



Do You Twitter?

Monterey County Elections on
Twitter

[Twitter.com/MontereyVote](https://twitter.com/MontereyVote)

Why ?

- Social networking may be the newest form of outreach/public education in use
- Sheer number of existing users – in the millions
- Consider it to increase outreach while keeping costs down (FREE!)
- Keeping followers informed about local government in hopes of increasing knowledge and awareness and sparking deeper involvement
- More informal approach to public education

Why ?

- Helps take away the “mystery” behind what we do by sharing current news and reporting on activities
- Maybe people will stop questioning whether or not we work full-time (or maybe not)

Seriously tho:

- Twitter can be used for networking, news reporting, sharing information, and “marketing” your activities to others who may be currently uninterested
- Small investment of time and attention, manageable, integrate it with your normal workflow
- It can be addictive, effective and FUN!

How did we get started?



- Naming – MontereyVote
- Department official logo to Twitter profile so we are visually recognized
- MontereyVote image is “Monterey Election News”
- Include a brief description of your purpose/activities
- Include URL of official Department website www.MontereyCountyElections.us
- Joined WeFollow – user powered Twitter directory to add your profile to existing categories such as elections, government, politics so people searching directory can find you

How did we get started?



- Following other users can encourage them to reciprocate and follow you
- View your follower's followers and reach out to them as well
- Limits to adding - no more than 200 followers can begin to follow you each day, with a maximum of 2,000 for every 2,000 you follow
- !Too much! We hope our followers will retweet our message to their followers, which helps distribution to even more users. "Each one Tweet one" like the old saying, "Each one teach one"

How did we get started?



- Caution on growing too fast – sign of a spammer
- Can “block” certain followers who may be involved in business or other engagements outside of the realm of what we do.
- Caution about giving perception that we are linked to or supports the activities of other Twitter users

Getting the Word Out?



- Sent a press release for media distribution
- Press releases are also emailed and posted on our website
- Sent a direct message, an email, or even called those with existing Twitter profiles to encourage them to follow us
- Each time we speak to a member of the press, the public, or other Tweeters we ask them to follow us for up-to-date information

Getting the Word Out?



- Link to our Twitter profile from our Department website home page
- List the latest Tweets along with our press releases under "Latest News and Postings"
- Informed thousands of county employees/potential users via the weekly report distributed by the CAO

How did we Grow?



- Growing each day –At start, only a handful of followers and admittedly these were staff members who had existing accounts
- Within weeks, up to 25 followers
- Within months, over 100
- Quality not quantity

How did we Grow?



- As of yesterday, now have 105 followers to our messages
- We are following 34 other users
- We are listed on 6 lists that have a combined 31 followers, adding those who read our messages
- Followers in Monterey County and in California from areas like Sacramento and Los Angeles; around the country in areas such as Washington D.C., NYC, Arizona, and Baton Rouge Louisiana!

Using Twitter – Quick, Easy, FREE



■ Reminders –

- its FREE public outreach and education!
- Takes only a few (thoughtful) minutes of time!
- Helps us share information with so many more people than we can in traditional ways (radio, television or print ads, outreach events like fairs and festivals, scheduling outreach presentations to the public)

Using Twitter – Quick, Easy, FREE



- You don't have to send a message every hour or even every day
 - Periods where we may not Tweet for days where we may Tweet multiple times in the day to keep followers informed – Election Day
- 140 character limit (including spaces and punctuation) so this limits what you say
- Form your Tweets carefully, maximize clarity and provide information your followers want to know. Keep them interested and coming back for more.

Using Twitter – Up-to-Date/“Live” Coverage



- Notify the media of a power outage and confirm voting was still open
 - “Power outage in Greenfield. Polls are still open - plans in place for this. We have flashlights and materials to allow voting to continue.” 3:37 PM Nov 3rd from web
 - “Power is back on in Greenfield. Lets hope it stays that way.” 4:43 PM Nov 3rd from web

Using Twitter – Up-to-Date/“Live” Coverage



- To announce the closing of polls and release of the first results, or that updated results were available
 - “Polls are closed, first report of vote by mail ballots and 17.26% turnout so far. Call or see on web.. shortly - takes a bit to post online”
8:27 PM Nov 3rd from web
 - “Tabulating remaining ballots. Watch for updated results posted on our website later this afternoon. Will Tweet when up.” 1:22 PM Nov 13th from web
- It was very easy journalism.....

Using Twitter – Up-to-Date/“Live” Coverage



- To ask the media to remind voters to get out and vote – to help spark a higher participation

“One last chance for our media partners to remind voters to make their voice heard today by voting! Our poll workers are waiting for you!” 4:40 PM Nov 3rd from web

We watched the 6:00 p.m. news and did see one of the major television stations remind voters to get out and vote! Now, how many calls or emails would I have had to send to make this happen without Twitter?

