AGIC

ARIZONA GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION COUNCIL

Social Media Guidelines

Platform Overview and Best Practices for AGIC Social Media Content and Management

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OVERVIEW SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

The expansion of social media in society as a main avenue for communication has created a need for AGIC to expand the use of these platforms to reach our geospatial community. AGIC currently uses several social media platforms to notify and inform those interested in geospatial topics, pertinent updates regarding specific Arizona issues such as AZGeo updates, and related geospatial events such as training opportunities. The Outreach committee has been asked to formulate and document a sustainable method for AGIC to effectively utilize social media. The Outreach Committee has created this guidelines document as a reference for goals, guidelines and best practices relating to AGIC's social media accounts.

AGIC Social Media Platforms

As of January 2021, AGIC has four established social media platforms: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are related to @AZGeoCouncil. Instagram is @azgeoinfocouncil.

AGIC Social Media Target Audience

The AGIC Social Media target audience has primarily been the state agency/jurisdictional GIS user. Our goal is to expand our target audience beyond that to include private industries that may use GIS data, as well as the Education community (K-12), and increase interaction with the university/local college audience. Future efforts may allow for our target audience to vary from channel to channel. Facebook will be the main platform, being inclusive of all targeted audience content. LinkedIn will focus more on professional development, while Twitter will target a younger demographic and will also include current happenings such as User Group meetings/social events, committee meeting announcements, and data releases that would be of interest to the public. Instagram, due to platform limitations requiring photos or videos, will be utilized when appropriate content is available.

AGIC Social Media Campaign Management and Activity

Hootsuite Social Media Management Platform

Hootsuite is a social media management software which facilitates the creation, scheduling and posting of content to multiple social networks at the same time. Use of this software will not only help create and manage content but will also save time for the Social Media Managers.

Approved by AGIC Council in August 2020, the Outreach Committee proceeded with the acquisition of Hootsuite subscription at the basic Professional level. This level has a monthly cost of $29, allows for management of 10 social media profiles, with one main user login. The Hootsuite subscription is maintained through the Land Department and will be reviewed on an annual basis with the AGIC Council for continuation of funding.

Social Media Managers, with guidance from the Outreach Committee chairs, will utilize the Hootsuite software for management of all AGIC social media channels. Protocols, procedures and guidelines for use of this software is provided under the Social Media Platform Guidelines section.

AGIC Social Media Managers

Social Media Managers play a critical role in the AGIC social media presence. They are responsible for creating and posting content, monitoring assigned social networks, and planning upcoming campaigns. The Social Media Workgroup appointed three volunteers to act as Social Media Managers: One Senior Social Media Manager, and two Social Media Managers.

- Social Media Senior Manager (one volunteer):   Oversees the management of all social media channels and is responsible for all Twitter activity, as this channel requires more social media experience to effectively utilize the platform including understanding post limitations, best timing of posts to maximize audience reach and utilizing hashtags to promote posts. The Senior Manager will coordinate with the Social Media Workgroup and obtain approval for content or platform changes

through the Outreach chairs. They also provide workgroup training on the use of Hootsuite and social media platforms in general, suggest social media platform enhancements, and assist in coordination with other AGIC committees on social media related issues as needed.

- Social Media Manager (two volunteers): Manages communications posted on assigned social media channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, and/or Instagram) including content and scheduling and coordinates with the Social Media Senior Manager, who is also available for technical support questions. Standard pre-approved content such as meeting announcements will not require coordination or approval of the Senior Manager or Outreach chairs. However, other types of potential content will be approved by the Social Media Senior Manager, with coordination with the Outreach chairs. Social Media Managers will report back to the Social Media Workgroup monthly, and as needed to the Outreach Committee.

Social Media Manager positions are volunteer positions. Volunteer activities are directed by the Social Media Workgroup Chairs. Participation in the Social Media Workgroup is required for all Social Media Manager positions. Currently, there is no specified length of volunteer period for these positions.

