THE CITY OF Edinburg

Social Media Communications Plan

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Social Media Communications Plan

Synopsis of technologies and methods used by City of Edinburg

Scope of plan

The purpose of this document is to be a "living" document evolving and changing as the technologies and methods of social media do. The City of Edinburg Public Information Department uses a variety of channels and platforms of social media, monitors new technologies, and adopts those that fit our communications needs. The document addresses those social media platforms Public Information uses.

Overview

Social media is a growing component of the internet. There are over 2 billion users of social networks, with that number expected to grow as new applications and platforms develop.

Social media provides an opportunity through which the City of Edinburg can reach residents and stakeholders to provide news, alerts, program information and other resources. Additionally, social media offers an opportunity to engage with residents and stakeholders.

Social media is part of an overall communications effort.

The City of Edinburg uses several social media outlets to spread official City news and other unique content to reinforce brand recognition and engage with residents and stakeholders. Content should be chosen based on audience and relevance, using each channel's specific strengths to best present relevant information.

Guiding principles

Residents and stakeholders should get the most out of their social media experience with the City of Edinburg. With this in mind, the City constantly

monitors best practices of social media use, and experiments with content to determine what works best for each outlet.

City of Edinburg social media content focuses on:

- Being authentic and positive
- Listening to its followers
- Responding to comments and questions
- Conversing with residents
- Providing quality content

The City of Edinburg accounts currently have more than 24,400 followers and grow with increases in activity and changes in content.

Content

The City of Edinburg posts content about City departments through its social media efforts. Content is a mix of news items, links, videos, photographs and other resources on an as-needed basis.

The goal is to post quality content that would be of interest to residents and stakeholders to strengthen image and brand recognition or as a form of follow-up for readers, providing valuable information they can use in their lives.

The Public Information staff identifies and creates valuable content for use on social media accounts. In addition, the Public Information Department receives content submissions from other City departments for review and posting.

All City of Edinburg official accounts and pages should have consistent voice and personality – helpful and friendly, personal and engaging, professional and reliable.

The City's Social Media use serves as a mechanism for communication between the public and the City on the listed topics. Following or "friending" persons or organizations is not an endorsement by the City and is only intended as a means of communication. All content, all comments submitted, and various list of fans/friends/followers are public and are subject to disclosure pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act.

Commenting

The City of Edinburg uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube to provide a source for two-way communication with the community.

Our social media platforms are considered "limited" public forum in that they are structured narrowly to focus discussions on a particular interest of the City rather than creating a "public forum."

The City of Edinburg welcomes comments and postings related to:

City of Edinburg programs, departments, policies, community events and general information for the residents of the City of Edinburg.

The City of Edinburg reserves the right to regulate the content of its social media pages. City personnel will not edit any comments by visitors, rather the Department of Public Information reserves the right to delete comments involving:

- Hate Speech;
- Profanity, obscenity or vulgarity – including creative spellings of such words using asterisks;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Disparagement or threats to a person or people;
- False information
- Promoting or advertising a person, business or commercial transaction;
- Implying, promoting or encouraging illegal activity;
- Content that promotes, perpetuates or fosters discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender, religion, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity;
- Content that opposes or supports political candidates or propositions;
- Content unrelated to the purpose and topical scope of a page;
- Content unrelated to a particular posting by the City of Edinburg Public Information Department.

Social media is a 24/7 medium; however, we cannot monitor, post or respond to comments 24/7. We will respond as quickly as possible. Generally, the

Department of Public Information will post or respond to comments from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

This comment policy is subject to modification. Repeated violations of the City's comment policy may cause the author to be blocked from a social media page.

Records Retention

The City's social media sites are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (TPIA), found in Ch. 552, Texas Government Code. Content in City social media, including a list of subscribers, posted communications, and public comments (including deleted comments), is public record. All such content will be archived and stored in accordance with Texas and federal laws and City record retention policies. The City Secretary Department is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public information requests for information on social media it maintains. The retention period for a record depends on the content of that record, regardless of the medium in which it is maintained. The Public Information Department will preserve records for the required retention period and will destroy, transfer, or otherwise dispose of records in accordance with records disposition schedules.

Facebook

Overview
Facebook is a social networking site which allows users to "Like" pages and follow those pages' activity, share those pages' content and interact with pages by commenting on posts. Businesses and organizations can set up page and use them to post news, events, links, photos and videos. Facebook has more than 2 billion users worldwide including more than 210 million in the United States.

City of Edinburg
The City of Edinburg maintains a single Facebook page. The City of Edinburg page has two administrators and four editors – all Public Information staff – who post all content. The page is used to share news, events, links, photos and videos that highlight past, current and future items, including people and activities.

Other City-related pages currently exist (Dustin Michael Sekula Memorial Library, Edinburg Scenic Wetlands & World Birding Center, Edinburg Fire Department) and are maintained by department staff.

Audience
The audience of the City of Edinburg Facebook page consists of residents and other related stakeholders. Followers of the Facebook page are made up of 70 percent female and 30 percent male, with 27 percent of females of ages 25-34.

Content
The City of Edinburg utilizes Facebook to encourage users to engage and talk with the City. The Facebook page is used to showcase City activities and events through photos and videos including live videos. Relevant news and information is also posted and shared.

- *Engaging followers:* Effort is made to answer questions in a timely manner, provide direction to resources and provide feedback to comments.
- *Photo/video posting:* City of Edinburg makes use of Facebook's media-rich nature to post various photo and video posts. Photos and videos uploaded

and shared to Facebook may be unique to the page or linked from other sites including the City of Edinburg YouTube page.

