

CITY OF DEARBORN TWITTER STANDARD



Purpose

Twitter is a micro blogging tool that allows account holders to tweet up to 140 characters of information to followers. By maintaining a Twitter account, City departments can communicate information directly to their customers, alerting them to news and directing them to CityofDearborn.org (including CampDearborn.com, DearbornLibrary.org, DearbornFordCenter.com, DearbornTheater.com, DearbornHills.com) for more information. These standards should be used in conjunction with the City's social media use policy and social media "best practices" guidelines.

Establishing an account

When a department determines it has a business need for a Twitter account, it will submit a request to the director of public information and complete a social media worksheet. Once approved, the digital media coordinator will consult with the department on how to set up its business account on Twitter.

Content

1. Boilerplate
 - a. Twitter accounts shall serve three primary purposes:
 - i. Get emergency information out quickly
 - ii. Promote City-sponsored events, activities, programs and projects
 - iii. Refer followers to content hosted at www.CityofDearborn.org
 - b. The City's digital media coordinator can assist with standardizing a department's Twitter account and provide the City's logo or other images appropriate for the account. All imaging, including Twitter backgrounds, must meet city branding standards and be approved by the Department of Public Information.
 - c. Account names should be descriptive of the department and begin with "Dearborn" (DearbornPD, DearbornFire, etc) except in the rarest of cases. Departments will choose carefully with consideration for abbreviations, slang iterations, etc. The director of public information will approve proposed names.
 - d. Twitter bios will include department name and phone number or email address. If appropriate the following will be added: Tweets monitored 8 a.m to 5 p.m. Mon-Fri.
2. Link to the City
 - a. A link to www.CityofDearborn.org will be included in the profile area of a department Twitter account, unless the department manages an external website (like CampDearborn.com, DearbornLibrary.org, DearbornFordCenter.com, DearbornTheater.com, DearbornHills.com).
 - b. Department accounts should follow other City accounts on Twitter.
3. Account administrators

- a. A successful Twitter account requires "babysitting." Each department Twitter requires a main administrator who is responsible for monitoring the Twitter account on a daily basis and sustaining it long term. Department will designate a back-up administrator in the primary administrator's absence.
 - b. Department's Twitter administrator is responsible for making sure account is not stale. Tweeting at least once per day is encouraged, with 3-5 tweets per day an ideal. Tweets on behalf of the City should be approved by the department's Twitter administrator or a designated alternate.
 - c. Twitter administrators shall be responsive to constituents who communicate via Twitter's @reply or direct message functions. Communication with followers will be timely and consistent with existing protocols. Supplying a response within two business days is expected. A same-day reply is preferred when possible.
 - d. Twitter administrators must work with the digital media coordinator on producing and sharing a monthly content calendar.
 - e. Administrators managing City Twitter accounts are required to meet regularly with the digital media coordinator and other City social managers to discuss content ideas, best practices, policies, etc.
 - f. The Department of Public Information must have administrative access to the account, including login name and password. If the password is changed, DPI must be notified immediately.
4. Style
- a. City Twitter accounts will be consistent with City branding. The Department of Public Information will advise departments on City branding elements. See the City's main Twitter account as an example.
 - b. Departments will use proper grammar, standard AP style and follow the City's own style guide while avoiding jargon and abbreviations as much as possible. Twitter is a casual communication tool but still represents the City at all times.
5. Tweets
- a. Twitter accounts should be refreshed with a new tweet at least once per day, with the minimum being one tweet three times per week.
 - b. Twitter is a fast-paced communication tool with an ideal output ranging from 3-5 tweets per day. Tweets should be timed so they are published throughout the day, not in clusters of mere minutes. The goal is to tweet no more than once per hour.
 - c. Departments should not automate Twitter updates. For example, a Twitter account should not be linked for the purpose of posting tweets automatically to a Facebook page. Tweets can, however, be scheduled using a tool such as Hootsuite.com.
 - d. Keep the content of your tweets relevant, timely and informative according to your department. Some cross-promotion can and should occur related to other City departments as appropriate.
 - e. Twitter content shall mirror information presented on www.CityofDearbon.org and other existing information dissemination mechanisms. Twitter administrators shall ensure that information is posted correctly the first time. Twitter does not allow for content editing.

- f. Departments are encouraged to be creative with tweets, utilizing images, videos, questions and 'games' whenever possible to add interest and keep 'followers' engaged.
- 6. Retweeting, favoriting and responding
 - a. Twitter administrators are welcome to retweet and share material posted by official City-branded accounts (@cityofdearborn, @DearbornRec, @DearbornLibrary, @DearbornTV). Positive tweets from non-city accounts may also be retweeted, though discretion is urged.
 - b. Twitter administrators should always respond to tweets or direct messages containing questions, and are encouraged to engage with users
 - c. Administrators may choose to "favorite" tweets containing positive messages about City programs, events and services

Revised April 18, 2013