Virginia Emergency Management Symposium
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Social Mediology:

Decoding Social Media Strategy and Maximizing Emergency Management Benefits

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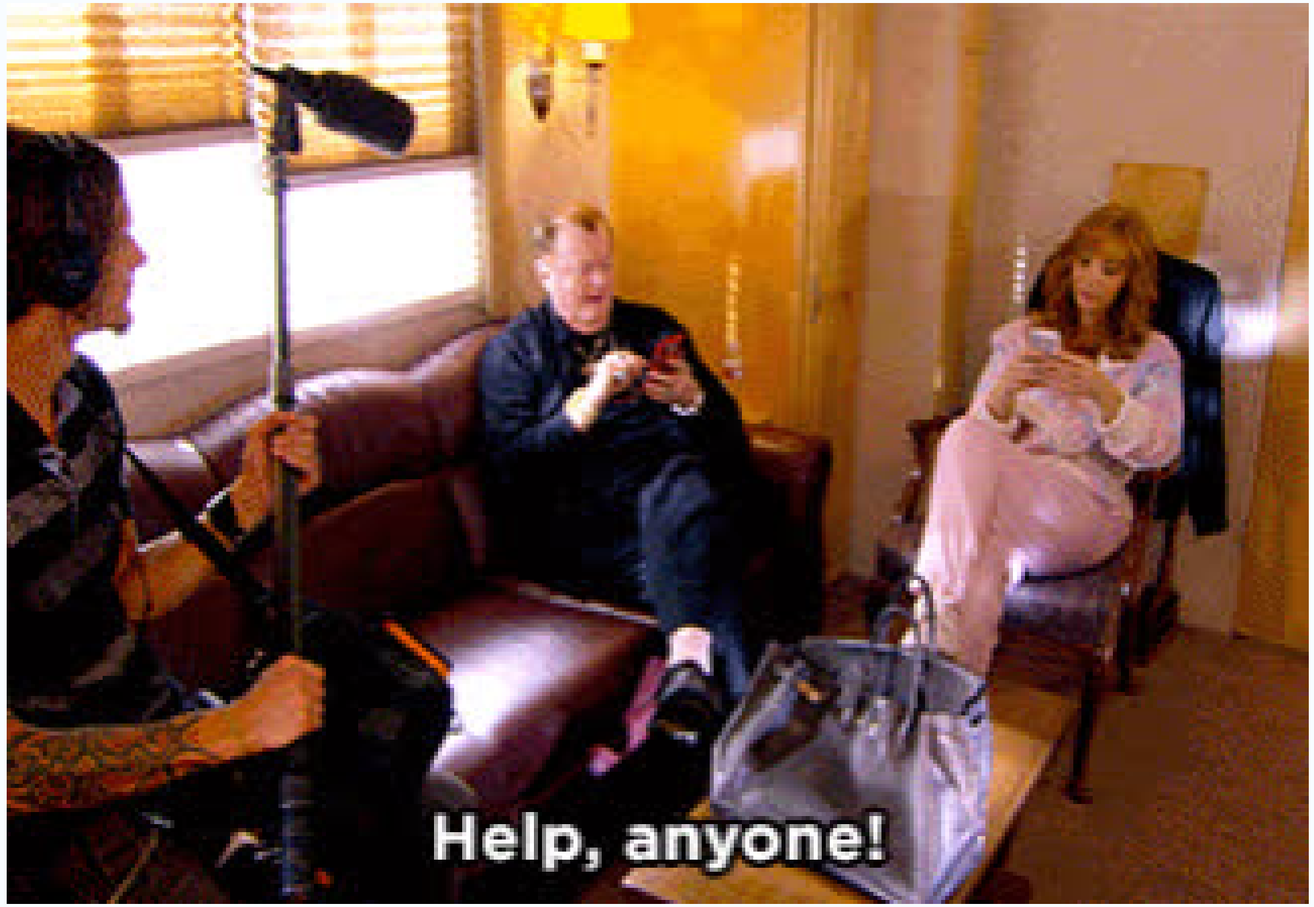
What's in Store:

- Social Media is EXPECTED
- Tell YOUR Story
- Post with PURPOSE
- The Platform DEETS
- Everything has a LIMIT
- BE ACCESSIBLE!!!
- It's a two way STREET
- Why and how to LISTEN
- Mission VOST



FACT:
In 2021, Social Media Presence is Expected

Shift Of Technology

Out with the old:

- Communication
- Shopping
- Dating
- Learning
- Staying "In The Know"
- Expression
- Shaping the World

"Cord-Cutter" Movement

No More Cable:

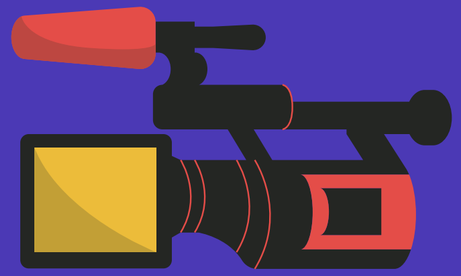
- Saving money - No Cable/Landlines
- News when they want it
  - Evening vs 24/7 Cycle
  - Busy Lives
- More sources at fingertips
  - Freelancers
  - Digital news companies
  - Bloggers/Influencers

FACT:
In 2021, Social Media Presence is Expected

Media Interface

Media has embraced social media

- Find story ideas
- Situation Updates
- Prefer social updates over other



Media Conversations

Media professionals use it to have conversations about:

- Ongoing events
- Community state
- Their stories
- Topics of Interest

#VEMS21

FACT:
When people can't find it...
they ask on social media

Friends - Neighbors - Outside Sources

FACT:
When people ask others...
they receive unverified info

Interpretations, Rumors, He/She Said, Perceptions

If You Don't TELL YOUR STORY, Someone Else Will...

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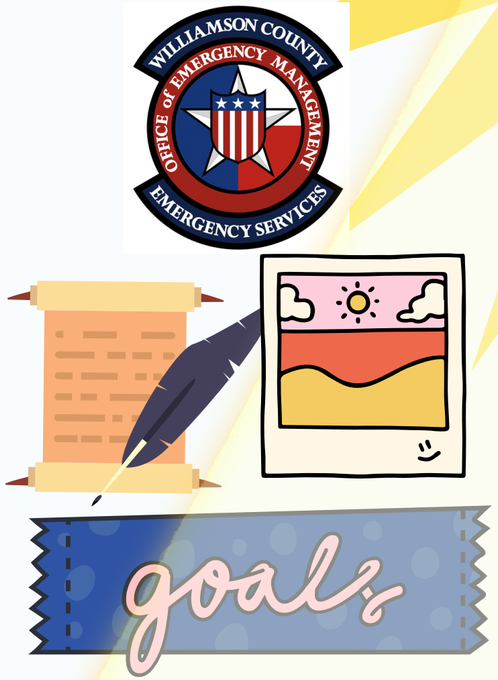
Tell YOUR Story

Shine the LIGHT!



Agency Updates

- Background
- Agency "Why"
- History
- Agency "Who"
- Accomplishments
- Service/Visibility

Public Education

- Preparedness
- Public Info Sources
- Local Hazards
- Awareness Campaigns
- EM Basics

Incident Information

- Notice of Incident
- Timing
- Actions to Take
- Resource Help
- Aid Processes
- Recovery Info

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Shine Your Light Through:

- **Photos**
  - Behind the Scenes
  - Action Shots
  - Humanize Agency
- **Videos**
  - Interviews - Live/Recorded
  - Fun Trends - Fit Brand
  - Tours & Edu Info
- **Graphics**
  - Interactive
  - Visual/Easy to Understand
  - Helpful Info
- **Link Usage Limited**

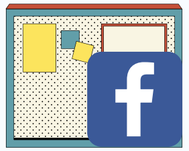
Just Posting... Isn't Enough

Post with PURPOSE to MAXIMIZE Reach

- Population Analysis
  - Census: Age, Race, Education, Language, Occupation
- Social Media Platform
  - Based on Population Analysis
  - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Nextdoor
  - Not all platforms are equal!
- Make the Message Meet THEM
  - Specific
  - Localized
  - Relevant
  - "Folk Speak"

Social Media Platforms

FACEBOOK:



- Networks of Networks
- Algorithm HEAVY
  - Post Count
  - Post Timing
  - Who Sees What
- "Bulletin Board"
- Community Groups
- Best for: Recovery

TWITTER:

- BREAKING NEWS!
- Better Order Structure
- Less Algorithm Impact
  - Top Tweets vs Latest
- "News Feed" or "Paper with Headlines"
- Hashtag Sorting
- Best for: Response

