

Should I “Friend” the Mayor?

Exploring Problems in New Media

June 10, 2011

Kalin Schmoldt

Eryn Deeming Kehe

Seating Instructions: Please add the appropriate sticker(s) to your nametag and try to sit next to other sticker types. **Thank you!**



• Assumptions

- Here to stay (*in one form or another*)
- There is value to be had
- Pressure to use will only increase

• Agenda

- Overview of article *Your Mayor, Your “Friend”: Public Officials, Social Networking, and the Unmapped New Public Square* by Bill Sherman
- Small Group Discussion
- Report Out
- Lessons and Ideas

Your Mayor, Your "Friend": Public Officials, Social Networking, and the Unmapped New Public Square

Bill Sherman*

I. Introduction

Your City Councilmember wants to connect with you. She wants to hear from you, speak to you, allow you to get to know her, and get to know you. She wants to learn your concerns and interests, and discuss policy, politics, and issues big and small. It is fair to say that she wants to develop a relationship with you. You share family photos, thoughts, and feelings. Of course, your views on the issues that she

● Public Record Laws

What do we need to keep?

“... all documents and materials directly or indirectly considered by the agency decision maker in making the challenged decision ...”

“... should not should not be limited to paper but should include other means of communication or ways of storing or presenting information, including e-mail, computer tapes and discs, microfilm and microfiche.”

*- US DOJ Guidance Regarding
Administrative Record*



• Public Record Laws

Challenges of recording Social Media

- Lots of it ... what is worth tracking?
- Hosted by 3rd parties (can be difficult to find older content)
- Content changes



Older Tweets
are temporarily
unavailable

All items ▾

Search

Navigation ▾ **Google Alerts - Sellwood Bridge**

Show: 70 new items - all items

As you view items in your reading list, they will be automatically marked as read as you scroll down (when in the "Expanded" view). If you'd prefer to disable this feature, you can turn it off in [Settings](#). [Dismiss](#)

☆ **Comments on Letters: Portland police, electric cars, death penalty ...** »

One day my kids are going to be standing on the new TriMet bridge and, looking upriver, they will see the new **Sellwood Bridge**. They will ask, "Why didn't ... blog.oregonlive.com/myoregon/.../comments-newest.html

☆ Add star Keep unread

☆ **Letters: Portland police, electric cars, death penalty, TriMet ...** »

I want to share "Letters: Portland police, electric cars, death penalty, TriMet, **Sellwood Bridge**, charter schools" via NFL Coverage on MSG.com with you. ... nfl.msg.com/article/0bri7aTg7kdpf?q=Portland+Oregon

☆ Add star Keep unread

☆ **Multnomah County commissioners to consider choices to fill in Sellwood** »

Steven Nehl/The OregonianThe **Sellwood bridge** crossing the Willamette river in Portland is the busiest two-lane bridges in the state, and has one of the ... mobile.oregonlive.com/advorg/.../contentdetail.htm?...

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☆ **Letters: Portland police, electric cars, death penalty, TriMet ...** »

by Letters to the editor

One day my kids are going to be standing on the new TriMet bridge and, looking upriver, they will see the new **Sellwood Bridge**. They will ask, "Why didn't they build one bridge for [Oregon Road Report - http://www.oregonlive.com/roadreport/](http://www.oregonlive.com/roadreport/)

☆ Add star Keep unread

☆ **Oregon will lower auto emission testing fee in Portland area, but ...** »

by OregonLive.com

... \$54 to \$86 for two years in 2009, and Multnomah County imposed a \$19 registration fee in 2010 to help pay for the replacement of the **Sellwood Bridge**. ...

Public Record Laws

facebook

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Sign Up Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS) is on Facebook
Sign up for Facebook to connect with Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS).

Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS)

Wall | Info | Photos | Boxes | Video | Notes

Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS) + Fans | **Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS)**

Just Fans

Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS) After grinding some in-water stumps, crews are moving into Blue Heron Bay. Boat access will be restricted for approx. 2 weeks. Construction will not take place in Blue Heron Canal.
Tue at 3:22pm · Comment · Like

Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS)
Next Phase of Lake Oswego's Wastewater Interceptor Project Brings Savings
LAKE OSWEGO – All five prequalified general contractors for the "Lake Down" phase of the Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS) project submitted bids on March 4, 2010. The low bid was submitted by the James W. Fowl...
March 10 at 10:03am · Comment · Like

Frank Bitzer We like to hear about saving money. Keep up the good work team! FB
March 10 at 8:07pm

Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS) James W. Fowler is apparent low bidder for Lake Down contract: \$26,870,000. Engineer's estimate: \$37,400,000.
March 4 at 4:19pm · Comment · Like

Rob likes this.

Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS) Crews are moving into Blue Heron Bay. Boat access will be restricted for approx. 2 to 3 weeks, beginning March 1. Construction will not take place in Blue Heron Canal.
March 2 at 3:04pm · Comment · Like

Lake Oswego Interceptor Sewer (LOIS) Read the LOIS update from the Lake

Information
Location:
4101 Kruse Way
Lake Oswego, OR, 97034
Phone:
503-699-7466

Fans
6 of 50 fans | See All

Slide

• Public Record Laws

Unresolved questions

- How do we determine what information to track?
- How do we avoid overwhelming the public (and ourselves) with information?
- What's the best way to track non-linear content?
- How does it change the conversation if we formalize comments?

• Public Meetings Law

Does social media behave like a public meeting?

If so, it must be:

- Open to the public
- Sufficiently noticed regarding time and place
- Be accessible to persons wishing to attend

• Public Meetings Law

Social Media is ...

- Open to the public
- Highly transparent
- Broadly accessible
- Reduces need for public record requests
- Arguably less anonymous than a physical open house

● Public Meetings Law

Social Media is ... also problematic

- What might be considered unduly private deliberations?
- How do we provide adequate notice for spontaneous social media activity?
- How do we objectively interpret outcomes from these “meetings?”

● Ethics

How do we avoid conflicts of interest?

- When speaking as an elected official? For an agency? As individuals?
- Example: Members of the US Senate agree “not to add personal, promotional, commercial or partisan political/campaign-related content or links to an ***Office-maintained website or channel...***”

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e-NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

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10 yrs later, the verdict on the Bush tax cuts for the best off. <http://bit.ly/jivMLG>

Follow Jeff on [twitter](#)



4787 likes. Sign Up to see what your friends like



Rep. Weiner Admits Tweeting Lewd Picture

SOCIAL MEDIA Admitting that he had "not been honest with myself, my family and my constituents, &..."

2 hours ago by Chris Taylor 38

twitter

YouTube

facebook



● Ethics

How do we avoid conflicts of interest?

- When collecting comments or speaking on behalf of our projects?

Clackamas should OK Sellwood fee

Bridge vote never about the money

Guest

"For
regist

Wes

Election Update! What the Hell is the Sellwood Bridge Going to Do Now?

Sarah Mirk, Portland Mercury - May 18, 2011

"... [L]ast night, Clackamas County overwhelmingly voted down a measure that would have them cover on bridge cost with a \$5 vehicle registration fee." [Read the article at PortlandMercury.com.](#)

• Reaction

- Abandon use completely
- Confusing, contradictory policies
- Rigid enforcement of the letter of the law
- Sherman's opinion: Current laws are inadequate and need to evolve

● Reaction

Tweeting About Election Results Could Get You in Trouble in Canada



April 22, 2011 by Ben Parr

25



Like



Send



328 likes. Sign Up to see what your friends like.

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[Don't Be Shy. Try Forex.](#) - Get to know GFT. Check it out our Risk Free Practice Account.

www.GFTforex.com

Canadians planning to tweet election results during next month's elections had better think twice, because it could result in a \$25,000 fine or up to five years in prison, thanks to a 73-year-old law.