All Social Media Managers will follow protocols for content review prior to any campaign development or postings. Guidelines related to type of posts have been created which will facilitate the approval and scheduling of posts. This is further discussed in the Social Media Platform Guidelines section.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM GUIDELINES

General Responsibility & Conduct

The general rule of conduct and content is to be mindful of all posts, ensuring that they are not discriminatory or offensive to any one group or persons. Posts should be informative and not opinion in nature, with the goal of educating, informing or in some cases, entertaining our target audiences.

All social media channels are owned by the State of Arizona (AGIC), and all social media volunteers understand that all posts made are done so representing AGIC.

Frequency of Social Media Activity

Given that AGIC is a volunteer organization, it may be difficult to reach social media posting frequency standards recognized by private industry or other governmental agencies with a paid, full-time social media staff. That said, AGIC Social Media Managers should attempt to follow the suggested frequency guidelines when possible, understanding that it may not always be possible due to other obligations.

Daily/Weekly Posting & Engagement/Monitoring

- **Be present and responsive.** Social Media Managers should maintain a regular presence on the Hootsuite software to monitor and to respond to posts, comments or mentions if needed. Industry standard is a minimum of once per day on certain channels such as Twitter, however, that is likely unachievable given our volunteer status. It is important to understand that having a social media account requires diligent maintenance and upkeep, and this will be achieved through frequent collaboration between the SMWG members.
- **Frequency of updates varies for each channel.** Social Media Managers will use the Hootsuite to assist with scheduling content, with the goal of spreading out content, not hoarding and posting all at once.

- On Twitter, users expect frequent updates. The goal is to post as frequently as possible given volunteer availability. Managers should login each weekly to check mentions and direct messages.
- People expect less frequent posts from pages on Facebook. Managers should login weekly to check on the page and monitor check ins, tags and comments and post new material. Posting content 3-5 times each week is industry standard, but weekly is more reasonable given volunteer availability.
- People also expect less frequent posts from pages on LinkedIn. Similar to Facebook, Managers will login as frequently as is reasonable, with a goal of weekly.
- On Instagram, industry standards suggest there should be enough content to post at least once a day. Instagram as a platform requires an image or short video for each post. Standard images for meeting announcements and other general AGIC activities will be made and utilized as appropriate. The Social Media Manager will post to Instagram when there is appropriate content in the required image format, creating new content when needed or desired.
- For a video or photo service like Flickr or YouTube where content is less likely to be fed into a user's stream, SMWG will explore the future possibilities of creating/maintaining accounts and uploading content as time allows.

Utilization of Hootsuite Management Software

The Outreach Committee has acquired a monthly subscription to the Hootsuite platform as noted previously. Social Media Managers, along with Outreach Chairs, will have access to this software to create and monitor all social media content related to AGIC.

Managers will utilize the Hootsuite platform to suggest posts, links, announcements, or other material they feel would be useful and informative to the AGIC Community. Protocols for approving platform content are further explained below.

Social Media Managers and Workgroup members should be mindful of which social media channels the content is best suited for; in some cases, that may be all channels, while in some circumstances, it may be very specific like Professional Development information best suited for Facebook and LinkedIn.

A powerful tool within the Hootsuite software is the metrics and analytics that are generated for each social media channel. SMWG will review these metrics and analytics at their monthly meeting, and report to the AGIC Council quarterly or as appropriate. The goal is to better understand our current followers and how we can best position the AGIC channels for future growth.

