

Seeing Through Multiple Mediums

Departmental Multimedia Policy and You

City of Philadelphia Mayor's Internship Program Summer 2011

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Introduction



- **Goal: Create policy recommendations for more effective use of multimedia assets and outlets**
 - Audio, video, photographs
 - Social media, Channel 64
- **Benefits of using untapped resources to showcase positive work**
 - Build transparency and trust
 - Attract new residents and businesses

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Methods



What types of multimedia do you have?

Facebook?
Twitter?
YouTube?
Flickr?

How often do you update multimedia resources?

What types of information do you share with constituents?



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Results



- 25 departments surveyed
- Problem is not a lack of content- it's a lack of **shared** content
- Some departments have embraced social media
- Few departments have a standard procedure for handling multimedia
- Fewer departments have a point person for social media

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Results Continued



	Percentage Surveyed
Maintains their own website	68%
Uses Facebook	60%
Has a Twitter account	44%
Has a camera to document events	48%
Has had experience with Channel 64	40%
Has a standard policy of keeping track of multimedia	20%

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General Recommendations



- Create a best practices guide for multimedia
- Have a single contact person within each department, create master list of contacts
- All departments should have access to a camera and video recorder

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Specific Examples of Multimedia Use



- **PhillyHistory — Mobile application**
- **Mural Arts — Fliers, e-mail blasts, social networking**
- **Water Department — DVD labeled and submitted to Channel 64**

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Low Cost, High Impact



- Content is there
- We found that this is a great way to connect with constituencies and fulfill a major goal of Mayor Nutter
 - Transparent
 - Informative

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Using Video as a Medium



- **Why?**
 - Easy to make and enjoyable to watch
 - Gives departments *personality* and establishes *trust*
 - Gives citizens government access *anywhere* and *any time*
- **How?**
 - Contacting channel 64 for editing and equipment
 - Using resources departments *already* have
 - Advance Preparation
 - Limited editing time by creating “sound bites” in advance

Making the Video



- **Step 1:** Contact Ch. 64
- **Step 2:** Accumulate visuals
- **Step 3:** Create a storyboard
- **Step 4:** Start filming
- **Step 5:** Edit
- **Step 6:** Distribute



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Abstract:

During the 2011 Philadelphia Mayor’s Internship Program, 14 interns interviewed 25 departments in the City of Philadelphia (“City”) to examine their social media and general multimedia usage, policies, and proficiencies. We observed and recorded the diversity of methods, levels of outreach, and competency among the departments in their use of multimedia content and social media outlets. Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare, e-mail, websites, LinkedIn, Tumblr, Wordpress, Flickr, YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Google+, Channel 64, and smart phone applications were all outlets we saw being used by City government to increase constituency outreach. We have attempted to make worthwhile and practical recommendations on better practices and standards for creating and sharing multimedia content with constituencies and on an inter-departmental basis.

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Intern Biographies

Karen Blyton is a senior at Temple University as a Communications major, Political Science minor. She has been interning with the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania this summer.

Steven Clayton is a graduate student at Carnegie Mellon University pursuing a degree in Public Policy and Management. He has been working within the Commerce Department.

Alistar Erickson-Ludwig is a second year graduate student at Duke University, studying Environmental Management. After graduation she hopes to return to Philadelphia. This summer she has been interning in the Water Department.

Doug Fedoroff is a graduate of Temple University with a degree in Economics. He is entering Temple Law School in the fall and has been interning with the Office of the Controller.

Alicia Ferrara is a rising junior at Vassar College with a major in Political Science and minors in Philosophy and French. She has been interning with the First Judicial District and plans on pursuing a career in law.

Evan Hunt is a senior at the University of Pennsylvania studying Political Science. He has been interning with the Mayor's Office of Community Services. He is a member of the Markward Basketball Club for Philadelphia High School Basketball Players and is a member of Penn Club Baseball team.

Megan Lawton is a senior at Temple University pursuing a major in Geography/Urban Studies and Environmental Studies, and dual minors in Social Work and Spanish. She has been interning in the Mayor's Office of Community Services this summer.

Jaimie Lee has been interning in Department of Human Services. She currently is a junior at New York University pursuing Social Work and Sociology.