Elections Canada, the non-partisan agency responsible for administering Canada's federal elections, has come under fire for saying that it will enforce the Canada Elections Act, specifically a section that mandates that nobody prematurely announce or send



• Why the special treatment?

Social media is ...

- Not just a give and take exchange

For projects:

- A way to reach new communities
- Value from establishing relationships, reputation, opportunities for deliberation
- A signal of transparency

• Why the special treatment?

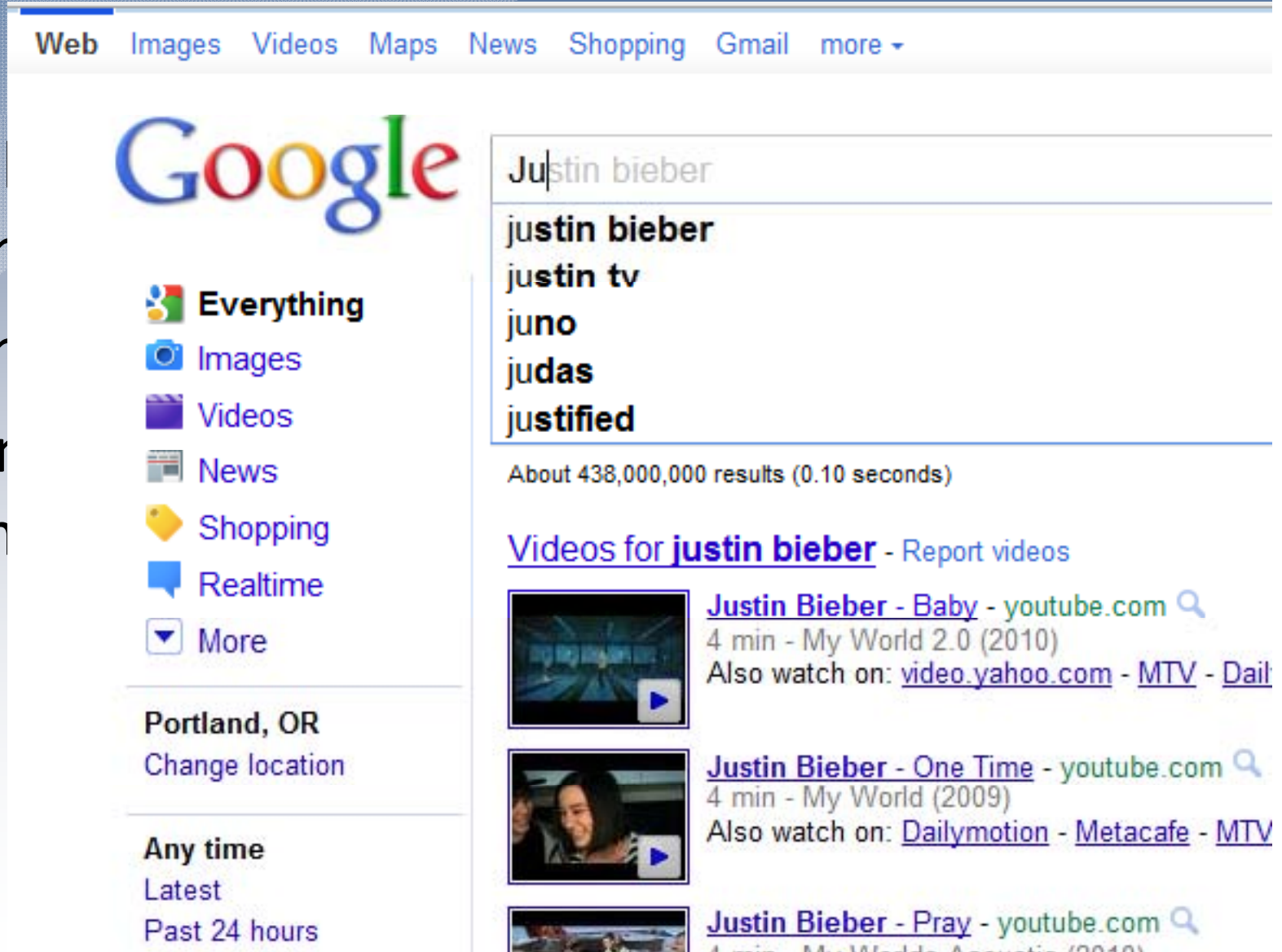
For the public:

