



8 SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

In March, Billy Grogan, chief of police for Dunwoody, Ga., led an insightful discussion about the power of social media in law enforcement and strategies for risk management. Tapping into his experience in law enforcement for 33 years and authoring two books on social media use in law enforcement and government, Chief Grogan shared several tips on how law enforcement agencies can best use social media.

1 Communicate Timely Information

Real-time information is vital to your community and requires agencies to take a distributed approach to information dissemination. Rather than centralizing all department social media postings, empower in-field supervisors with access and guidance on sharing updates with citizens as they happen.

2 Market Your Department

Outside of disseminating critical public safety information, social media can also be used to market your department. Share information about community policing programs, neighborhood watch and other community initiatives in which your department participates.

3 Manage Your Reputation

As your department becomes more active on social media, it will become important to manage its online reputation. It is not uncommon for frustrated citizens to vent on police departments' Facebook pages, so ensure you are actively marketing the positive things your department is doing for the community.

4 Engage Your Community

Use social media accounts to engage in a two-way dialogue with your citizens by letting them post questions and comments and send messages to your department. You may not agree with all of the comments, so it is important to create opportunities for positive engagement.

5 Bypass The Media Filter

You cannot do a press release on every good story your department has to tell, but you can do a social media post. A lot of Dunwoody's media coverage started out as a social media post that garnered attention.

6 Provide a High Level of Transparency

Use social media to increase transparency into your department's current investigations, major crimes and other information the public should know. Added bonus: This level of transparency typically helps solicit valuable tips for crimes and warrants.

7 Strengthen Your Relationship with the Community

Social media is a powerful way to strengthen and build trust with your citizens. The more active and transparent your department is on social media, the stronger your relationship will be with your citizens.

8 Archive Everything

Social media is a public record. Period. As a public record, social media is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and must be archived just like a government email account. For Chief Grogan, ArchiveSocial was a pivotal ally in ensuring all records were automatically archived.