Fiona Lockyer is a rising junior at Brandeis University with a major in Politics and dual minors in Environmental Studies and French and Francophone Studies. She has been interning in the Department of Human Services, and will be studying social pluralism and development while abroad in Cameroon this fall.

Isaac Murphy-Trotzky studies include a History major and a minor in Political Science at Temple University. He has been interning with the Philadelphia Fire Department in the Fire Prevention Division and has over five years of service at Penn Wynne-Overbrook Hills Fire Company.

Pamela Joy Logan Salud recently graduated from Temple University with a Bachelor's degree in Geography and Urban Studies. She has been interning at the Mayor's Office of Health and Opportunity and would eventually like to work in the field of disease surveillance.

Monica Sindwani is a rising senior at American University with an interdisciplinary major including: Communications, Law, Economics, and Government and a minor in European Studies. After graduating she plans to get her MPA and work in the public sector. She has been interning in the Parks and Recreation department this summer.

John Anderson Weiss, Jr. has been interning with the Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy. A senior at the University of Michigan, he is majoring in History and Museum Studies while he also sails on the Michigan Club Team.

Max Williams is a junior at Temple University. He is studying to be a history teacher and has interned with the Mayor's Office of Education.

Introduction:

In an increasingly digitized society, effective management of multimedia resources, including social media, is essential for any government entity. While City departments have a wide range of media content at their disposal, many of these resources are not being utilized to their full potential. Through this project, we sought to encourage more effective management of the City's multimedia assets by developing a set of policy recommendations. We focused on ways in which departments can use Channel 64, as well as a variety of popular social media platforms as tools for communicating with constituents.

We explored a diverse swath of content formats and platforms through which they can be shared. They tell unique stories about the work being done by local government; stories that in many cases have not found a storyteller or audience yet. In order to gain a clearer sense of the types of multimedia resources available, we interviewed staff members in 25 City departments and catalogued their existing media assets, including audio, video, and photographs. Based on this research, we compiled a set of general recommendations, with the intention of allowing departments to optimize usage of multimedia based on their individual goals and needs.

We feel that this policy will be helpful in communicating departmental goals, news, events, and accomplishments directly to constituents. By showcasing the positive work coming out of City Hall, our recommendations have the potential to help fulfill Mayor Michael Nutter's goal of increasing transparency and trust in City government.¹ Furthermore, this will be helpful in attracting new residents and businesses to Philadelphia, positively influencing the local

¹ "Mayor Nutter on government transparency, city CTO and business retention," *Technically Philly*, July 30, 2010, <http://technicallyphilly.com/2010/07/30/mayor-nutter-on-government-transparency-city-cto-and-business-retention> (accessed August 7 2011)

economy and growing the City's population- yet another goal of the Mayor.² Finally, media can be used as an effective tool for constituent services, by allowing departments to more effectively disseminate information about resources available to City residents.

We are hopeful that our recommendations can begin the process of getting City departments on track toward utilizing their untapped multimedia resources, as well as developing more engaging ways of communicating with the public. Now, we urge City administrators and staff to take the time to further assess what unrecognized assets they have on-hand in their departments and potentially find value in what they previously saw as merely odds and ends.

Methods:

We relied on phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and website information to methodically call and/or e-mail departments. Each intern or pair of interns reached out to a department. After contact was established, a meeting was often scheduled and the intern(s) presented a series of questions about the specific department's multimedia inventory and use. Questions asked related to types of multimedia used in the department - for example, digital photographs, podcasts, and videos. Additionally, interns asked questions about how the department stores and updates their multimedia content. In some cases, interns completed research on their own about a particular department simply by visiting websites and taking note of frequently conveyed topics, frequency of updates and links to social media sites. Interns collectively compiled the information they gathered onto a spreadsheet. Lastly they met together to collectively discuss trends in multimedia use and how the multimedia was being utilized.

² Robb, Greg, "Bullish on Philadelphia: New Mayor wants to reverse population outflow, attract more businesses," *Market Watch*, July 4, 2008, <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/bullish-on-philadelphia-interview-with-mayor-nutter> (accessed August 7 2011).

