



# Open Government & the Web

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# Social Networking

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- *My Face?*
- Facebook
- Twitter
- MySpace
- LinkedIn
- Blogs



LinkedIn®



# Usage Increasing

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- February '08 - February '09, Facebook, the most popular social networking website, grew 228 % to add 65.7 million new users.
- Twitter saw 1,374 % increase during that same time, growing to 7 million users



# Alan's Intro to Facebook

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- You do not have any friends.
- Once you find some friends, they will appear here.



# Linkedin

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- Friend? Colleague? Baby Momma??
- Option: “I don’t know this *user*”
- Fact: Harvard Business School graduates average **58** connections. You have **4**.



# Social Media

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- Create online using highly accessible publishing technology
- Shift in how people discover, read & share information
- Fusion of sociology & technology, transforming monologues into dialogues
- Democratization of information -- transforming people from content readers into publishers
- Allows people to connect in online world to form relationships for personal, political & business use

# Share Content

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- Photos
- Videos
- Notes
- Blogs
- Web links
- News stories
- Diaries



# City Use of Sites



- Blogs
- Official City Website
- Departmental Websites
- Individual Employee Profiles on Facebook
- Department Profiles on MySpace



*artfully yours*

THE CITY OF  
**DRIPPING SPRINGS**  
OFFICIAL WEBSITE



# Troy P.D.



- 07/29 - 3 accidents on the northbound side of IH 35
- 07/30 - Graffiti - 205 College Street
- 08/02 - Warrant arrest on IH 35 northbound at the 310 mile marker
- 08/02 - Accident on IH 35
- 08/05 - Accident on Church Ave.
- 08/09 - Accident on IH 35 southbound
- 08/10 - Accident at 5 N. Central
- 08/11 - Construction theft on W. Main
- 08/13 - Drug Paraphernalia on N. Central



# Public Information Act

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- All data collected, assembled, or maintained by the City in connection with transaction of official business
- All data collected, assembled, or maintained for the City—the City owns the data or has a right of access
- Regardless of format
- Includes Paper, Film, and Digital

# Duty to Provide Data

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- Give any existing data ever posted on websites
- Can't simply refer to website



# Attorney General

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- No opinion on Social Media, yet
- Email is clearly subject to PIA
- Duty to Provide copies of Online Data



# Right to Privacy?

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- Password ≠ Private
- Social Media is only “Semi-Private”
- Personal v. Official:
  - Who has access?
  - What is content?
  - How is it used?
- Anonymous
  - Delaware Case of Mayor “Proud Citizen”

# Personal or Private?

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- City of Dallas case
- Former Mayor Laura Miller
- Blackberry:
  - Device & Service Paid for with Personal Funds
  - Utilized Personal Email Address
  - Used to Conduct City Business
- Trial Court Ruled: Public
- Appellate Court Overturned



# Think Before You Post

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- Does this reveal any potentially embarrassing private information?
- Am I discussing official city business?
- Is this information subject to Open Meetings?
- Is this information subject to Open Records?
- How long must this information be kept?
- What will current or future employers think about what I post?
- Who will be able to view the information I post?

# Records Retention

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- Texas State Library and Archives Commission
- Two years for email
- No current established policy for the preservation or destruction of online data
- *Bulletin B, Electronic Records Standards and Procedures*

# Open Meetings

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- Public business should be conducted in public
- A “Meeting” is:
  1. Deliberations (talking and/or voting)
  2. Quorum (majority)
  3. Governing Body (city council, P&Z)
  4. City Business
- Action without Meetings
- Washington: Email Exchange = Meeting

# Freedom of Speech?

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- *Rangra v. Brown* (5th Cir. 2009)
- City of Alpine
- Email Exchanges by Quorum of City Council
- Content-Based:
  - Narrowly-Tailored
  - Compelling Government Interest

# City Policy

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1. Restriction on Personal Use of City Resources
2. Apply to Computers & Phones
3. Clarify Role & Opinions
4. Protect Privacy, Confidentiality & Privileges
5. Remember Respect & Safety
6. Work Comes First



## City Policy (cont.)

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7. Reflection on City's Image
8. Caution with trade secrets, competitive info
9. Plagiarism will not be tolerated
10. Honor Logos or Trademarks
11. Online Activities can have Job Consequences

# City Policy

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- Mandatory staff meeting
- Distribute agenda to all officials & employees with discussion of the policy as action item
- Have all officials & employees sign attendance roster & hand out copies of the policy
- Discuss it & hold a question & answer session
- Pass out copies of policy receipt acknowledgment forms for everyone to sign
- Collect signed forms before adjourning

# Alan's Desk?

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