Submittal of Social Media Content by AGIC Committees & Workgroups

Any AGIC Committee or Workgroup may submit proposed content for publishing on all or some of the AGIC social media platforms. Requests should include the following:

- Specific content and/or wording desired, including any images or hyperlinks
    - *NOTE: Social Media Managers may need to alter text to fit certain platforms or guidelines such as Twitter, which has a maximum character limit*
- Specify which platforms the content should be published on
- Requested date of post or publish by dates (if there is not a specific desired day)
    - If multiple posts of the same content are being requested, please indicate desired dates of each post or subsequent reminders
    - If this is a recurring post request such as a monthly meeting, please indicate "monthly post" and requested days before event to publish the initial post and any reminders

Requests can be made by submitting emails to one of the following: (see AGIC website https://agic.az.gov/agic/outreach-committee for email address information)

1. Outreach Committee Co-Chairs
2. Social Media Workgroup Chair/Co-chair
3. State Cartographer's Office

Once requests are received, an email reply will be sent acknowledging the post request has been received and is going through the Content Approval Process. Social Media Managers may reach out to the requesting party to ask for clarification or approval of wording changes if necessary.

Submittal of Social Media Content by Outside Entities

Government entities (local, state or federal), as well as private individuals, groups, nonprofits or businesses, may request that AGIC publish informative ONLY posts on the AGIC social media platforms. These types of informative posts must be relevant to the geospatial community and align with AGIC goals and guidelines. Examples could include:

- Meeting Announcements
- Public Information Announcements
- Geospatial Employment Opportunities/Listings (LinkedIn only)

Post requests can be made by submitting emails, including detailed post information, to Outreach Committee Chairs and or State Cartographer's Office only.(see AGIC website https://agic.az.gov/agic/outreach-committee for email address information)

These types of requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis by Outreach Chairs and must conform to all AGIC Social Media Guidelines for posting.

Platform Content Approval Process

The content approval process is similar to what has been established previously for social media content and articles. Prospective content or material, either for social media distribution or articles posted on the AGIC website, received by email are reviewed and approved by Outreach Committee chairs. Additionally, proposed content may be brought forth for discussion during Social Media Workgroup meetings or Outreach Committee meetings. Suggested content must follow all guidelines such as being relevant to the intended audience and must not be political in nature or perceived offensive in any way.

Pre-approved types of content:

- AGIC meeting announcements
- Training opportunities sponsored by AGIC
- Announcements approved by AGIC Council or other AGIC Committees
- Articles or other postings already approved for the AGIC website
- Forwarding, reposting or retweeting of posts from another State of Arizona department or agency directly related to geospatial technologies or related topics

Content requiring review and approval include:

- Original content created by Social Media Managers in support of a holiday, event, hash tag, etc.
- Announcements or posts made by State of Arizona departments or agencies not related to geospatial technology topics
- Reposting of posts from outside organizations, agencies or individuals related to geospatial topics

GUIDELINES ON FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONS

"Friending", "liking", "following" or accepting a request from an individual or organization on social media requires careful consideration. Who an organization follows and why is an important part of the organization's identity. The Social Media Workgroup recognizes that it is important to be selective in our approach.

Following Individuals or Organizations

All organizations or individuals AGIC follows on social media must be:

- Approved by the AGIC Outreach Chairs and/or Social Media Workgroup
- Align with AGIC's target demographic
- Not be political or offensive in nature

Currently Approved Organizations to Follow

Organizations, departments, or agencies with member representatives on the AGIC Council, as well as all non-member counties, cities, and federal agencies, are approved to follow on any social media channel. National organizations that AGIC participates in, such as NSGIC, are also approved, as well as neighboring state GIS organizations. A comprehensive list of approved agencies/organizations can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Approved Agencies - AGIC Representatives

AGIC Council Representatives

State Agencies and Instrumentalities

Arizona State Land Department	AZ Department of Transportation
AZ Department of Environmental Quality	Maricopa County
AZ Forestry and Fire Management	Pima County
AZ Game and Fish	Yavapai County
AZ Department of Water Resources	City of Buckeye
AZ Department of Emergency & Military Affairs	Maricopa Association of Governments
AZ Department of Administration	Gila River Indian Community
AZ Economic Security	AZ State University - Arizona Geographic Alliance (AzGA)
AZ Department of Health Services	University of Arizona - GIST
AZ Department of Public Safety	Arizona Professional Land Surveyors

