



# **Social Media and Local Agencies: Examples and Legal Issues**

# About the Institute

- **501(c)(3) research arm of LCC & CSAC**

- **Relevant programs:**
  - Civic Engagement
  - Public Service Ethics



# Objectives

- 1. A few examples of county use of social media**
- 2. Legal issues to be aware of**

# 1. Examples:

**Illustrates Scope of  
Social Media**

**and Issues That Arise**



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The County of Sonoma now offers a free electronic subscription service that allows visitors to receive automatic email notifications when selected website information is updated.

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Wall **Info** Discussions Photos

**Brett A. Hazuka** Good afternoon all!

I have been asked by Carolyn with the Moorpark Rotary to share with you that they will be conducting their Civil War Reenactment on November 7th and 8th in Moorpark. More information is available at: <http://www.moorparkrotary.com>

I have heard a lot of great things about this event so if you can come please do! I know that we will definitely try to make it.

**Rotary Club of Moorpark**  
Source: [www.moorparkrotary.com](http://www.moorparkrotary.com)  
Official Website for the Rotary Club of Moorpark. Powered by ClubRunner : Rotary Club Websites & Member Communication Made Easy

October 23 at 1:56pm · Share · Report

**Bentley Lynn Richards** SHUT. UP. i move all the way to North Carolina, and they are holding a CW Reenactment in Moorpark?! Geez! I would love to see one of those!!  
October 23 at 2:37pm

**Brett A. Hazuka** yeah, but at this one, I bet the North wins!  
October 23 at 2:41pm

**Tutu's Hawaiian** ventura county's own tutus ice cream shop is runnig for the best ice cream shop. remember to vote. <http://myfoxla.cityvoter.com/standings/best-of-the-la-hotlist/4747/specialty-food-and-drink/ice-cream-shop>

Source: [myfoxla.cityvoter.com](http://myfoxla.cityvoter.com)  
October 22 at 12:40pm · Share · Report

**Bill Swisher** Your area is paradise.. so much so that I am expanding my company there this winter and hiring 400-600 new people. Also, one of our new business is to nuke these Wild Fires. I think it is nuts having to endure them year after year. No more with our plan. without Advertising here, just google Swisherco and see the second post about Ending wild fires. I cant wait to move there.. sick of heat in FLA  
September 23 at 2:58am · Report

**Lucky Chan**  
**Quality Porta Potties and Temporary Fence Rentals in Southern California**  
Portable rental toilets for all your construction projects & special events, event fence, generator rentals, porta potty and luxury restroom trailers. <http://www.diamondprovides.com/>  
September 22 at 5:55am · Participate

**Jeff Black** I lived in Ventura County in 2006, and whoever wrote the intro above is right - it will always be with me, even across the continent, and I dream of coming back someday. A beautiful place to live. I'll always treasure watching sunsets from the shore just north of the city of Ventura, and watching the Milky Way fade into

**Information**  
Category: Common Interest - Friends  
Description: You have either lived here, visited here or just been a part of it, but we enjoy life in all of its forms.  
If you have ever left you know it will always be with you and you will probably be back some day. If you have never left you know that when you leave...it is probably only temporary.  
Ventura County is a place that cannot be described, only experienced...  
Privacy Type: Open: All content is public.

**Admins**  
Brett A. Hazuka (Ventura County, CA) (creator)

**Members**  
6 of 144 members See All  
Joseph Cortez Steve Hajdukco Paul Hutchinson  
Sarah Muldowney Rand Traverse Angel Quezada

**Links**  
3 links See All  
Rotary Club of Moorpark 1:56pm Oct 23  
[myfoxla.cityvoter.com](http://myfoxla.cityvoter.com) 12:40pm Oct 22

**Pell Grants Increased**  
The Recovery Act increased the amount of pell grants. It's time to go back to school and start your career. Find help now!  
Like

**Sprint**  
One push. Work gets done.  
Connect in less than a second with Nextel Direct Connect, the fastest national push-to-talk network.  
Motorola Clutch™ i465  
Get it now  
Replay

