

SAA Social Media Forum

ARCHIVES 360°: SAA's 75th Annual Meeting
Hyatt Regency Chicago
Thursday, August 25, 2011

Meeting Notes

Recorded by Eliot Wilczek and Elizabeth Kaplan

After introductions were made and a brief orientation presented, 40-50 participants at the forum engaged in an open discussion about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the Society's use of communication technology.

What is CTWG's objective?

- Yakei: Best social media strategies for SAA to pursue.
- We need to understand:
 - Users and what they need/want from SAA.
 - Interest in communication among and between component groups.
 - Stronger connection to the archives community.
 - Desire among component groups to extend reach to non-SAA members and get the public to seek out archivists for help.
 - Kaplan: Who are the outside constituencies?
 - AT/Archon / External groups with internal connections
 - Archivematica \ Both use Google groups
 - ArchivesSpace
 - Conservators
 - Technologists
 - Allied associations and regionals
 - "Cloud collaboration" (e.g., Chatter, etc.) could be good strategy to recruit potential new members
 - Which social media platforms best deliver various kinds of information.
 - Social media not just about pushing info but, rather, fostering community.
 - How to effectively use multiple streams to excite people.
 - Information overload: Too many streams of information; Users tune much of it out. Don't repeat same info via FB, Twitter, and email.
 - Counterpoint: Don't like info coming from a single source.
 - Message needs to suit the medium.
 - Nature of the media yields implicit tension between what organizations can do vs. what individuals can do. Who makes the connections?

- Everyone uses social media in lots of different ways. Who coordinates? (Can anybody coordinate it?)
 - Threat: SAA invests lots of time on a specific social-media tool that subsequently gets superseded by the latest trends.
- Disconnect between what happens inside SAA and what happens in the profession at large.
- Kaplan: How can SAA use social media better? What orgs are doing a good job? Any models out there?
 - SAA hasn't had a president who blogs or tweets. When this happens, that will really foster a conversation.
 - American Association of Museums (AAM) has really embraced social media, might provide a good model.
 - Need more emphasis on appropriate technology for different messages. Social media can/should be more "touchy-feely."
 - Doyle: Social media brings together multiple networks (e.g., professional, friends, family, etc.) How do we keep personal and professional lives separate?
 - Evanston History Center has a social media policy.
 - Social media is just one type of communication, one piece of many moving parts (e.g., publications, website, etc.) Social media cannot be looked at in isolation. Strategy needs to look at the big picture → Caution: May expand scope of CTWG.
- Issue advocacy:
 - Appeal fatigue → Need to be very careful about what we communicate and where.
 - Planned Parenthood a model for issue advocacy.

Twitter

- Love SAA tweets.
- User needs:
 - More hashtags for education sessions and continuing education workshops. Include official hashtags in program literature so people can follow tweets for programs, not only at annual conference but throughout the year.
 - For people who can't afford to travel, helpful to be able to follow discussion.
 - Distribution of workshop materials would help prospective attendees persuade resource allocators (e.g., "Look what we could have learned; let's go next time.")
 - Something along the lines of the feed for Sue (T-Rex)
 - Counterpoint: Social media changes; Doesn't make sense to invest a lot of time creating "official" hashtags.
 - Bitly links to marked-up slides.
- Best practices:
 - Use Twitter for community development and less as broadcast media.

- Twitter should foster conversations.
- Twitter best for self-promotion; not much more.
- Good for “shout-outs.”
- Want to know *who* at SAA is communicating.
- Many people use Twitter both for internal and external communications.
- Twitter has clamped down on Twapperkeeper → Constraints on content aggregation.

Blogs & Blog Aggregators

- User needs:
 - Aggregate content:
 - <http://code4lib.org> is an example of a successful blog aggregator.
 - Would be great for someone to do—i.e., bring posts from different blogs together in one place.
 - Who would be best positioned to do that? If it’s SAA, is that too official?
 - MARAC is considering a blog aggregator.
 - Could be done regionally.
 - Opportunity for collaboration.
 - Regional website job post aggregators might also be a good model.
 - See also “Social Tagging” below.
 - Doyle: How do people search for information?
 - Topically? Geographically? Via personal networks (i.e., word of mouth)?
- Best practices:
 - Blog comments good for conversations.

Social Tagging (Bookmarking)

- Implicit user need is content aggregation.
 - Has SAA considered social tagging via <http://www.delicious.com> or <http://digg.com>?
 - Does SAA have a delicious account?
- Suggested practices:
 - SAA could formulate suggested lists of people and institutions to follow.
 - SAA could create a set of “official” hashtags for individuals to use.
 - Counterpoint: hashtags have a short lifespan → Could be difficult for an organization to maintain.
 - Day of Digital Archives on October 6 leverages the short lifespan of a (Twitter) hashtag.¹
 - Google+ could have potential but doesn’t support organizational pages.

¹ Notes show that hashtags came up again in context of content aggregation. Not clear if this has any relation to delicious and/or digg.

RSS Feeds

- Are RSS feeds available from SAA? Want more info via RSS. Want to access via gReader.
- RSS feeds available on SAA list server but need to make them easier to find.
- Make available for news and events via SAA website as well as the list server.

Facebook

- Best practices:
 - Facebook good for photo tagging.

WiFi at Annual Meeting

- SAA should more actively support onsite communication via social media (e.g., Twitter)
- Not happening now → No wifi!
 - Beaumont: Annual Meeting Task Force will examine this issue.
 - Forthcoming member survey should query about tolerance for additional fees.
- Other ideas:
 - Consider having assigned, official tweeters
 - Get three bullet points from speakers prior to sessions / Do pre-interviews with speakers
 - Send out bullet points and URLs in real time.