Montgomery County Memorial Library System

Information Services
INF-2 Social Media Policy and Procedures

I.   POLICY PURPOSE

Montgomery County Memorial Library System (MCMLS) endorses the use of carefully chosen social media tools as an important enhancement to communication, collaboration and information exchange between MCMLS staff, library users and the general public. Social media use by libraries can provide streamlined, cost-effective marketing and outreach, as well as foster a sense of community between the library and its users.

This policy proposal establishes the Library's position on the usefulness and selection of social media models and provides guidelines for management and compliance with other Montgomery County and MCMLS policies. The Library recognizes that technology advancements are continuous and that new tools will emerge which have useful application in the library setting; thus, this proposal addresses social media in general and not specific programs, websites, or technology platforms.

II.   POLICY STATEMENT

The primary mission of the Montgomery County Memorial Library System is to be a leading resource for information, education, culture, and recreation, contributing to life-long learning, and adapted to the special needs and interests of the community. Social media tools provide a potentially valuable method to assist in this mission.
 Social media tools employed by the Library will be selected to enhance or provide more cost-effective means to deliver such library functions as:

- Community outreach, marketing and publicity
- Education of the community in the use of Library resources
- Reader's advisory services
- Information and reference services
- Book discussion groups
- Reading readiness activities for pre-school children
- Reading incentive programs for children, youth and adults
- Cultural and educational programming
- Advertisement of volunteer opportunities available at the library

- Additional library-related uses that may be explored or expanded upon as deemed reasonable by Library Administration.

Library social media offerings are intended to create a welcoming and inviting online space where library users will find useful and entertaining information. In some forums, users may be able to interact with library staff and other library users (please see **Public Terms of Use** for more information.

III. **DEFINITIONS**
1. Blog- A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow visitors to post responses, reactions or comments. The term is short for "web log."
2. Page- The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
3. Podcast- An archived digital audio presentation available for download from a website.
4. Post- Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.
5. Profile- Information that a user provides about himself or herself or an organization they represent (as an administrator on a page) on a social networking site.
6. Social Media- A category of Internet-based resources that integrate user generated content and user participation. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, Pinterest), micro blogging sites (Twitter, Nixle), photo and video sharing sites (Flickr, You Tube) wikis (Wikipedia), social cataloging (Good Reads, Library Thing)blogs and news sites (Digg, Reddit).
7. Social Networks- Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, share interests and socialize with others using a range of technologies.
8. Speech-Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, video, or related forms of communication.
9. Web 2.0- The second generation of the World Wide Web focused on shareable, user-generated content that is dynamic rather than static web pages. Some use this term interchangeably with social media.
10. Wiki-Web page(s) that can be edited collaboratively.

IV.   REGULATIONS

1. Social media pages should be designed for a target audience, such as parents of young children or book discussion groups.
2. Social media should have a demonstrable library focus, such as information and reference services or reader's advisory.
3. Third party social media sites may be used to promote library-created content, if this is clearly labeled as provided by MCMLS and the library has the right to publish the content. Examples are:
     i. Videos of library events and library tutorials posted on video aggregators, such as YouTube or Vimeo, to increase access speeds for users and reduce pressure on library bandwidth;
     ii. Library participation as a contributor of book reviews and reading lists to established online book discussion communities, such as Library Thing and Goodreads.com
4. Social media content postings should be aggregated using content syndication tools (where allowable) to reduce staff time for publishing content.
5. Participation by MCMLS in social media sites or pages and online communities (not individual posts) shall be approved in advance by the Library Director.
6. Where possible, each social media page should clearly indicate that it is maintained by MCMLS and should have MCMLS contact information prominently displayed.
7. Where possible, each social media page/profile should include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and scope of the library's presence on the website.
8. Where possible, social media pages should link to MCMLS' official website and this social media policy.
9. If user discussion and contribution is invited on library created and maintained social media sites, it shall be subject to the **Public Terms of Use** below. This shall be clearly indicated on the social media page that invites participation.
10. Library created content posted to third party sites shall also be retained on County servers.
11. Social media content shall adhere to applicable laws, regulations and policies including all information technology and records management policies.
     i. Content is subject to public records laws and Montgomery County records retention schedule.
     ii. Content shall be manage, stored and retrieved to comply with open records laws and e-discovery laws and policies.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Public Terms of Use

1. MCMLS has no affiliation with any advertisements or other material posted by third party sites or software.
2. By choosing to comment on MCMLS Social Media sites, public users agree to these terms:
   i. Comments are moderated by MCMLS staff and MCMLS reserves the right not to post or to remove comments that are unlawful or off topic as determined in its sole discretion, including but not limited to:
      1. Plagiarized materials;
      2. Copyright violations;
      3. Off-topic comments;
      4. Commercial materials/spam;
      5. Duplicate posts from the same individual;
      6. Comments containing sexually explicit language or images, or statements that ridicule, malign, disparage or otherwise express bias against any race, religion or protected class of individuals;
      7. Personal comments about individuals, including attacks, insults or threatening language;
      8. Images, executable programs or any non-textual content.
3. Persons who repeatedly violate these terms may be barred from further postings,
4. All comments are public records, and as such, are subject to public records laws and MCMLS records retention schedule. Commenters are urged to protect their privacy. Commenters should not post personally identifying information, including but not limited to: last name, school, age, phone number, address, library card number. MCMLS recommends use of a generic user name that is not personally identifying. Staff will use real names for transparency and accountability.

B. Staff Responsibilities

1. When representing MCMLS via social media, personnel shall:
   i. Conduct themselves at all times as representatives of MCMLS and accordingly, adhere to all associated standards of conduct;
   ii. Identify him or herself by name as MCMLS personnel;
   iii. Not make statements about patrons, or post, transmit or otherwise disseminate confidential information in violation of MCMLS' Privacy Policy;
   iv. Not represent postings as official MCMLS policy, unless this has been clearly approved by the Library Director;
   v. Not conduct political activities or private business.

2. MCMLS personnel are prohibited from using County computers to access social media sites when this activity interferes with regular duties.
3. MCMLS personnel shall observe and abide by all copyright, trademark and service restrictions in posting materials to electronic media.
4. Designated staff members responsible for maintaining library social media will:
   i. Receive a completed photo release form from staff and public for all pictures posted on the site;
   ii. Regularly solicit ideas and suggestions from other staff members and;
   iii. Are responsible for increasing followers and sharing statistics with other library personnel.

VI. GUIDELINES

1. The library staff should use their discretion in handling situations.