Results:

Not wholly to our surprise, we found a variety of different levels of multimedia content creation and sharing. While some departments prioritize sharing videos and pictures, other departments seem to have largely neglected the task. We found that the Fire Department, Records Department, Mural Arts Program and the Water Department are clear leaders in multimedia outreach and social networking. Their user-friendly websites, rich with multimedia content, should serve as standard models for other municipal departments.

Social Media

We found that social media usage is slowly becoming more popular among departments. Of the 25 departments surveyed, ten did not maintain a Facebook page and ten did not maintain a Twitter account, but there were some departments that had plans to start using these websites. While the nature of some of the departments interviewed is not conducive to social networking (for example, the District Attorney's Office and Capital Programs), we believe that for most other departments, this is a missed opportunity to connect with constituents through a popular channel of outreach.

General Outreach

About half of departments surveyed did not have a standard procedure for promoting departmental events, the creation and maintenance of which would streamline such promotion efforts. In the 25 departments we surveyed and researched, only five had a standard policy keeping track of multimedia, the basis of what would be used in these promotions. Most departments interviewed indicated that they regularly use e-mail blasts to connect with constituents. However, e-mail blasts are largely a one-way method of communication, limiting direct and meaningful engagement with constituents. Some departments, such as the Office of

Education and the Office of the Controller, frequently utilize text messaging systems to also connect.

Centrality of Communication

In many instances, we found that there was no “point” person for social network and multimedia affairs. This presents a scenario where the assignment of responsibility for upkeep and updating of media delivery resources becomes unclear, hindering a normal, dependable pattern for consistent engagement. Moreover, there is a lack of accountability at an access point to a City department. This lack of a consistent point person obligates the staff member with something to share or promote to waste valuable time in either locating the person responsible or the log-in information and policies regarding social media use for their department. In addition, there is no “master list” of the point person(s) in each department for social media and general constituent outreach. This list would allow different departments to reach out to each other more effectively when promoting projects and initiatives that are to their mutual benefit, allowing for exchange of information regarding best practices and innovative ideas. Meetings might be scheduled as a way for media point-persons to meet, share advice, and strategize about evolving uses of social media and future interactions. We suggest that the person responsible for the main “City of Philadelphia” social media should maintain and update the list of point people, and assume responsibility for scheduling necessary meetings.

Diamonds in the Rough

While we found that most departments do have working cameras and video equipment, much of this multimedia content remains internal. While, as noted, social media use was increasing, only nine departments had experience working with Channel 64. The problem does

not seem to be that there is a lack of content; rather, there is an abundance of valuable content within departments that is not shared with the general public.

Recommendations:

In terms of general recommendations, we would suggest creating a best practices guide describing a comprehensive multimedia strategy that could be used across the departments and agencies of the City. This guide could provide strategies on how to improve websites, optimize multimedia content and creation and use social media to present a unified message without repeated information. It is in the best interest of both those who are creating the guide and those who are following it that it should be reviewed and updated yearly given how fast technology changes in certain mediums.

It is also important for each and every department and agency to have a single contact person who coordinates the multimedia and social media strategy of the office. We fully understand that some offices will have different needs and resources, however having that central contact person would be invaluable in terms of finding the right person if needed – someone who is accountable for the media output, and responsible for coordination of media output and responding to inquiries. We would state no suggested amount of work they would have to do, they know their own particular departments best, so we would let each department be the judge of what needs to be done. In essence, the department multimedia workload would depend on the needs of that particular department.

Other general suggestions would be for departments and agencies to update their website as often as possible, as well as update 311 often for correct information for better customer service. It is our belief that every department should have a camera and video camera to better

capture what is going on in the department and what the residents of the city would possibly be interested in. Furthermore a simple but very useful step would be to have all files “backed up” by being saved with clear labels on the shared drive, which will make for some continuity and organizational memory.

On a more narrow level, for departments that already have dedicated cameras, we would urge for more frequent use of those tools. We feel that the Commerce, Water and Streets Departments for example, which all have departmental cameras, could expand their multimedia content creation and output even more than they do now. However, we are aware that that may not be a possibility given their resources in terms of staffing. That is why each department should make an individual plan on what best suits their multimedia and social media needs – where they are now, and where they can be if multimedia content is made a priority.

From our analysis we found that many departments either have never dealt with Channel 64, or it has been a long time since they have. Given that fact, one of our recommendations is to have a Channel 64 orientation to familiarize the departments with what is possible with Channel 64. This will make them more likely to use the resources of Channel 64 when they do have interesting material that they would like to share.

