Use of Social Media

The answer?

- In other words, the difference was due to the different study focus and the amount of time searching for a single facet of a municipal website.

Municipal Use of Social Media

The Implication

There is clearly no general agreement on the value or best practice relating to the use of social media by a municipality.

Municipal Use of Social Media

So where are we now?

The early adopters of social media are all accounted for and the remaining 2/3rds of municipalities are in a “wait and see” period to see if social media really makes a difference in their information and resident interaction mission.

Municipal Use of Social Media

**Recommendations for
current and future municipal
website implementations of
social media.**

Municipal Use of Social Media

- Design and place your social media links to maximize their visual impact.
- Don't invent your own designs. Use what people will immediately recognize.

Municipal Use of Social Media

- If you have more than 2-3 social media options, place them in a “Social Networking Toolbar.”
- Different social media buttons mean different things. Don’t use a Facebook “LIKE” button if you want people to visit your Facebook page. That just registers a “like” on your Facebook page. Use a Facebook “Follow Us” or “Find us on Facebook” button to take them to your Facebook Page.

Municipal Use of Social Media

- If you have multiple Facebook or Twitter pages, label them so people know what Facebook or Twitter page they are going to visit. (i.e., town name, Police, Recreation, etc)
- Make sure your links work.
- Place the links to social media in the same place on every page that has them.

Municipal Use of Social Media

- Update your social media pages frequently – daily or at least weekly. If you do not update it frequently, people will not see it when you do because they stopped looking.

Municipal Use of Social Media

In the March 2014 time frame I will be doing a webinar on Social Media for the League of Municipalities. In that webinar we will cover specific things to do and avoid with creating a social media presence. A best practices and resource guide will also be included.

Watch your email and the League's website for this important webinar. It has been approved for CEUs.

Municipal Use of Social Media

Remember the League of Municipalities has a free web and internet consulting service for its members. All you have to do is call the League

Morris A. Enyeart, Ed.D.
City Connections LLC
5 Ebbtide Court
Barnegat, NJ 08005
609-660-9327
Enyeart@citiesnj.com