Applications Internet 100%



Suggest to Friends  
Subscribe via SMS

Information

Location:  
1100 K Street, Ste. 101  
Sacramento, CA, 95814

Phone:  
916-327-7500

Mon - Fri:  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Fans

6 of 123 fans See All



**California State Association of Counties** California State Association of Counties Hold Monterey, CA. <http://www.csac.counties.org/default.asp?id=2657> on Tuesday

Wall Info Photos Boxes Events

Write something... Share

California State Association of Counties Just Fans



**California State Association of Counties** California State Association of Counties Holds Annual Meeting in Monterey, CA. <http://www.csac.counties.org/default.asp?id=2657>

Yesterday at 7:02am · Comment · Like

Ava Autrey likes this.

Write a comment...



**California State Association of Counties** Prop 1A Securitization Bonds sold-totaling \$1.895B. Counties held harmless from property tax loan. More details at <http://www.csac.counties.org>



**California State Association of Counties**

Source: [www.csac.counties.org](http://www.csac.counties.org)

Nov. 19 - Today, the California Statewide Communities Development



Send Paul a Message

Poke Paul

On April 21, I appeared on the CNBC Reports program. Here's the link:  
<http://www.cnbc.com/id/15840232?video=1099555845&play=1>

Information

**Paul McIntosh** Senator Lois Wolk was given the President's Award by CSAC President Gary Wyatt for her outstanding service this past year as a stalwart defender of counties in the Legislature. 23 hours ago

Wall Info Photos Video

Write something...

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Filters



**Paul McIntosh**

**Reid bill would cost \$849B, expand coverage to 31 million people, aide says - washingtonpost.com**

Source: [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has assembled a compromise health package that would expand coverage to more than 31 million Americans at a cost of \$849 billion over the next decade, a senior leadership aide said late Wednesday.

Today at 7:49am · Comment · Like · Share



**Paul McIntosh** Senator Lois Wolk was given the President's Award by CSAC President Gary Wyatt for her outstanding service this past year as a stalwart defender of counties in the Legislature.

Today at 1:58am · Comment · Like

Eva Spiegel likes this.

Write a comment...



Compact for a Sustainable Ventura County

**Quality of Life: Past, Present, and Future**

1. Thinking about the overall quality of your life here in Ventura County, imagine a ladder with ten steps representing the "ladder of life." The tenth step represents the best possible life for you; and the first step, the worst possible life for you. On a scale of 1 to 10, on which step of the ladder do you personally stand at the present time?

	Worst	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Best
Rating Scale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. On which step did you stand five years ago?

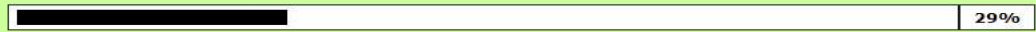
	Worst	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Best
Rating Scale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. If you could look into the future, on which step do you expect to stand 5 years from now?

	Worst	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Best
Rating Scale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Do you think the quality of life in Ventura County will decrease or increase for your or your friends children and grandchildren?

- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease



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Twitter

Login Join Twitter!

Hey there! **SBRedCross** is using Twitter.

Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing? **Join today** to start receiving **SBRedCross's** tweets.

Join today!

Already using Twitter from your phone? [Click here.](#)



**SBRedCross**

American Red Cross  
Santa Barbara County Chap

Help provide insecticide treated bed nets to families in Sub-Saharan Africa at risk of malaria infection or death.  
<http://bit.ly/2wbCBS>

5:27 AM Nov 3rd from web

On November 20th the UCSB Red Cross Club is hosting a Dodge Ball Tournament to raise funds for Malaria No More.

5:26 AM Nov 3rd from web

CLUB RED NEWS: What an Awesome weekend! Slideshow coming soon to our Chapter website! Visit us at:

<http://sbredcross.org/index...>

1:43 PM Oct 14th from web

CLUB RED NEWS: Here's what a Delegate had 2 say about Club Red: "It was so much fun & so amazing! You learn so much from it!"