There are several innovative ideas various departments are doing to engage with the citizenry. PhillyHistory is using photos from the City Archives to create a mobile phone application where users can see old photos of Philadelphia on their phone based on their location. The City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program approaches the “digital divide” by reaching out to constituents of every age bracket by using e-mail blasts, fliers mailed to residences, and many social media outlets. Another good practice has been shown by the Fire Department when it added Channel 64 to its press contact list, to optimize the amount of exposure the Fire

Department receives when it has an event. The Water Department already had a DVD, and after an intern met with them to discuss this research, they found out they could share it with Channel 64. Simply connecting the Water Department with Channel 64 allowed them to easily share public projects and their recent accomplishments.

Recommendations in Review:

1. Create a city-wide multimedia best practices guide, revised annually, that provides a comprehensive multimedia strategy harnessed to accomplish larger administration goals. This will provide departments with some form of guidance in terms of media outreach, and will provide important information about how to maintain a social media or multimedia outlet in a way that is consistent with City guidelines.
2. Designate a contact point-person(s) who coordinates multimedia and social media strategy in that particular department; provide name and relevant information of contact point-person(s) for development of master-list to be shared with relevant parties.
3. Update website on a regular basis; provide contact information so that constituents can seek out information.
4. Use cameras to record, or have Channel 64 record, more events, and try to share them more frequently through social media platforms and Channel 64.
5. Have departmental photographs and video-clips uploaded to a shared drive, properly labeled with event name, date, and subjects for easy access and use.
6. Develop a multimedia plan for your particular department that addresses specific needs for events and scenarios that happen often.
7. Research what other departments are doing, and learn from their experience

Conclusion:

Multimedia content is a huge asset for government agencies. Our research indicates that many City departments already possess valuable multimedia content. For instance, a majority of

departments have a working camera or video recorder that contains recordings from previous events and affairs. The some departments have been linking this content to a web page and other types of social media to enhance interaction with City residents. While the research has indicated that some departments have made major technological strides, a significant portion of City government has yet to maximize the vast potential of its multimedia content.

Given the time and financial restraints of City government, we understand that issues of the utmost importance dominate the daily agenda. This research was conducted to demonstrate that multimedia content belongs on that agenda. An effective use of multimedia can expedite Mayor Nutter's goal of increased transparency and trust in government. One of the best things about this plan is that it comes at a very low monetary cost. Utilizing multimedia content does not require a massive overhaul of technological equipment, simply a way to publicize this great multimedia content that remains internal. We are also not suggesting choosing one social networking medium or another to publicize this content, rather, it is our intention to suggest how departments may effectively use social networking as a whole to improve City government.

Our recommendations allow all departments to solve this technological dilemma internally, without any major additions. It only takes a small change in governmental organization and mindset to produce one of the Mayor's biggest goals. The departments just need to recognize that the answer lies in hard drives and cameras sitting in their offices.

Appendix 1: City departments interviewed

Capital Program Office

City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program

City Planning Commission and Zoning Code Commission

Department of Commerce

Department of Human Services

Department of Public Health

Department of Public Property

Department of Streets

Licensing and Inspection

Mayor's Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy

Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service

Mayor's Office of Community Services

Mayor's Office of Education

Mayor's Office of Sustainability

Mayor's Press Office

Office of Information Technology: Division of Technology

Office of the Controller

Office of the District Attorney

Philadelphia Fire Department

Philadelphia International Airport

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department

Philadelphia Police Department

Philadelphia Prisons Systems

Philadelphia Water Department

The Philadelphia Courts: First Judicial District of Pennsylvania

Appendix 2: **An Introduction to Channel 64 & Web Short-Films**

Short videos and public service announcements have become popular methods of raising awareness and conducting advocacy. A well-constructed video provides a personality to departments, their initiatives and programming that distinguishes it from the more traditional mediums. The advent of new technology allows videos to reach target audiences practically anywhere, in numerous non-traditional settings. Through web-based sharing platforms, such as YouTube and other social media sites, constituent outreach has become simpler, faster, and more readily available. However, it is incumbent upon the department to best make use of these new and innovative sites. Short videos can also be used in conjunction with a resource that has been around but has yet to be used to its full potential – Channel 64 Government Access Channel.