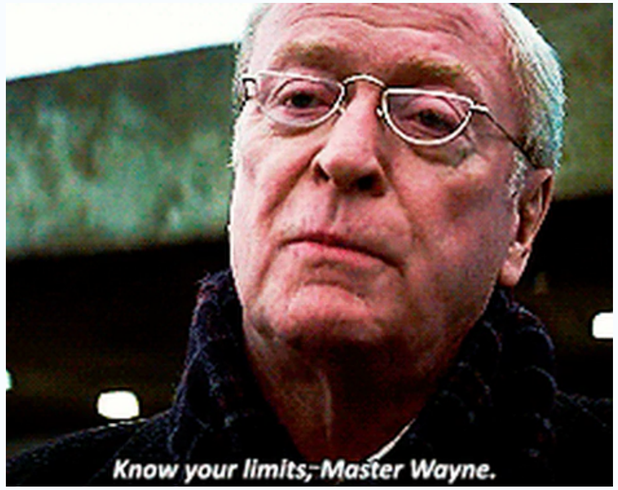
INSTAGRAM:

- Pretty Pictures!
- Tell story with photos
- CANNOT post links in post
- More hashtag reliant
  - Use A LOT
- Less location dependent
- Best For: Preparedness and Agency Rapport

NEXTDOOR:

- "Neighborhood Watch"
- Post updates, events, and photos to neighborhoods or entire jurisdiction
- People ready to help!
  - CERT/Outreach
- Target affected areas
- Best for: Outreach Events, Response, Recovery

Social Media LIMITATIONS



Algorithms:

- Determine how many of your residents see your posts:
  - How many posts
  - What you post
  - How people react
  - Subject Type

Usage Access:

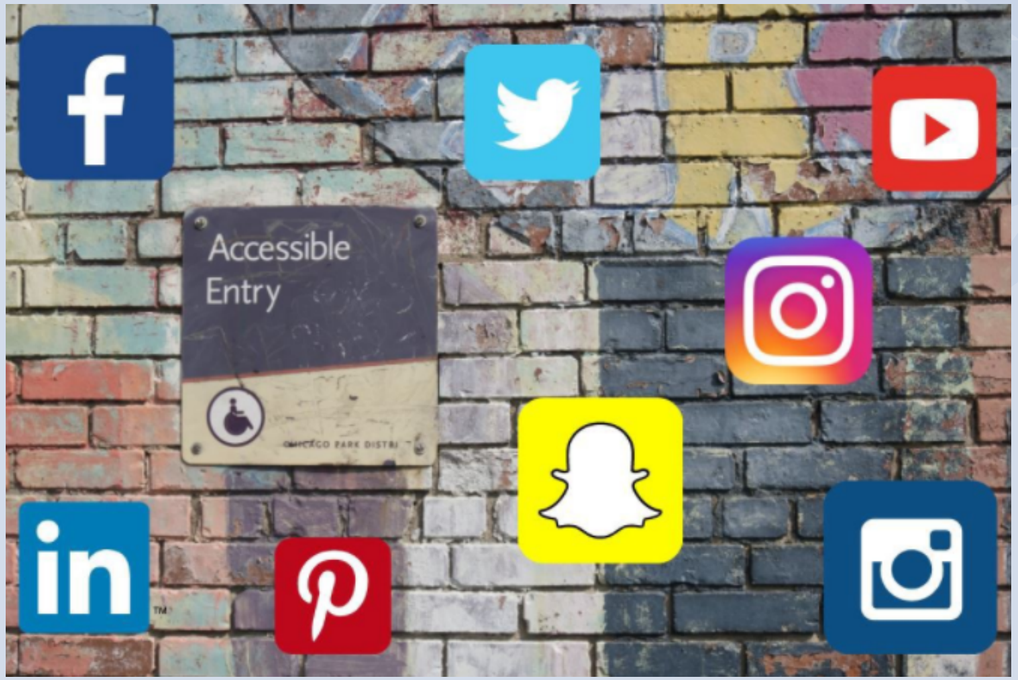
- Can only reach those who follow you or follow someone amplifying your posts
  - Followers
  - Non-SM Population
  - Internet Access
  - Digital Literacy

Brand Visibility:

- People can only follow you if they know you exist
  - EM field visibility
  - Local vs fed visibility
  - City vs county
  - OEM vs FD/PD
  - OEM vs county acct

Accessibility

- A large amount of government agencies are NOT providing accessible content:
  - Sight - Screen Readers
  - Hearing - Captions
- Accessible content during disaster could be life or death to AFN community



Accessible Content is a MUST!