1:42 PM Oct 14th from web

**#Vandenberg #Highway Incident (SB CO/VAFB)** - The SB CO chapter of the ARC has volunteers on stand by to open a shelter if needed. **#fire**

5:33 PM Sep 30th from web

The volunteers are headed to Samoa to help out with tsunami relief.

5:29 PM Sep 30th from web

8 volunteers from the Santa Barbara County Chapter of the American Red Cross are getting ready to head to Samoa Islands.

Name Red Cross, SB County  
Location Santa Barbara County  
Web <http://www.sbredc...>  
Bio A nonprofit in SB County that is led by volunteers and supported by YOU.

252 following 890 followers 48 listed

Tweets 531

Favorites

Following



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[www.ca-ilg.org](http://www.ca-ilg.org)





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December 05, 2008

## NRPA Online Town Hall Meeting: Strategic Solutions for Managing Budget Cuts

**December 17th and 18th**

**Guest Bloggers will be blogging from 8:00 AM - 8:30 PM EST Each Day**

*All comments are welcome anytime.*

What happens when your budget gets cut by 20%? 50%? Or even more? Do you lay off staff? Can you justify raising fees? Are you able to creatively trim services?

Unfortunately, this isn't an imaginary case study - these situations are real and they are occurring all across the country in communities of every size. But you're not alone. NRPA is a community 21,000 strong and many of our members are facing similar challenges as you. On December 17th through the 18th, NRPA is proud to present a special blogging event:

Moderated by some of the profession's most experienced leaders, this open forum will allow you to share challenges and capture solutions. Bookmark this page, mark your calendar and join the discussion. We'll see you here on December 17.

Posted by Krista Barnes, CAE on December 05, 2008 at 01:38 PM | [Permalink](#) [ShareThis](#)

### TrackBack

TrackBack URL for this entry:

<http://www.typepad.com/services/trackback/6a00d8341bf7d253ef0105363c22fa970c>

Listed below are links to weblogs that reference [NRPA Online Town Hall Meeting: Strategic Solutions for Managing Budget Cuts](#):

### Comments

You can follow this conversation by subscribing to the [comment feed](#) for this post.

<http://nrpablog.typepad.com/policy/>

Internet

100%

[www.ca-ilg.org](http://www.ca-ilg.org)



# Site Visitors Distribute Information

The screenshot shows a web page from the Institute for Local Government (ILG) with the article title "Involving the Public: How Local Officials See It" by Terry Amsler. The page includes a navigation bar with "Publications" and "About ILG", a search bar, and a sidebar for "the James Irvine foundation". The main content area contains the article text and a "ShareThis" button. A red circle highlights the "ShareThis" button in the top right corner, and another red circle highlights the "ShareThis" button in the bottom right corner. A red arrow points from the bottom button to the top button. A "ShareThis" sharing popup is open, displaying various social media sharing options such as Facebook, MySpace, Digg, Reddit, Live, Twitter, G Bookmarks, Delicious, Stumbleupon, Y! Bookmarks, and LinkedIn, along with a "Save" option for "Save to ShareBox".

Publications About ILG

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## Involving the Public: How Local Officials See It

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By Terry Amsler

Terry Amsler, program director of the Institute for Local Government's Collaborative Governance Initiative, interviewed the following city officials for this article about civic participation: Council Member Lynne Ashbeck, Clovis; Council Member Tzeitel Paras-Caracci, Duarte, and chair, National League of Cities' City Futures Panel on Democratic Governance; City Manager Rick Cole, Ventura; Mayor Ron Loveridge, Riverside; Deputy City Manager Christine Tien, Stockton; and City Manager Chris Zapata, National City.

**A great deal of attention is being given to new approaches to public involvement in local decision-making. Are more traditional community input processes, such as public hearings and comment periods, not working?**

**Rick Cole:** There's a difference between input and participation. Citizens can give input through public hearings and during comment periods -- essentially opportunities to sound off with their opinions. But effective solutions emerge only when citizens participate in decision-making through workshops and other forums where they engage in listening, collaborating and weighing the trade-offs.

the James Irvine foundation  
Expanding Opportunity for the People of California

SPONSOR THANK YOU

The Institute is grateful to the James Irvine Foundation for its support of the Institute's Collaborative Governance Initiative and the Institute's Competitive Bidding Program.