The prospect of actually creating a short video oftentimes causes trepidation. Departments may fear that they need an inordinate amount of time, money, and resources to devote to such a project. However, in coordination with City resources such as Channel 64 and by using on-hand resources within individual departments, producing a video can be done quickly and easily. It should be noted that Channel 64 has expressed a desire for additional content, and has made resources available to help Departments create it, at the same time effectively promoting themselves. Using a PSA for the Mayor’s Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy as an example, we logged our activities and devised the following timeline as a potential model for similar projects:

1. Contact Channel 64 and advise them that you are interested in creating content and set up a time to meet and a mutually acceptable procedure to follow.

2. Prepare early by accumulating photos, or any other visuals you would like to highlight, which can fill time and reduce effort of filming and editing.
3. Select a few short statements, or “sound bites,” which you hope to use for the video. These can be found in already-produced press releases and in mission statements and other documents and news articles. By planning out and scripting, even if only loosely, sound bites prior to shooting, editing time is shortened dramatically. This is in contrast to simply allowing staff members to speak at length on a given topic and then being forced to edit a significant amount of content down to segments that can be fashioned into a usable video piece.
4. Create a short “story board” for the video. A story board is a visual template for videos that lays out and organizes the timing for your video. Incorporate the language from the sound bites and plan how one will use the photographs and visual clips to tell a story. Conducting such a planning process will result in a ready-made project.
5. Once the story board is completed, you can start filming. While recording, remember to wear headphones and turn off the external microphone on one’s recording device in favor of a lavalier (clip-on collar) or similar microphone. This way, any extraneous sounds or noises can be caught prior to the completion of the video. B-Roll – background and related shots – should also be shot in order to have extra video to work with while editing.
6. After completing your video, bring the camera to Channel 64 to import footage from the camera to a disk.
7. Then, you have the option of editing the footage yourself or leaving the footage with Channel 64. If you choose the latter option, make sure you identify parts in the footage you absolutely want to see in the final product, and try to review the storyboard with them.

8. Soon you will see your newly-created content airing regularly on Channel 64. Make sure to also upload it to your department's social media sites for a wider distribution.

Contact Information:

- Channel 64's studio is located on the 7th floor of City Hall, Rm. 726. Their website is under the Department of Technology, Public Property.
 - Willie Williams- Assistant Managing Director, Cable TV producer/director - willie.williams@phila.gov - 215 686 9946
 - Mark McLaughlin - Cable Franchise Manager - Mark.McLaughlin@phila.gov – 215 686 4990
 - John McNally – Electronic Technician 2 – John.McNally@phila.gov – 215 686 4534

Basic Facts:

Editing software used: Final Cut, iMovie

Type of camera used: Handheld video camera

Total time: 5-7 hours

Other ideas for short-video outreach:

- A PSA from your department's commissioner
 - An explanatory video about what your department does
 - A preview of an upcoming event in your department
-

Appendix 3: **Examples of Existing City Outreach**

Philadelphia Crime Reports: CrimeReports.com is an online service provided by Public Engines, Inc., that combines access to crime statistics from the Philadelphia Police Department with Google-based mapping and analytics. CrimeReports.com partners with over 1,800 law enforcement agencies in North America to share various police and crime data with the public.
<http://www.phillypolice.com/about/crime-reports/>

Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities Blog: Reaches out to constituents via WordPress about upcoming projects and other useful information.
<http://phillymotu.wordpress.com/>

“Taking a Social Media Cue from Politics”: An article from the Carr Marketing Communications, Inc. blog focusing on the use of social media outlets in politics, using Mayor Nutter as an example.
<http://carrmarketing.com/uncategorized/taking-a-social-media-cue-from-politics/>

Code for America: Code for America helps city governments increase transparency, become more efficient, and enhance citizen participation by connecting the talents of cutting-edge web developers with people who deliver city services. Inspired in part by Teach for America, CFA works with city officials and leading web development talent to identify and then develop web solutions that can then be shared and rolled out more broadly to cities across America. Philadelphia is currently one of only four cities to be chosen for CFA's inaugural, one-year Fellows program.
<http://codeforamerica.org/>