- Low threshold for building relationships, community
- Getting, sharing information
- Helping to filter, process, and contextualize information

• Why the special treatment?

For the

- Low t
comm
- Gettin
- Helpin
inform



The screenshot shows a Google search interface. At the top, navigation links for Web, Images, Videos, Maps, News, Shopping, and Gmail are visible. The search bar contains the text "Justin beiber". Below the search bar, the Google logo is displayed. To the left of the main content area, there is a vertical menu with icons and labels for "Everything", "Images", "Videos", "News", "Shopping", "Realtime", and "More". Below this menu, the location is set to "Portland, OR" with a "Change location" link, and the time filter is set to "Any time" with options for "Latest" and "Past 24 hours". The search results section shows "About 438,000,000 results (0.10 seconds)". Under the heading "Videos for justin beiber", three video thumbnails are shown. The first video is titled "Justin Bieber - Baby - youtube.com" with a duration of 4 min and release year 2010. The second video is titled "Justin Bieber - One Time - youtube.com" with a duration of 4 min and release year 2009. The third video is titled "Justin Bieber - Pray - youtube.com" with a duration of 4 min and release year 2010. Each video entry includes a thumbnail with a play button and a list of alternative sources to watch the video.

• Why the special treatment?

Social media is ...

- Unstructured institution
- Built on changeable norms and behaviors
- Created by participation, shapes participants

Is social media...

- Compatible with regulation?
- Adaptable to our needs? Or something we need to adapt to?