Federal Government Agencies

NOAA - National Geodetic Survey	US Forest Service
US Department of Agriculture	US Bureau of Land Management
US Bureau of Reclamation	US Air Force

Table 2: Approved Agencies - Non-AGIC Organizations

Approved Non-AGIC Organizations	
Counties, Cities, Councils of Government & Other	
Arizona Geological Survey	City of Chandler GIS
Northern Arizona University	City of Tucson GIS
Apache County GIS	City of Flagstaff GIS
Cochise County GIS	City of Phoenix GIS
Coconino County GIS	City of Scottsdale GIS
Mohave County GIS	City of Yuma GIS
Pinal County GIS	Central Arizona Governments
Santa Cruz County GIS	Northern Arizona Council of Governments
Yuma County GIS	Pima Association of Governments
Gila County	Western Arizona Council of Governments
Greenlee County	Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization
La Paz County	
Navajo County	

Southwest States Organizations and Councils	
California Office of the State Geographic Information Officer	Nevada Geographic Information Society
California Geographic Information Association (CGIA)	New Mexico Geographic Information Council
Governor's Office of Information Technology - State of Colorado GIS Coordinator	New Mexico Geospatial Advisory Committee: NM Map Services
GIS Colorado	Utah Geographic Information Council
Nevada State Mapping Advisory Committee	Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center (AGRC)

National Organizations/Councils	
Federal Geographic Data Committee	GIS Certification Institute
National States Geographic Information Council	

Approval Process for Following Organizations and Individuals

Social Media Managers may gather a list of potential organizations to follow using the AGIC social media accounts. This list will include requests submitted to the AGIC social media accounts by outside organizations and individuals. Any suggestions or requests will be reviewed by the Outreach chairs and/or SMWG during its monthly meetings for approval. Once approved, Social Media Managers can proceed with following the approved organization/agency/individual.

In general, individuals are unlikely to be approved for following. The concentration for AGIC social media should be organizations, agencies/departments, and similar GIS related groups.

Software/Services Vendors

As a general guideline, AGIC will not "follow" or "like" any particular software or services vendor, nor will any post from such vendor be reposted or tweeted.

Direct Messages Received from Public

If any social media platform receives a Direct Message or question from the public, the Social Media Manager may direct the individual to the AGIC webpage or contact the State Cartographer's Office for additional information or assistance.

Important Notes on "Following" to keep in mind...

- **Follow limits.** Twitter specifically states that every account can follow 5,000 other accounts total. Once you follow 5,000 accounts, there are limits to the additional accounts you can follow. Facebook also has a similar limit and Instagram only lets you follow 7,500 accounts, regardless of your ratio. LinkedIn has a daily and monthly follow invitation limit that can change once the account reaches 100,000 followers.
- **Negative impact.** Following too many accounts can affect how a social media profile looks, especially if the ratio isn't reasonable, as it makes the account look less authentic. Aiming for a more balanced ratio will look better and mean the organization is able to engage with the audience more effectively.
- **Follow for follow.** This has the same effect as the last point. An account may ask you to follow them if they follow you. As a general point, our Guidelines will help us to avoid this trap unless they are an approved agency or organization. Our goal is to stay true to the AGIC brand and accurately reflecting AGIC's objectives through our profile

CONTENT GUIDELINES

Posting Announcements/Activities/Tweets

Any content found on the AGIC website could/should be shared through our Social Media channels. This includes all News articles, meeting announcements/agendas, upcoming events such as training opportunities, updates or new opportunities posted to the Resources webpage (ArcGIS Online School Competition is a good example), and AZGeo related information. If the information can be found anywhere on the AGIC webpage, it is not necessary to obtain approval to repost this information on the social media channels.

New information, comments or posts regarding topics not currently found on the AGIC webpage should be sent to Outreach chairs and Social Media Workgroup chair for review and approval if time sensitive or can be reviewed at the next Social Media workgroup meeting if timing is not critical.

All graphics to be used or posted will be approved by the SMWG and will utilize official AGIC logos where appropriate.