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# Discussion Forums: Visitors Exchange Information



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*Discussion Forum*

## Helping the Community Understand Local Government

What does your agency do to help the public understand local government?



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INSTITUTE  
FACEBOOK PAGE

Show your commitment to good government at the local level by becoming a fan.

RELATED TOPICS

General Discussion

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Add new comment

### Response to Test Comment **new**

Submitted by admin on August 12, 2009 - 12:10pm.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. In scelerisque diam eget est dapibus varius. Duis quis tortor rutrum justo adipiscing facilisis non quis tortor. Morbi odio sem, egestas eu lacinia a, porttitor et ligula. Etiam gravida eros id est feugiat porta.

reply

### Pellentesque imperdiet quam **new**

Submitted by kloman on August 13, 2009 - 3:52pm.

Pellentesque imperdiet quam quis tortor auctor vestibulum. Mauris nec velit id felis aliquet eleifend sit amet non enim. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean vulputate, justo eget fringilla semper, enim nisi mollis quam, vel varius libero magna eu velit. Nullam pulvinar tincidunt nulla, varius ultrices dolor condimentum sed. Morbi ornare iaculis tincidunt.

reply

# Ratings & Comments

Promoting Good Government at the Local Level

League of California Cities.


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## A Local Official's Guide to Immigrant Civic Engagement

This publication provides insights and examples to help ensure greater public involvement of immigrant residents.


**ORDERING INFORMATION:**

The Institute makes this publication available several ways:

- In electronic form on an honor system for individual use by local officials, the media and the public.
- In electronic form for download and distribution to others for a modest (License Order Form)
- In hardcopy form: to purchase hardcopies, please fill out and either fax payment. (Hardcopy Order Form)

*All proceeds support the development of additional materials to serve local a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.*

**Downloadable Product (For Personal Use Only):**

 A Local Official's Guide to Immigrant Civic Engagement

Item #: 1825  
Hard Copy Price: \$25.00 each  
License Price (2-5 Units): \$5.00 each  
License Price (6-25 Units): \$3.50 each  
License Price (26-75 Units): \$2.50 each  
License Price (75+ Units): \$1.50 each  
Average:  
★★★★☆  
Your rating: 4 Average: 3.5 (2 votes)

**License Price (75+ Units): \$1.50 each**  
Average:  
★★★★☆  
Your rating: 4 Average: 3.5 (2 votes)

Hard Copy Price: \$20.00 each  
License Price (2-5 Units): \$3.50 each  
License Price (6-25 Units): \$2.00 each  
License Price (26-75 Units): \$1.00 each  
License Price (75+ Units): \$0.75 each  
Average:  
★★★★☆  
Your rating: 4 Average: 4 (1 vote)

Comments  
**This is excellent!**  
Submitted by guest on August 13, 2009 - 4:12pm.  
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. In scelerisque diam eget est dapibus varius, quis tortor rutrum justo adipiscing facilisis non quis tortor. Morbi odio sem, egestas eu lacinia a, porttitor ligula. Etiam gravida eros id est feugiat porta. Curabitur condimentum porttitor eros, sed euismod eros blandit vel.  
edit reply

# Polls & Webforms: Tool for Collecting Information



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ILG is the research and education affiliate of the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities.



## What concerns do you have about using alternative dispute resolution processes to resolve disputes between public agencies?

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- Unfamiliarity with the process.
- Alternative dispute resolution processes always involve compromise.
- The public may think that a conciliated or mediated agreement gives up too much.
- Fear of criticism about the transparency of the alternative dispute resolution process.
- Alternative dispute resolution professionals' are not familiar with unique aspects of local agency decision-making processes.
- Other
- None.