- **_Highlighting news, activities and events:_** City of Edinburg shares information and links for upcoming events and activities, as well as information during and after events.
- **_Educational material:_** Relevant items are promoted and linked to tie in with an event, incident or news.
- **_Highlighting trends and topics:_** Information related to hot topics that are relevant to users are promoted and shared.

Twitter

Overview

Twitter is a microblogging platform where users can quickly and easily send 280-character updates, link to photos, videos, and/or stories. Users can also interact by replying to other accounts. Twitter is used to engage users in real time and keep a consistent stream of content. Twitter is particularly useful to share news due to its easy to use sharing capabilities. Twitter has more than 335 million monthly active users including 68 million users in the United States.

City of Edinburg

The City of Edinburg has one official Twitter account. The account is used to post news, links, photos and videos. Additionally, the City of Edinburg account is used to share content and information from third parties including the Texas Department of Transportation and the U.S. National Weather Service.

The account is managed by the Public Information Director and the Public Information Specialist.

Other City-related pages currently exist (Dustin Michael Sekula Memorial Library, Edinburg Scenic Wetlands & World Birding Center) and are maintained by department staff.

Audience

The audience of the City of Edinburg Twitter account mainly consists of residents and other stakeholders. Followers of the Twitter account are 50 percent female and 50 percent male.

Content

The City of Edinburg utilizes Twitter to disseminate information, news and alerts to its followers. Twitter is also used to showcase City activities and events through photos and video. Other information and news from third parties is shared if it is relevant for our audience.

- ***Engaging followers:*** Effort is made to answer questions in a timely manner, provide direction to resources and provide feedback to comments.
- ***Highlighting news, activities and events:*** City of Edinburg shares information and links for upcoming events and activities, as well as information during and after events.
- ***Retweeting, liking and sharing:*** Updates, links, photos and videos of followers are liked, retweeted and/or shared. This helps build brand recognition and build stronger relationships with followers.
- ***Following trends:*** Twitter is a great way to follow trends and topics to help guide content creation.

Instagram

Overview

Instagram is an online, mobile, photo and video-sharing platform that allows users to take and share photos and videos both publicly and privately. Instagram allows users to cross-post on other social networks, Facebook and Twitter. Posting on Instagram, however, is only available through the platforms mobile app. Instagram is accessible through the web, but only for viewing photos and videos.

Users can share photos and videos of 15 seconds to one minute. Additionally posts through Instagram Stories can be from 15 seconds to 60 minutes via live video streaming. Videos between 15 seconds and 10 minutes can also be shared via IGTV. However, videos uploaded to IGTV must be in 9:16 aspect ratio (vertical).

Instagram is fast-growing social media platform particularly popular among younger audiences. Currently there are more than 800 million active users with growth projections in the coming years.

City of Edinburg

The City of Edinburg has one official Instagram account. The account is used to publish photos and videos of City activities and events.

Audience

The audience of the City of Edinburg Instagram account consists of residents and other stakeholders. Followers of the account are 64 percent female and 36 percent female, with 40 percent of females ages 25-34.

Content

The City of Edinburg Instagram account is used to showcase events and activities through photos and videos including live video.

- ***Engaging followers:*** Effort is made to answer questions in a timely manner, provide direction to resources and provide feedback to comments.

- ***Photo/video posting:*** City of Edinburg makes use of Instagram photo and video nature to showcase the City in a positive light. Effort will be made to post unique photos specifically for the platform.
- ***Highlighting news, activities and events:*** City of Edinburg shares information for upcoming events and activities through photos and videos.
- ***Reposting/Link sharing:*** Photos of followers can be shared with permission and photo cred. This allows to keep account active and builds relationships and brand recognition among followers. Links do not live naturally on Instagram. Information or news will be redirected to City website link on Bio Section of the account.

Snapchat

Overview

Snapchat is a mobile messaging app for photo, video, text and drawing-sharing platform that allows users to take and share photos and videos both publicly and privately. Posting on Snapchat is only available through the platform's mobile app.

Users can share messages photos and videos for a designated amount of time before the message disappears. Public photos and videos will disappear after a 24-hour period.

Snapchat particularly popular among younger audiences. Currently there are more than 800 million active users with growth projections in the coming years.

City of Edinburg

The City of Edinburg has one official Instagram account. The account is used to share photos and videos of City activities and events. For special events the City buys Snapchat Geofilters for user generated snaps.

Audience

Information about users is not accessible through platform. Approximately 50 users have added the City of Edinburg as a "friend."

Content

The City of Edinburg Snapchat account is used to showcase events and activities through photos and videos. Snapchat Geofilters for specific events are made available to users by City of Edinburg.

- ***Highlighting news, activities and events:*** City of Edinburg shares information for upcoming events and activities through photos and videos.

YouTube   https://www.youtube.com/user/EdinburgCableNetwork/

Overview

YouTube is one of the top video sharing websites. The site allows an organization to upload videos that can be viewed, commented and rated on the site itself, or embedded to other websites.

City of Edinburg

The City of Edinburg uses YouTube for video sharing. The City channel is used primarily as a video hosting site for long-form videos. Videos are used to be embedded onto City of Edinburg website and shared through other means.

Audience

There is no specific target audience for YouTube. City of Edinburg long-form videos are uploaded to the site. Interested users can subscribe to receive alerts on latest videos.
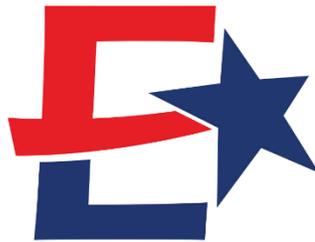
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City Manager: Juan G. Guerra

Public Information Director: Cary Zayas

/s/ Cary Zayas

2018/2019 Social Media
Communications Plan

City of Edinburg Public Information Department