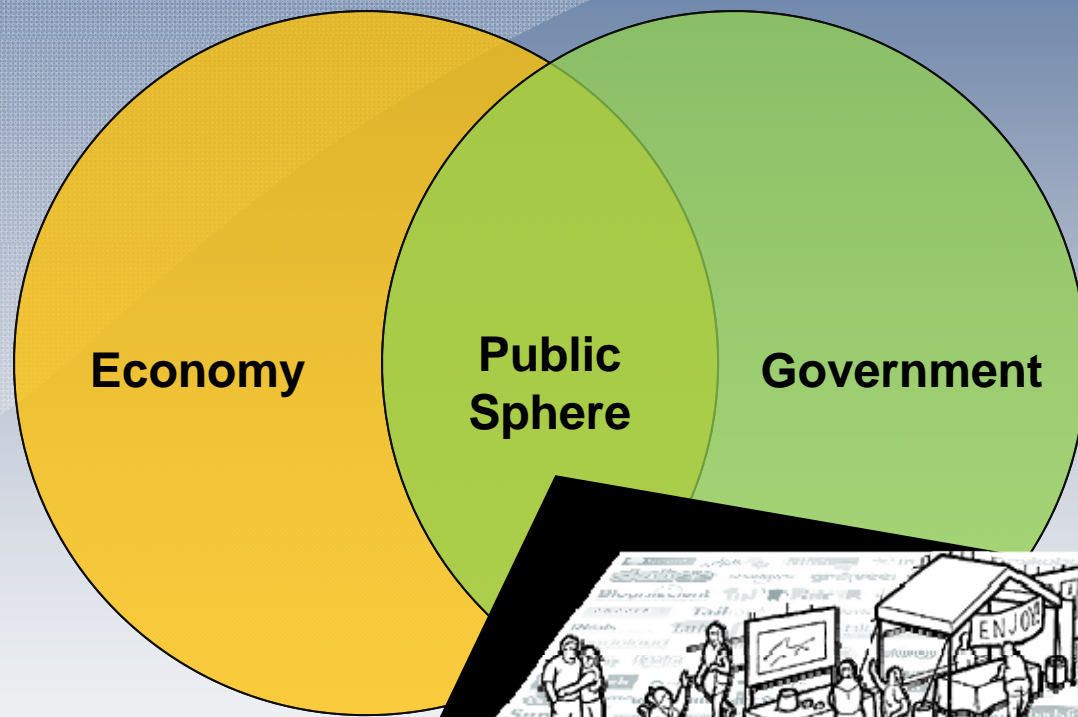
• The Public Sphere

Where...

- Individuals can come together to freely discuss and identify problems
- Influence action
- Separate from the state
- Separate from the economy



• The Public Square



● Group Discussion ●

Discussion questions are on the back of the resources handout.

Discussion Questions

1. I have described a number of problems with reconciling the use of social media with public record laws, public meeting laws, ethics laws. **In your experience, are there other significant constraints that make it difficult or impossible for your organization or the organizations you work with to participate in social media?**

2. The value of social media is derived from the participation of many, but policies, rules, moderation, and restrictions can make it difficult or impractical to participate fully in these online communities. **Do the rules and policies designed for online protection fundamentally diminish the value of social media?**

3. A great deal of social media content is never formally recorded as official project comments, but may affect a decision-making process. **How do we do this?** (For example: news articles; news commentary; blog posts; comments on a Facebook wall; etc.) **How do we do this?** **necessary to keep on record as an official part of the decision-making process?**

... of social media as a "public record" from government

● Lessons and Ideas

“In most of these areas, there simply are **no easy answers**. This is not only because the **laws vary**, and **are interpreted differently** by different legal experts, but because in many places, the laws **have yet to be written.**”

“The best that public managers can do is to consult the legal resources available to them—including legal staff within agencies, but also Guides from independent organizations.”

*- IBM Center for The Business of Government
Using Online Tools to Engage – and be Engaged by –The Public*

• Lessons and Ideas

- Know relevant laws (and their intent)
- Be upfront with the information you have
- Understand your role in the public square

Woman Follows Google Maps “Walking” Directions, Gets Hit, Sues

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www.google.co



May 28, 2010 at 5:36pm E

Is Google responsible fo
about to find out. After G
Rosenberg claims she v
now suing Google for da

Slide 26

Project News

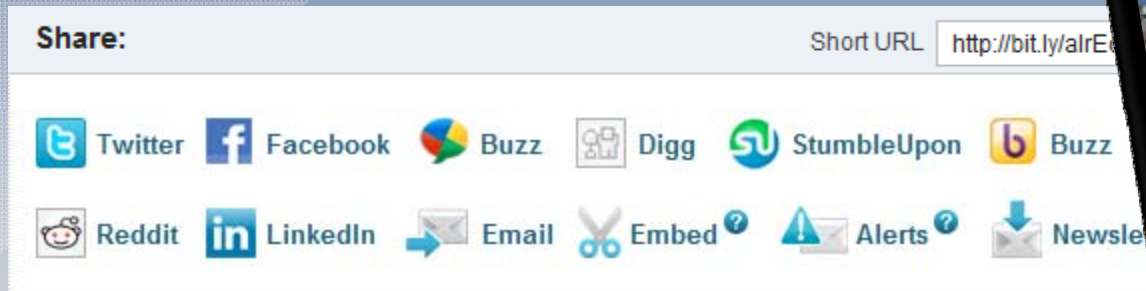
We'll use the space below to post news articles, press rele
free to [contact us](#) if you see something we should include.

Why not pay our fair share?

Guest Opinion, Oregon City News - June 2, 2011

- **Lessons and Ideas**

- **Address information overload**



- **Speak the language of the public square**



- **Thank you!**

**Your feedback will help develop policies
and strategies for using social media**