NWS Emerging Technology Team and Its Role in Information Delivery and Communication via Social Media

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Outline

● Social media in the NWS
● The Emerging Tech IWT
● Role in adoption of social media in NWS
● Past work & lessons learned
● A path forward
Social Media in the NWS

2011 survey by the American Red Cross: 74% of Americans expect response agencies to monitor and respond to social media posts within 1 hour

Importance in the NWS is well-established

- NWS Service Assessments detail value of NWS social media activity before, during, and after events.

- Offer an opportunity for the National Weather Service (NWS) to achieve a higher response to its standard suite of alerts and warnings
  - help people personalize their threat and motivate action.
Social Media in the NWS

- Reach directly from an NWS office to the public
  - large and unprecedented

- NWS Social Media reach vs. traditional means
  - FWD web pages: 900-4,500 visitors/day
  - FWD social media: 39,100 followers

- For one event May, 2013
  - FB: Reached 97,000 people
  - Twitter: Reached 26,000 people
  - YouTube: 51,000 views
  - TOTAL: 174,000...probably more.
Social Media in the NWS

● Challenges
  ○ Policy - legal, security, operational
  ○ NOAA Partnership policy considerations
  ○ training, organization, and bureaucracy.
  ○ continue to evolve; new technologies present themselves continuously,
  ○ Workload in NWS offices.
Emerging Tech Integrated Work Team

- Chartered by the NWS Corporate Board in 2010
  - reports to the NWS Chief Information Officer (CIO) in 2010.
- Reps from every region and national center
- Monitor uses of social media/new tech and make use recommendations to the NWS CIO
- Keep abreast of new legal agreements, DOC and NOAA policies, and standards

Current Team Representation
- Mike Hudson (non-voting co-chair)
- Corey Pieper (non-voting co-chair)
- Don Miller (Eastern Region)
- Melinda Bailey (Southern Region)
- Derek Deroche (Central Region)
- Matt Solum (Western Region)
- Sam Shea (Alaska Region)
- Bill Ward (Pacific Region)
- Jay Liang (NCEP)
- Wendy Levine (HQ SPP)
- Sean Potter (HQ Comms)
- Mike Gerber (HQ OCWWS rep)
- Pete Pickard (HQ OST)
- Gustavo Limon (HQ OCIO)
- (vacant) (NWSEO)
Role in Adoption of Social Media in the NWS

- DOC Terms of Service (ToS) approval
- NWS approval
  - Business Case
  - Policy analysis
  - Workforce management coordination
- NWS Rollout
  - Documentation
  - Guidance/bounds of use
Role in Adoption of Social Media in the NWS

- Legality (DOC ToS?)
- IT Security
- Improve mission operations? (business case)
- Acquisition (NWS Directive 1-11: Administration and Management)
- Internet Use (DOC CIO Internet Use Policy)
- Privacy
- Section 508 (DOC Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Policy)
- Technology Transfer (NWS Directive 100-4: External Affairs)
- Consistency
- Resources/Operational Impact

- Configuration and Data Management (NWS Directive 30-12)
- Paperwork Reduction Act
- Federal Advisory Committee Act
- Records Retention Requirements
- Managing the Acquisition of Environmental Data from External Parties (NWS Directive 1-12)
- Public Communications Policy
- Employee Papers (NWSPD 100-1)
- Information Quality Act Guidelines
- NOAA Partnership Policy (NWS directive 1-10)
Past Work & Lessons Learned

- Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. were “no brainers” - but the process was new
- Things are more difficult now.
  - Workload is more important than ever
  - Consistency
  - The case to roll out new outlets needs to be stronger than ever
- The “handoff” of Operational social media outlets needs attention
The Path Forward

● Speed things up
  ○ We owe it to the field to get answers more quickly
● Work to advise the NWS on a path forward for social media as an agency
  ○ Roles for social media beyond operational rollout
● More all-around field involvement
  ○ policy analysis needs real-world operations testing
  ○ field-driven prototype teams to lay groundwork
● Evaluation of current outlets
● National social media resource development
Thank You!

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