[Vote](#)

MORE FROM THE INSTITUTE



### SPONSOR THANK YOU

The Institute is grateful to the JAMS Foundation for its support of the Institute's Intergovernmental Conflict Resolution Program.

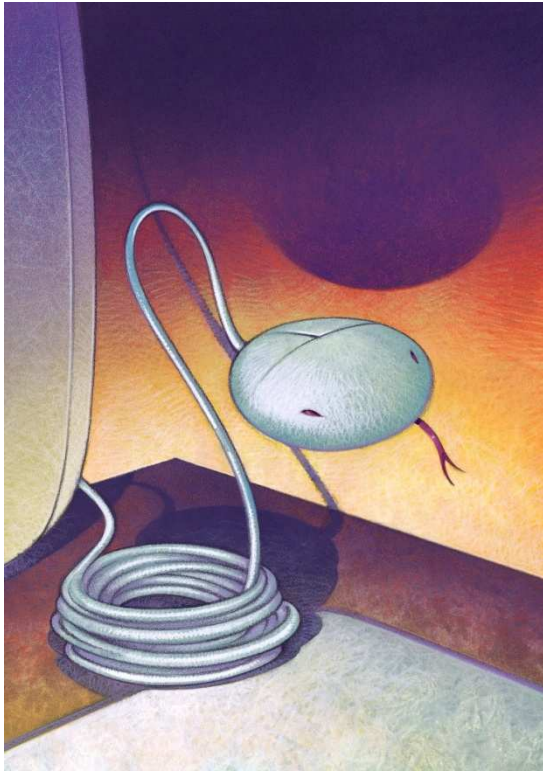
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## 2. Key Legal Issues



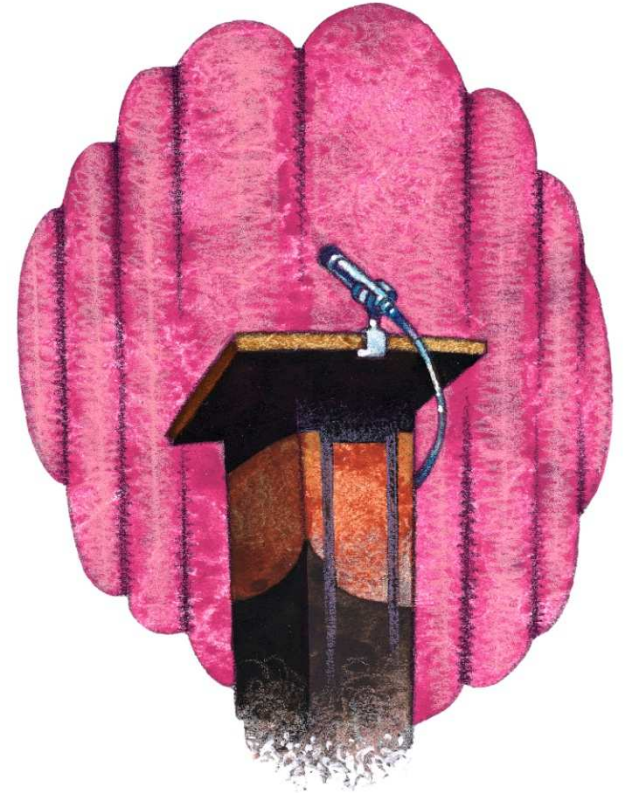
- **First Amendment**
- **Brown Act**
- **Employees' Rights**



# First Amendment 101

“Congress shall make no law  
 . . . abridging the  
 freedom of speech . . .”

