Version 2.1
ROM Web and Social Media Standards

What is Social Media?

Social Media can be simply defined as *online social conversation*. The word *conversation* is key. Traditional media delivers content one-way with no opportunity for audiences to participate. Social media is about two-way communication.

Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, for example, are online platforms for participating in conversations.

Don't be intimidated! Despite new social media tools and platforms evolving, its basic aspect remains constant and is similar to traditional forms of communication: to engage in dialogue, provide and exchange information, and build understanding.

Web and Social Media at the ROM

The purpose of online communication at the ROM is to build connections with our audiences through conversations. Conversations enabled by web technologies help to achieve many important goals including to:

- Enhance the Museum's public profile by increasing awareness, understanding and relevance of the ROM's brand and programs
- Build relationships with specific audiences by fostering direct and responsive public engagement

Please review these guidelines and relevant ROM policies, and attend web and social media training sessions. You'll then be ready to contribute to the ROM's website and start using social media on behalf of the ROM.

If you still have questions or concerns, please contact the ROM's Social Media Coordinator (Ryan Dodge at ryand@rom.on.ca), the Communications department or the ROM Web Manager.

Please check periodically for updates to these guidelines as this document will evolve.

Primary

Twitter

A variety of ROM Twitter accounts are used to promote events and exhibitions as well as conversational channels. Before starting a new Twitter account, please consult with the Social Media Coordinator to request permission. Please do not include 'ROM' in your personal twitter handle/username, without previous approval.

Facebook

Facebook is currently used as a mechanism to broadcast news & updates, to promote events, and to promote ROM blog posts. It also provides a way for people to identify themselves as supporters of the ROM.

YouTube

The ROM has chosen YouTube as the platform to house all ROM video intended for public viewing. ROM website links will direct to YouTube. If you want to submit a video to our YouTube channel, please prepare tags that describe the video, which NMR will add. These make the video much easier for users to find online.

Secondary

Instagram

One of the fastest growing social media platforms, we are just experimenting with Instagram and use it sparingly to share photos of the museum, galleries, collections, programs and events.

Google+

Google+ is used similar to Facebook and you will find similar content posted there as is posted on Facebook. Google+ plus also gives us free SEO on the content and info listed on our profile and the ability to host live Google+ Hangouts on Air.

LinkedIn

Used primarily as a way to publish basic information about the museum and staff hires/departures. LinkedIn groups tend to be much more active discussion arenas than Facebook pages. By taking part in conversations on these groups, we can leverage participants to interact with other ROM social media.

Pinterest

The ROM has a Pinterest account as a way to highlight specific aspects of the museum's collection and exhibitions (e.g , textiles for weddings, dinosaurs, etc.)

Guidelines for ROM Employees & Volunteers – Professional use

While the ROM recognizes and welcomes the benefits of social media, there are risks associated with its use. These guidelines will help you use social media in a responsible way, appropriate for the ROM. To start, please familiarize yourself with the following ROM Board Policies which apply when using ROM social media platforms:

Abuse, Harassment and Discrimination:
http://www.rom.on.ca/about/pdf/boardpolicies/abuseharassdiscrim.pdf
Communications:
http://www.rom.on.ca/about/pdf/boardpolicies/communications.pdf
Copyright:
http://www.rom.on.ca/about/pdf/boardpolicies/copyright.pdf
Ethics Conduct:
http://www.rom.on.ca/about/pdf/boardpolicies/ethicsconduct.pdf
Use of Information Technology Resources:
http://insite.rom.on.ca/employee_handbook/pdf/mp_use_information_technology_resources.pdf

Always remember that participation online results in your comments being permanently available and open to being re-published in other media. Stay within the legal framework and be aware that libel, defamation, copyright and data protection laws apply.

This means that you should not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activity on behalf of the Museum unless you are authorized to do so. This authority may already be delegated or may be explicitly granted. Also be aware that this may attract media interest in you as an individual, so proceed with care whether you are participating in an official or a personal capacity. If you have any doubts, consult your manager. If a member of the media contacts you, notify the Communications department at media@rom.on.ca, who will determine the best course of action.

Prohibited Online Content
All ROM employees and volunteers implicitly agree to not:

- o post, transmit, link to, or otherwise distribute any inappropriate, profane, defamatory, infringing, obscene, indecent or unlawful material or information or false statements
- o defame, abuse, stalk, harass, threaten or otherwise violate the rights of others

    ○   post, transmit, link to, or otherwise distribute any materials, information or content constituting, advocating or encouraging conduct that would constitute a criminal offense, or otherwise use a ROM social media or website or any of the services in a manner which is contrary to law or would serve to restrict or inhibit any other user from using or enjoying a ROM site.

