Tips for Using Social Media in Government

1. Increase your social media reach and engagement by adhering to social media best practices
   - Include an image or video in all Facebook posts and tweets (as often as possible)
   - Keep it short and sweet
     - It’s better not to max out character limits if you can help it
     - Research shows people engage more with shorter posts/tweets than with longer ones
   - Don’t abuse the hashtag
     - Limit yourself one or two per post/tweet
     - Before starting a new hashtag, search Twitter to see if anyone is already using it and run it by others for approval

2. Learn about Facebook’s mysterious “Newsfeed Ranking Algorithm” and adjust your content accordingly in order to increase your Facebook reach
   - The ever-changing algorithm attempts to deliver each Facebook user content that is most interesting and relevant to him/her
   - How to get into the Newsfeed, per Brian Solis
     - Post regularly (especially on weekdays)
     - Post images (that are self-explanatory for ease of sharing)
   - Encourage engagement through:
     - Questions, contests, fill in the blank statements, etc. (increases your “affinity score” with fans, which leads to your content showing up more often in their newsfeed in the future)
     - Spend time deliberately monitoring and engaging with your partner’s posts
       - Avoid negative feedback when possible
       - Focus on quality content (make it relevant to your audience)
   - Facebook likes viral content!

3. Put thought into when you schedule your content to post on both Facebook and Twitter
   - HootSuite is a great tool for scheduling future social media posts
   - General guidelines on frequency:
     - Facebook: Post 5-10 times per week
     - Twitter: Tweet 5+ times per day (not to exceed 20)
   - Pay attention to day of week and time of day posts/tweets are scheduled
   - There are general guidelines for day of week and time of day such as:
     - Facebook: Wed. at 3 p.m.
     - Twitter: Mon-Thurs 9 a.m. & 3 p.m.
   - However, it’s best to determine the best day of the week and time of day based on your fans/followers
     - Within Facebook, go to “Insights”, then “Posts” to see data on when your fans are online
     - For Twitter, consider using the best time to tweet report through SocialBro (free up to 5,000 followers)

4. Use HootSuite or a similar platform to monitor Twitter
   - Set up streams to monitor mentions, keywords, hashtags, etc.
   - Can set up “geocoded searches” for keywords within a set geographic radius of a location you specify (go to this link for detailed instructions: http://blog.hootsuite.com/hoottip-geo-located-search/)

5. Use promoted (paid) posts/tweets on social media when you really need to reach more people
   - Cost-effective; MARC example: $50 to reach 5,645 people
   - You set the budget, timeframe and target audience (can target by zip, gender, language, etc.)
Suggested articles

The Social Media Frequency Guide: How Often to Post to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and More
https://blog.bufferapp.com/social-media-frequency-guide

#HootTip: Geo-Located Search
http://blog.hootsuite.com/hoottip-geo-located-search/

https://blog.bufferapp.com/a-scientific-guide-to-hashtags-which-ones-work-when-and-how-many

Social Media Update 2014 (Pew Research Center)
http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/01/09/social-media-update-2014/

Online resources

Hootsuite.com
SocialBro.com
BrianSolis.com
Mashable.com
HubSpot.com

MARC’s primary Facebook and Twitter accounts

Facebook.com/MARCKCMetro
Facebook.com/airQKC
Facebook.com/ridesharekc
Facebook.com/HomelessnessTaskForceOfGreaterKansasCity

@MARCKCMetro
@airqkc
@RecycleSpot
@MARCKCTrans
@kceconomy
@kcsmartmoves

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