- Applies to local agencies through 14<sup>th</sup> amendment
- Doesn't have to be a “law”



# Threshold Issue

- **Is a *public agency* abridging speech?**
  - Individual blog by public official, not created with public resources: probably not
  - Public agency blog, created with public resources: yes

# Key Issues

- **What kind of forum?**
  - Traditional websites—Not a public forum
  - Interactive – May well be a public forum
- **What kinds of limits?**

# Limits

- **Allowed:**
  - Topic specific (within the subject matter jurisdiction or defined topic)
- **Not allowed**
  - Deletions of objectionable remarks
  - “Objectionable” may include some profanity

**Do Not  
Feed The  
Trolls.**

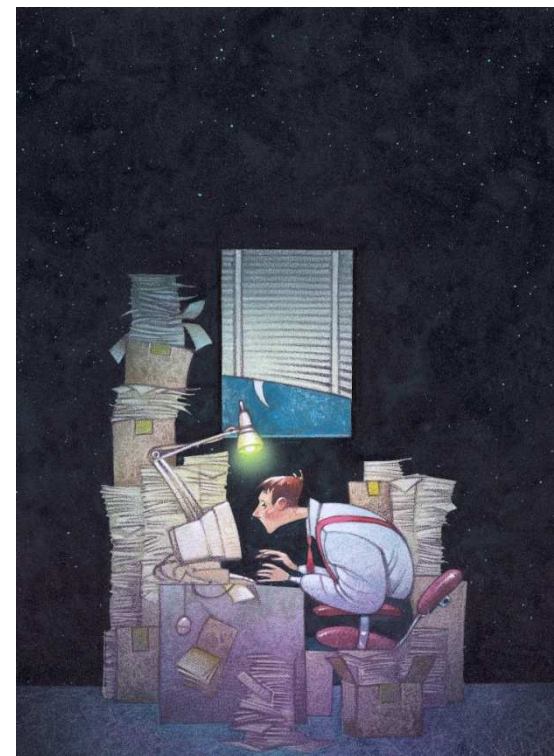
**Do Not Reply  
To This Thread.**



**DNFT**

# Brown Act Issues

- **AG: Email exchanges = meeting**
- **Discussions on blogs or any exchange of info on positions = meeting**



# Brown Act: Implications

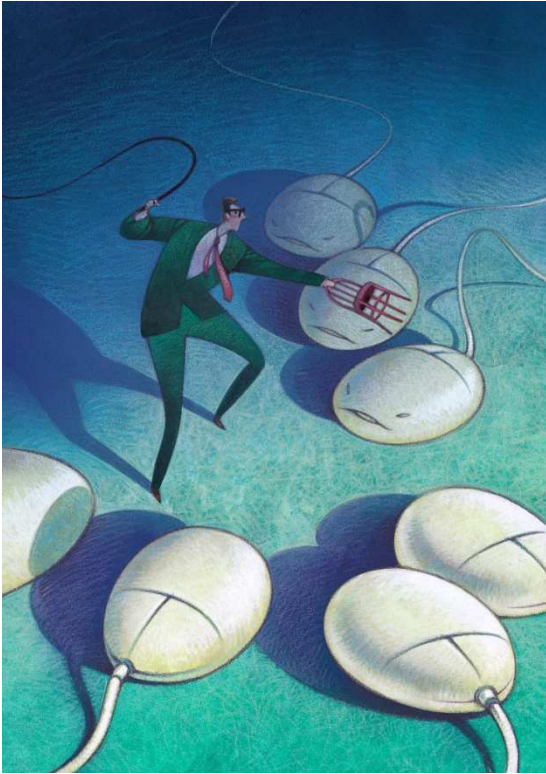
- **Being FB friends: OK**
- **Grandkids picture comments: OK**
- **Substantive issues: Not OK**

# Brown Act Implications

- **Use web 2.0 media to supplement practices**
- **Not supplant**
- **Ex: Agenda postings/  
teleconferencing**



# Best Practices for Elected Officials



- **Use social media to seek input**
- **Not broadcast one's views in advance of meeting**

# Guidance to Employees

- **Public capacity: Consider guidelines (ex: Utah)**
- **Private capacity: Be aware of right to speak on issues of public concern**

# Resources

- **Handouts**
- [www.ca-ilg.org/CGItechnology](http://www.ca-ilg.org/CGItechnology)
- [www.ca-ilg.org/CSACsocialmedia](http://www.ca-ilg.org/CSACsocialmedia)



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