Copyright

Always provide credits when required. If you use or link to a photograph, quote someone, paraphrase an idea, etc., always give the originator credit. Refer to the ROM Board Policy on Copyright for further information.

Photos

- Don't post photos of people that can be identified unless you have a signed model release form. This legal document allows you to use someone's likeness for specific purposes. Without it, it's illegal to post a personally-identifiable photograph.
- The ROM allows people to photograph objects in its collection. However, paintings or photographs by living artists/photographers may involve copyright, in which case you cannot use the image.
- If in doubt, check with ROM Rights and Reproduction or the related curatorial department. Other areas of potential concern include galleries/collections requiring sensitivity to issues of cultural appropriation (e.g., ethnology collections).
- "Behind-the-scenes" photography is one of our greatest assets but caution should be used when taking photos in our collections storage areas. Never share photos that may include items that the ROM doesn't want to be promoted publically or areas/functions that should not be publically displayed for reasons of security or confidentiality.
- Take care that "Behind-the-scenes" photography is focused on the subject/object and never include wide angle or panoramic images that may include secure/unsecure doors, etc.
- If you are using a photo of an object that hasn't been published yet, ensure you received permission to do so. Some objects must remain embargoed, for example, as a requirement of publication in a scholarly journal.
- Do allow others to use photos you post of the ROM and its collections by licensing them under a Creative Commons license: Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives license. This allows you to send our message even further afield by encouraging people to share it.

Privacy & Confidentiality

Personal Privacy: Never share personal information about another person (such as e-mail address, home address, phone number, age, etc.). If you're unsure, ask the person if the information is acceptable to share. Refer to the ROM's Board Communications Policy under "Confidentiality".

Don't discuss confidential or internal ROM matters: Don't discuss any matters pertaining to the ROM that are not approved for public disclosure. Areas such as unpublished research, finances, internal announcements, upcoming hires or departures, upcoming exhibition titles and opening dates, shipping information – anything that hasn't been announced yet or is considered privileged or confidential. If in doubt, check with your manager.

Don't reference unconfirmed content: If an exhibition, gallery or program is in the planning stage, don't reference it unless you have obtained permission from the individual(s) responsible for producing it.

GUIDELINES FOR GETTING STARTED: TONE AND STYLE

Social media communication should be conversational. Write in the first person and avoid jargon. However, please be aware that you are representing the ROM in the same way as you would in any public forum.

Listen and Respond

The point of social media is to engage people, and that means listening to what people have to say. Check in with your media daily (e.g. web page, blog, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, etc.) If you open a discussion on a web page or blog, it's your responsibility to monitor the conversation by logging into Drupal daily. Web administrators will support this work by monitoring for profanity or inappropriate comments, but your participation is required to keeping website discussions active.

It's important to respond on social media, even if it's just a thank you to let people know you're listening. For example, retweet information that is interesting or informative for ROM followers and thank people for retweets or mentions. However, don't do so automatically. Consider the external source, as this can be perceived as the ROM endorsing or supporting an organization or cause. Ensure their goals and activities are in alignment with those of the ROM.

Develop a Focus

There are currently 1.28 billion monthly active users on Facebook, almost 200 million blogs, and over 255 million monthly active users on Twitter. In 24 hours there are 500 million tweets sent, 250 million photos are uploaded to Facebook, 2 million blog posts are created and 864,000 minutes of video uploaded to YouTube. How will you stand out? What will encourage people to pay attention to you? What's your niche?

Use Your Voice

When you're interacting with people online, the focus is on your unique voice. Your personality identifies you, sets you apart, and provides a human voice to the museum. If you contribute content anonymously to a shared official platform, ensure that all contributors agree in advance on a uniform tone and style to ensure consistency of voice.

Be Accurate

The ROM has a reputation as an authority on a wide variety of subjects. Being accurate is an essential part of the ROM brand. If you don't have an answer to a specific question, simply respond that, "I'm not an expert" and offer to redirect to the appropriate person. Let them know when you expect to get back to them, whether that's in ten minutes or next week.

Comments posted by the public on the ROM's social media sites that can be substantiated as factually inaccurate should be addressed (politely of course!) if at all possible, as this represents an opportunity to position the ROM as knowledgeable and authoritative.

Make it Brief

Social Media messages and online communications are often brief. Brief is best.

Avoid Marketing Speak

People want to participate in meaningful conversation on social media, not feel like they're being sold a product. Be careful not to use traditional sales messages. Promotion of the ROM and its goals via social media is achieved through conversation and content, not direct marketing approaches.

Ask questions

People love to know that you're interested in their opinion. Asking questions can provide a great opportunity to start a conversation, and start a connection to the ROM through social media.

Add Visuals

A picture tells a thousand words. And sometimes, an image gets you a thousand clicks.