Posts or Tweets mentioning AGIC or AGIC Event

Any post on any social media channel mentioning AGIC, or an AGIC event, should be approved by the Social Media Managers, and verified by Outreach Chairs. Social Media Managers may forward potential posts or retweets to the Chairs by email in time sensitive situations for approval, otherwise they may be reviewed at the next Social Media Workgroup meeting. In addition, any AGIC Council Member may suggest posts either during Council meetings or by forwarding the suggested post directly to the Outreach chairs.

Employment Listings

Social Media Workgroup will post announcements related to available employment openings that are deemed appropriate and of interest to the geospatial community on the AGIC LinkedIn account. This social media platform

is primarily focused on professional development and related topics and is therefore the appropriate platform to share such information.

Organizations looking to fill a position in a geospatial related field may be posted once approved by the Outreach chairs and/or SMWG. Although many job opportunities are often posted on the AGIC listserv, this action does not necessitate that the posting will be appropriate to be posted on AGIC's LinkedIn account. Listings posted on AGIC listserv or directly brought to the attention of the Workgroup will be reviewed on a case by case basis by Outreach chairs, with consultation with Social Media Managers and the entire workgroup as appropriate.

Further development of additional Guidelines related to employment listings may be considered based on frequency needs and any related issues uncovered as the AGIC LinkedIn platform develops.

Posting Articles to AGIC Website and Social Media

Careful consideration should be taken when posting articles or links to the AGIC website or Social Media channels. The following workflow was created to ensure articles and links follow AGIC guidelines. The goal is to provide consistency on approved and rejected articles.

In order to continue the high level of activity, quality and consistency of interesting articles presented to the AGIC community, the Social Media Workgroup has created a News Manager position. Guidelines suggested below were developed after years of article review and posting for the AGIC website, and now social media channels.

Process for Approving Articles/Links and Posts

- News articles are found by and/or sent to Outreach Committee chairs and News Manager
- If approved, the group identifies which websites/social media platforms to post the article to.
  - AGIC News Website: for any articles that involve AGIC
  - GIS News Website: for all other approved articles
  - Social Media:
    - Facebook - all articles are posted, as well as meeting announcements, training opportunities, social engagements, and pertinent industry information.
    - LinkedIn - those articles involving professional development and training will be posted here, including User Groups meet ups.
    - Twitter - will focus primarily on meeting announcements, social engagements/User Group Meet Ups, contests, and other related announcements. Articles, or links to articles, in general will not be posted to Twitter.
    - Instagram - images created to promote meeting announcements and frequent AGIC events will be created and posted as appropriate. New image content may be created or posted as time allows, such as maps made by State departments or agencies, or other topics/images of interest.

Rejected Articles

Since AGIC does not endorse specific vendors, all rejected articles have focused on promoting a specific vendor. Rejected articles include:

- Advertisements, including software or paid training
- Articles written to promote a specific vendor or product.

Past Issues Encountered

How to decide when to post an article that references a vendor or product? (see Appendix B for specific examples of approved articles)

There have been several articles about processes or projects that could be very interesting to the Arizona GIS community but were rejected because they promoted a specific vendor. AGIC has posted articles that may reference a vendor but the article was not an advertisement and the information was considered to be useful for the GIS community. For example, New LiDAR Dataset Covering the Kaibab Plateau, AZ talks about LiDAR data available for the Kaibab National Forest. The article was written by the vendor, OpenTopography, but does not sell their product nor are readers required to buy anything in order to access the LiDAR data. Also, as with many articles suggested, vendor-written articles are the only articles available about a project. In the case of the Kaibab LiDAR, we could not find any other articles about this topic.

We have rejected many articles on interesting projects for of one of the following reasons:

- The article was clearly trying to sell a product.

- The article was written by the vendor. We prefer to have articles written by the group doing the project or by a third-party, like a journalist.

- The article focused more on the vendor's product than the project.

