



SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Social media refers to any interactive media used to communicate with the public, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media platforms/applications.

Situation Analysis

The Constabulary currently makes use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, as well as a direct email service on OWL, the force website, and a Herts Police smart-phone app.

As of August 2018

Herts Police Facebook page - has over 65k fans and is managed by Corporate Communication. News, crime prevention advice, wanted photos, appeals and questions are posted and questions responded to. The user-base is fairly evenly split between males and females.

Herts Police Twitter profile - has over 115k followers and is managed by Corporate Communication. News updates, appeals, crime prevention advice and other messages are posted up at least twice a day.

Safer Neighbourhood Team/Special Constable Twitter accounts - there are currently over 35 official Safer Neighbourhood Twitter accounts with a combined following exceeding 100K. These are managed by trained Safer Neighbourhood Team officers and are regularly monitored by the local press officers.

Non-SNT Twitter/Facebook accounts

- **Tri-force Police Dogs Twitter account** - Updates on training, successes and activities
- **Herts Mobile Data Team** – Gives updates on mobile data issues
- **Specials Recruitment** – Managed by recruitment to promote specials posts
- **Chief Constable** – Corporate account managed by Corporate Communications
- **Rural and Equine Facebook Page** – dedicated to rural and equine communities
- **Stevenage Police Facebook page** – Managed by Stevenage Chief Inspector

Hertfordshire Constabulary YouTube Channel

The force has an official YouTube Channel and with over 200 videos, which have received over 1.6m views and has over 900 subscribers. Nearly 88% of our users are male, with the majority aged between 25-34 years old. Videos of ANPR work, CCTV appeals, crime prevention, special events and recruitment videos are posted on the channel, which is managed by Corporate Communication.



Aims:

To make best use of digital media in a cost-effective and time-effective way to:

- Communicate with Hertfordshire communities – particularly those who prefer digital communication over other means – to help them to stay safe and feel safe
- Help fight crime and catch criminals
- To do this whilst promoting and preserving the excellent reputation of Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Support the Constabulary's operational response to major incidents
- Reassure residents that crime is low and police are reducing it further

Objectives:

- To increase the audiences of the Force's Facebook and Twitter accounts each year.
- To increase the average number of monthly unique visitors for www.herts.police.uk each year.
- To increase the number of followers each of the SNT Twitter accounts have.
- To raise awareness internally particularly with Senior Investigating Officers of the pressures and possibilities of social media.

Guiding principles:

- Individual Facebook accounts for units/staff are not currently permitted. Updates from staff can be posted via Corporate Communication.
- Every neighbourhood has or has access to a Twitter account. The accounts are managed by the sergeants and delegated officers, and monitored by Corporate Communication. Accounts for other teams will be considered on a case by case basis. All those with access to Twitter accounts must first have training with Corporate Communication and adhere to the 'Twitter Protocol for Officers' (please see attached document).
- The accounts will be checked at least once a day by the owners for enquiries and inappropriate content.
- Consideration to be given to possible use of social media in all PR strategies and major incidents/crisis situations.
- Posts should always: Increase feelings of safety, be legally sound, professional, timely, accurate and have a policing purpose.

Publics:

1. Internal
 - Neighbourhood Teams
 - Special Constabulary
 - Other Constabulary staff
2. Stakeholders:
 - Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner
 - Partners including: Hertfordshire County Council, Local Councils, Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce
 - 'Citizen journalists'
3. External
 - Those who live and work in Hertfordshire
 - Local businesses

Tactics:

- Regular internal emails to inform staff Twitter users of issues, updates and offer support.
- Regular content to be posted on the official Constabulary accounts along with regular monitoring.
- Bespoke PR campaigns to raise awareness and increase users on the accounts.
- Engaging with 'citizen journalists' in the local community.
- Facebook and Twitter icon incorporated news releases web pages to enable sharing.
- Chief Officers to be briefed on on-going use of digital media to encourage support from the top down throughout the organisation.
- Awareness training to be given to all Safer Neighbourhood officers using digital media and the challenges it brings.
- Making more use of videos for news-based content (in addition to the purely proactive campaigns we currently do) where appropriate and where resources allow.
- Exploring the use of new social media channels/tools like Social Sign In.

Evaluation:

Digital media performance will be evaluated on a monthly basis via Google Analytics, Social Sign In and recorded statistics.

Feedback from staff and publics and media coverage will be kept for later reference.

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
People are interested in what the police have to say. Social media is largely free or low cost to use. We already have accounts set up and running with a good fan base. Sign-ups can be easily measured. Enables communication with thousands with one click. Feedback can be instantaneous. Valuable source of intelligence. Can combine sound, vision and interactivity. Enables people who wouldn't have used traditional methods to engage with the police. Professional Standards and IT Security are in agreement on the use of social media for work purposes and have clear policies on the use of social media by staff for personal	Difficult to monitor as the number of accounts increase. Creating videos and sophisticated apps can be time-consuming. Whilst a number of officers are social media literate, only a small number have in-depth technical knowledge. Enables those who aren't media trained communicators to send messages to thousands of people. Inaccurate or sensitive information can spread to millions of people in a very short space of time. Pressure from other work can lead to social media being an afterthought. Content/campaigns are rarely created specifically for social media. The fast-paced nature of major incidents can add pressure for information requests.



<p>use. Gives the Constabulary a voice to correct inaccurate information and gives some control of the message. The Constabulary has a number of keen users of social media. Doesn't require specialist equipment, can be monitored by Corporate Communication from laptops/most phones.</p>	<p>Content published online is available for a long time and can be accessed by millions. A growing volume of users will create more demand on Corporate Communication staff. We aren't trained intelligence handlers. The public can ask about incidents that are sensitive or that are not public yet. Keen constabulary staff can work independently on social media initiatives outside of the corporate strategy/policy. Security threats – people could 'hack' the sites. Inappropriate content could be posted on the official police profiles.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Threats</p>
<p>Lots of conferences and information resources on social media. The Home Office and NPCC are supportive of social media. Growing range of tools and apps to harness and exploit social media. A wider range of the community makes use of technology now including, the older age groups.</p>	<p>Facebook, Twitter and Youtube are free services currently; they could charge businesses and organisations in the future. The government may decide to shut down social networks at times of crisis in the future (although recent decision seems to suggest this won't be the case). Technology such as BBM (BlackBerry Messenger) means that often communication/rumours/messages around intent to commit crime are not public and therefore not easily monitored.</p>