Share

Nothing establishes you as a trusted channel of information – one that people will come back to time and again – like regularly posting useful links, being magnanimous and pointing people to others' content.

Give thanks

Somebody send you an interesting link? Give them a credit when you post it. Get an interesting photo from a follower? Give them a tip of the hat when you post it. People appreciate validation and recognition.

Responding to Comments or Complaints

Negative or critical comments will surface occasionally and shouldn't be removed, unless they fall under the definition of Prohibited Communication Content on Page 3 of this document. Deleting undesirable comments gives the impression to others that our conversations are

inauthentic. Social media conversation must remain transparent. Pulling comments will effectively undermine our position as a trusted player in social media.

To address a specific concern, it's often best to offer to speak to the person personally offline. Ask them to email or call you at your business number and then discuss and aim to resolve the concern one on one, rather than through public social media space. Always strive to resolve with a positive outcome.

Never Respond in Anger

If faced with an argumentative follower, ask yourself "do I need to respond to this?" Not every comment online requires a response. For example, if someone is "trolling" (i.e. prodding you or the ROM just to get a reaction) it's often best not to say anything. In the best case scenarios, your strong online community will come to your defense. Strive to make every interaction a positive one. If in doubt, always contact the ROM's Social Media Coordinator and the ROM Communications Department for advice before posting.

What if I want to start my own ROM blog, Facebook page, Twitter account, etc?

If you have interest, we'd like to hear from you. Please contact the ROM's Social Media Coordinator to discuss. Do not set up social media channels in the ROM's name without prior approval. Consult with the ROM's Social Media Coordinator before starting an official ROM social media account.

Registration

All employees using ROM social media platforms should register the login and password with the ROM's Social Media Coordinator. This information is required to keep things running at all times, i.e. when you're absent or if you leave the organization.

I'd like to use social media to crowd-source information?

Any method of surveying the public should be reviewed and endorsed by the ROM. Contact the Manager, Audience Insight and the Social Media Coordinator to discuss.

ROM Employees & Volunteers – Personal Use of Social Media

You're free to set up and use social media for personal use. However, it's important that your personal participation in social media doesn't interfere with your primary role at the ROM.

Employees and volunteers may maintain or contribute to personal websites, blogs, message boards, conversation pages and use other forms of social media such as social networks, virtual worlds, opinion sites, and multimedia sites outside of your job function. Through personal social media use, you may or may not be recognizable as a ROM employee, although it could be discovered.

When posting information about your job, your activities, or about the Royal Ontario Museum in general, please exercise good judgment at all times, **do not**:

- Use the Royal Ontario Museum's (ROM's) name in your Identity/Username
- Disclose confidential or proprietary company information
- Use intellectual property, logos, trademarks, and copyrights
- Discuss personal opinions on politics or religion

Posting or Linking Personal Material to the ROM's Official Platforms

If you decide to post or link any of your personal social media sites or material to your ROM employee website page, it becomes viewed by association as ROM communication and therefore must adhere to the professional use standards outlined above.

Appendix A – Twitter Tips

Twitter is a great way to reach out directly to a specific audience. It's allows you to get messages to a community quickly and easily, and represents one of the best ways to spread an idea rapidly to a larger group of people. Know your audience. Who do you want to reach? What are their interests?

Twitter is a conversational medium. Accounts need to be maintained and checked regularly, just like voicemail. When someone reaches out to you via Twitter you should responded to in a timely fashion. Standard practise is to check Twitter at least twice a day.

Avoid using phrases like "check out this…", "looking forward to…", etc. Simply explain what's interesting or unique about your topic. Let the content do the convincing, not the verbiage around it.

Tips for Communicating within 140 Characters:

Twitter allows space for only 140 characters, use them wisely.

- Always include a link or an image in your tweets, a proven tactic to increase engagement

- Tweet consistently and often, people will recognize you as a source and look for your content

- Avoid using too many abbreviations and "leet speak" (e.g. "u" = "you" / "4" = "for"). Always re-read your tweet to make sure it's clear before you tweet it out

- Don't worry about using a link shortening service, Twitter will do it for you

- Make your tweet short enough that people can include your Twitter ID in a retweet.
  Example: *"Study claims world running out of Indium. Means phone price increase. Apple claims to have alternate source: http://indium.com/story52.htm"*
  This leaves no room for a retweet attribution. Retweeting helps people link back to the source, promoting the ROM. Good tweets use less than 100 characters.

  Alternate example: "Are we running out of Indium? Phone prices could go up. Apple claims to have alternate source: *http://indium.com/story52.htm*"
  This allows people to retweet it as such: "RT @ROMToronto: Are we running out of Indium? Phone prices could go up. Apple claims to have alternate source: *http://indium.com/story52.htm*"