- Alternative Text
- Camel Case Hashtags
- Subtitles and Transcripts
- Statement Graphics
- URL Shortener
- Emoji Mindfulness
- Acess/Functional Needs Content Inclusion

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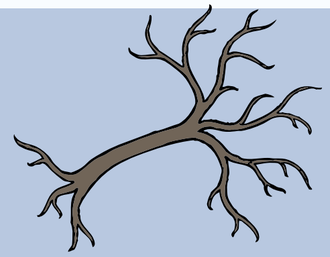
Social Media for Situational Awareness

It's a TWO WAY STREET -
Not a One Way Broadcast!



Social Listening

01.

Storm Reports - Eyes on the Ground

Can lead to faster shelter activation, damage assessment activation, and assessment of needs.

02.

Planned Events or Threats

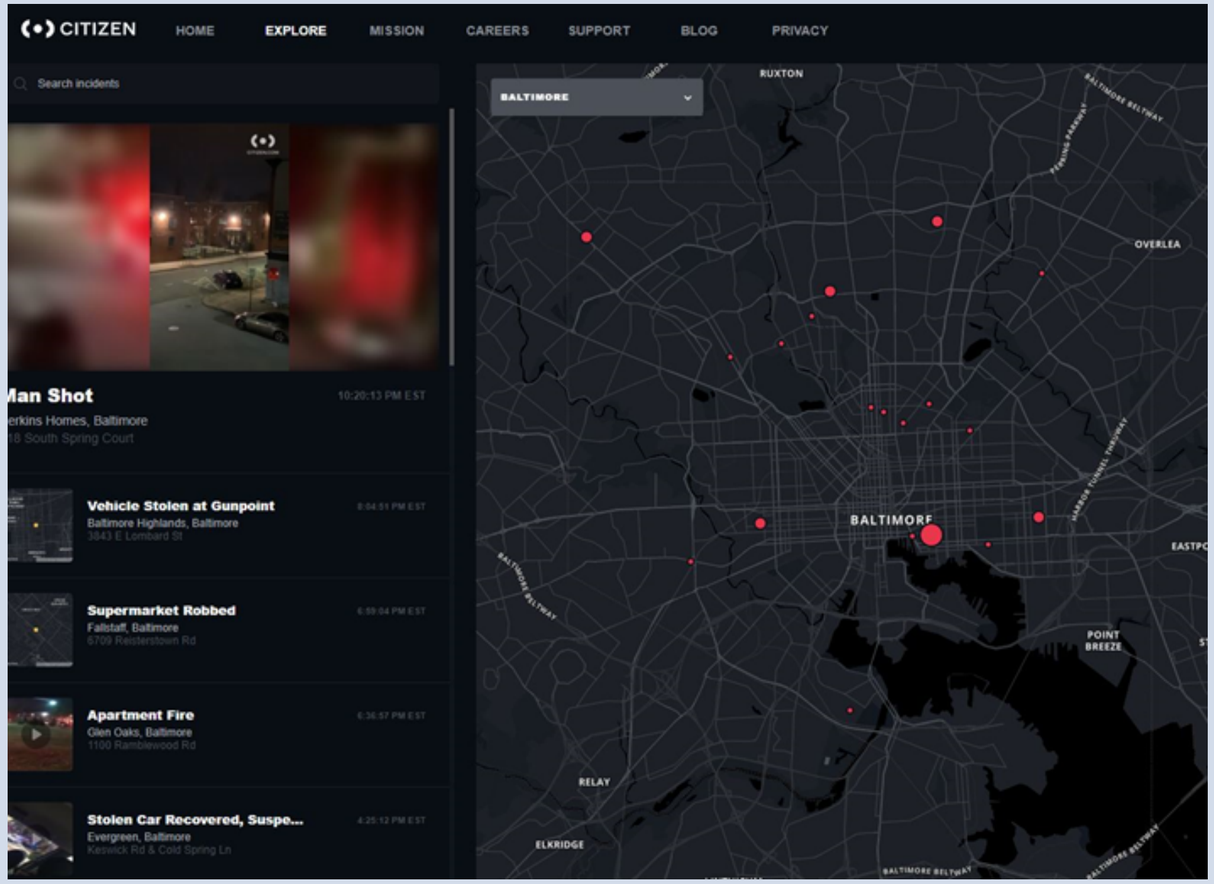
Can lead to planned event preparedness and readiness, protection of assets, and violence prevention

03.