Offensive or Promotional Posts

Content deemed offensive to any group or individual will not be posted, liked, followed, or retweeted. In the case this has occurred, Social Media Managers will immediately take corrective action, and inform Social Media Workgroup chair and Outreach chairs.

Similarly, AGIC will not post, like, follow, or retweet any post that is solely promotional of any individual, group, vendor, organization or movement.

Further development of these guidelines may be needed based on social media platform growth and actual occurrences.

Security Protocols

- Only designated members of the Social Media Workgroup (Social Media Managers and Outreach chairs) will have appropriate credentials to access the platforms
- One general login will be used and there will be no user-specific logins/passwords
- Passwords will be managed by the State Cartographer's Office and changed when there has been a change in volunteers or staff

AGIC Social Media Guidelines - Updates/Revisions

Great care must be taken when managing AGIC Social Media accounts, as our presence online is a direct reflection of our organization. As our experience grows, together with our volunteer base and organizational structure as a workgroup, these Guidelines will continue to be revised and updated, as necessary. At a minimum, the Social Media Workgroup will review these guidelines annually and present any necessary additions or revisions to the Outreach Committee for further action. Resulting edits will be brought forth for AGIC Council approval.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES - APPENDIX A

General Posting Calendar/Schedule Industry Recommendations

As reference for Social Media Managers & committee volunteers, the following information is provided as an industry guideline/standard.

Twitter Posting Schedule:

- Twitter has the most consistent engagement during the time period of **Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–4 p.m.**
    - **Best times**: Wednesday and Friday at 9 a.m.
    - **Best days:** Wednesday and Friday
    - **Worst day**: Saturday

Facebook Posting Schedule:

- Facebook has the most consistent engagement during the time period of **Tuesday through Thursday, 8 a.m.–3 p.m.**
    - **Best times:** Wednesday, 11 a.m. and 1–2 p.m.
    - **Best day:** Wednesday
    - **Worst day:** Sunday

LinkedIn Posting Schedule:

- LinkedIn has the most consistent engagement during the time period of **Tuesday through Friday, 8 a.m.–2 p.m.**
    - **Best times:** Wednesday from 8–10 a.m. and noon, Thursday at 9 a.m. and 1–2 p.m., and Friday at 9 a.m.
    - **Best day:** Wednesday and Thursday
    - **Worst day:** Sunday

Instagram Posting Schedule:

- Instagram has the most consistent engagement during the time period of **Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.**
    - **Best times:** Wednesday at 11 a.m. and Friday from 10 a.m.–11 a.m.
    - **Best day:** Wednesday
    - **Worst day:** Sunday

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Examples of Approved Articles

Articles considered for posting include any that involve AGIC, the GIS community, or geospatial related topics (e.g. UAS, LiDAR).

Examples of articles that have been posted:

- AGIC-specific news, such as status of projects, milestones achieved, general information.
    - [New AGIC Natural Resources Workgroup (NRWG)](#)
    - [Current State and Future Plans for AZGeo](#)
- Awards given to Arizona GIS persons, groups, or companies.
    - [An Arizona GIS Professional Received an Award from URISA](#)
- Information for events, such as upcoming contests, meetings, public review periods, etc.
    - [ArcGIS Student Competition for Grades 4 to 12](#)
- Market trends for GIS/geospatial jobs.
    - [5 key Location Intelligence trends for 2019](#)
- Articles about new resources or demos about how to use new or existing resources.
    - [Data Off the Beaten Path: Housing and Urban Development](#)
- News about state or federal bills or legislative efforts that may affect the GIS community
    - [What does the FAA Reauthorization Act Mean for UAS Educational & Recreational Flyers?](#)
- News about efforts that may affect the GIS community
    - [Datums, feet and GNSS vectors: The 2022 NGS upgrade](#)
- Important information or updates to commonly used GIS software
    - [Important Update for ArcGIS and TLS](#)
- News on accomplishments or interesting projects that people, groups, or companies are working on that do not promote a vendor or product.
    - [New lidar dataset covering the Kaibab Plateau, AZ](#)