Message Correction

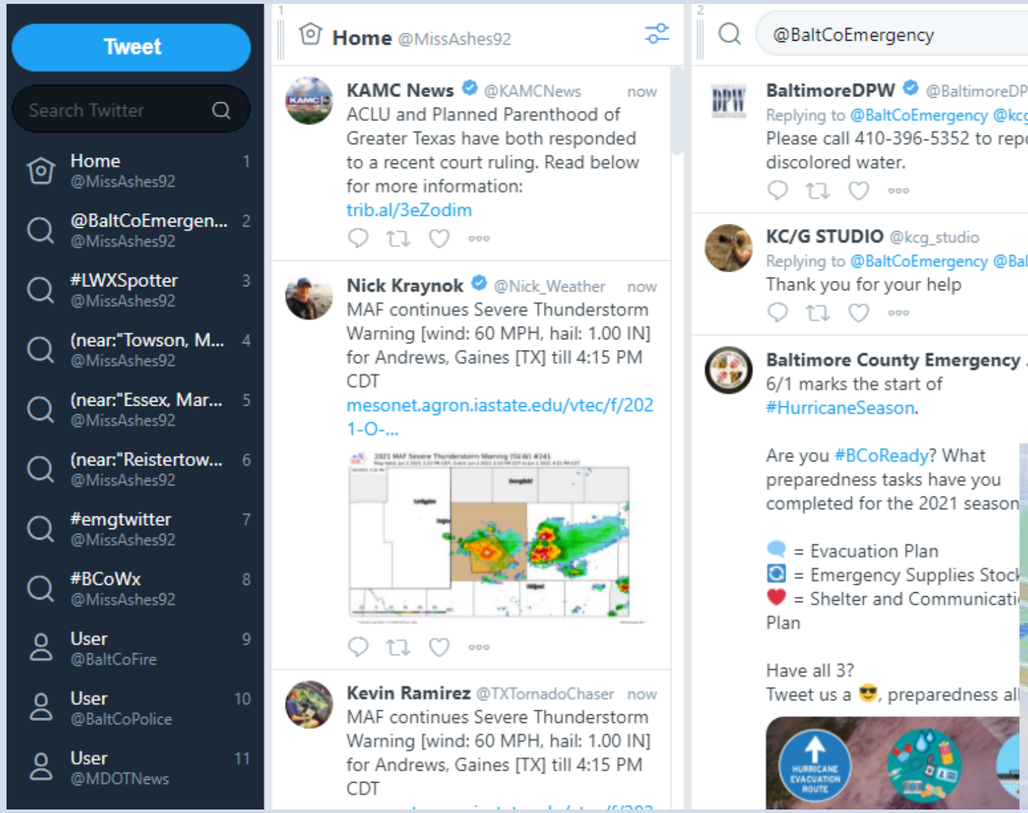
Can lead to bettering the info getting to the public through media resources

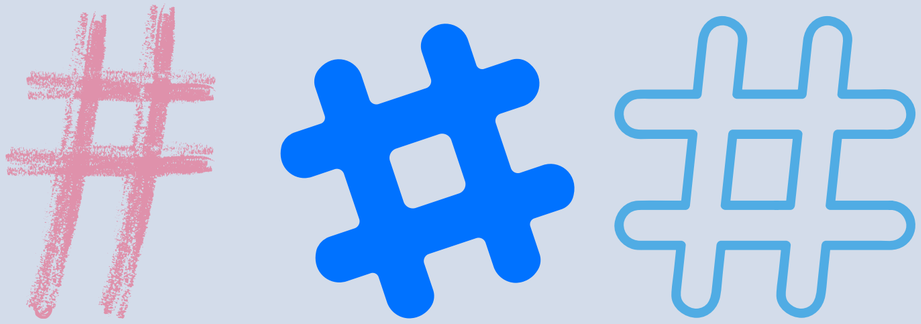
Tools to Listen:



- Solicited reports:
  - Comments, Messages
  - RELATIONSHIPS!
- Use of Hashtags
  - #LWXSpotter
  - #BCoWx
- TweetDeck and Strings
  - (near:"Towson, Maryland" within:25km) AND rain OR flooding OR flood OR water rescue OR water damage OR rain
- Snapchat Map
- Citizen and Crowd Sourcing Apps

Tools to Listen:





When People Don't Report, We DIG!

Virtual Operation Support Teams (VOST)

Volunteers to help you dig reports

- Vetted volunteers (Skywarn, CERT, Social)
- GroupMe/Chat App
  - Activate Decision: EOC, Weather coming
- Report Flow
  - Volunteers
  - Team Lead
  - NWS/OEM

Get In *Touch!*

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