Using Twitter – Election Calendars & Updates to Activities



- To announce the latest schedule of activities for those who wish to observe
“The official canvass is to be done in 20 days (11/23) per state law. view online schedule <http://www.montereycountyelection.com>” 1:43 PM Nov 6th from web
- To announce a special election & opening of the candidate nomination period
“Recall election announced for Trustee Area 1, Alisal Union School District on August 25th. Nominations open NOW through June 11, 2009.” 4:41 PM May 21st from web

Using Twitter – Election Calendars & Updates to Activities



- Used in addition to press releases and sometimes to remind the media we just sent them a press release!
“Just sent PR to announce opening day of nominations this Monday 7/13. 138 offices available on the ballot this November - wow!”
3:56 PM Jul 10th from web
- To provide quick answers to frequent questions, such as voting by mail
“Deadline to request a vote by mail ballot for May 19th statewide special election is Tuesday May 12.” 5:39 PM May 7th from web

Using Twitter – Direct Traffic



- Direct traffic to your website
“Reminder Polls open 7 am to 8 pm Tues 11/3.
Polling place locations & voter information
pamphlet at <http://www.montereycountyel...>”
3:41 PM Nov 2nd from web
- Direct traffic to other sites you use or find
may be useful to others, such as the
Secretary of State, the federal Election
Assistance Commission, or the regulations
we follow under the American’s with
Disabilities Act

Using Twitter – Read & Share News



- Allows you to read articles and stories provided by those we follow, and we have used Twitter to link to useful articles we find on the internet.
 - Below is a series of articles we shared by the League of Women Voters in a New Jersey newspaper on the voter's perspective on the reason why they vote.

"Why vote? Read story from first time voter."
<http://bit.ly/2axvzE> 12:43 PM Sep 9th from web

"Second of a series of stories on why people choose to vote."
<http://bit.ly/SPSVo> 11:56 AM Sep 10th from web

"Third in a series of articles on voting - do you vote?"
<http://bit.ly/4xC0xS> 11:17 AM Sep 11th from web

Using Twitter – Read & Share News



- Share articles of what is happening in elections both locally and globally.
 - We shared an article about the election in Afghanistan and their alternative methods to deliver election supplies.
- “Google alert - donkeys & horses deliver election materials to rugged areas of Afghanistan - wonder how early they head out b4 the election?” 11:25 AM Aug 17th from web

Using Twitter – Find Partners



- Twitter can be used as a means to find others to form a working partnership
 - Partners can share information with their membership
 - Provide an instant audience for public education and a workforce who can serve as poll workers
 - May have alternate funding resources and may be willing to share the financial burden (staff and supplies)

Using Twitter – And they told two friends, and so on.....



- Using Tweets in news stories
 - Reporters now asking if we will use Twitter to share information
 - Easier for them to check while off-site than to be at the office to receive a fax or visit our website to find a press release
 - Statistics we shared that day appeared on evening news, educating even more
 - “Cool stats on Ballotpedia - 109 local measures on the 11/3 ballot in California!
<http://ballotpedia.org/wiki...>” 3:17 PM Oct 30th from web

Using Twitter – And they told two friends, and so on.....



■ Retweeting

- Your Twitter followers can take your messages and share it with their followers, multiplying the number of recipients
- Example, taking four of the major news outlets, two television and two print, will give MontereyVote exposure to their combined total of 2,779 followers.
 - If one of their followers then retweets a comment the exposure keeps growing exponentially. A great deal of exposure at virtually NO COST, and the number of Twitter users keep on growing every day.

Who Else is Using Twitter?



- *Our 105 followers:* county political parties, voters, other county election officials, WeDrawtheLines (Citizen's redistricting commission), labor boards, GOTV (Get Out the Vote), Ballotpedia, city attorneys, two major county newspapers and two major television news outlets
- *The 34 who we follow:* Secretary of State, other County election officials, League of Women Voters, Governor's News Room, media outlets, Ballotpedia, and as of yesterday, CSAC_Counties
- *California Election Officials* – Alameda, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, San Mateo, Orange, and the Secretary of State
- *Election Officials in other states* – Oklahoma, Florida, South Carolina, Washington D.C., Indiana, Kentucky, Utah, Tennessee, and Virginia
- *Election Officials in other countries* – Canada, Iran, Ireland, United Kingdom, Australia, Zimbabwe...
- *Election-Related Organizations on Twitter* – DemocracyNow!, SimVOTE, Rock the Vote, League of Women Voters/SMARTVoter, Get Out the Vote (GOTV), FairVote, Trigger the Vote, Overseas Voting Foundation (OVF), PEW Research Center, and Mobilize.org



Legal Issues?

- Can the law keep up with technology? Not so far....
 - Technology develops and changes at speeds greater than the law
 - We used to write letters, then you could send an email, then you could send a text message from your phone, then you could IM someone from your email account, then you could get "LinkedIn" or share ideas and photos on "Facebook", and now we have Twitter and connections with other social networking sites to complicate even further
- Are there legal issues? Yes – according to article, users being sued for libel and what they've tweeted about others, who may or may not also be on Twitter.
- Issues may be similar to what we face today with regard to email
 - Public Records Act or court subpoena
 - Storage/retention
 - Deeper issues if business profile mixed or linked with personal profile
 - How do the laws govern free speech and/or the Internet
- Has Monterey faced any legal issues? Not to date and we hope to keep it that way.
 - Keep messaged related to work functions
 - Never offering opinions or advice
 - Limit access to who can post information to maintain controls



Legal Issues?

“Is the Web a unique, separate space or is it really an extension of real space?”

To find out, read, “Can the law keep up with technology?” at www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/11/17/law.technology/index.html

“Mix” it

“Facebook” it

“Twitter” it

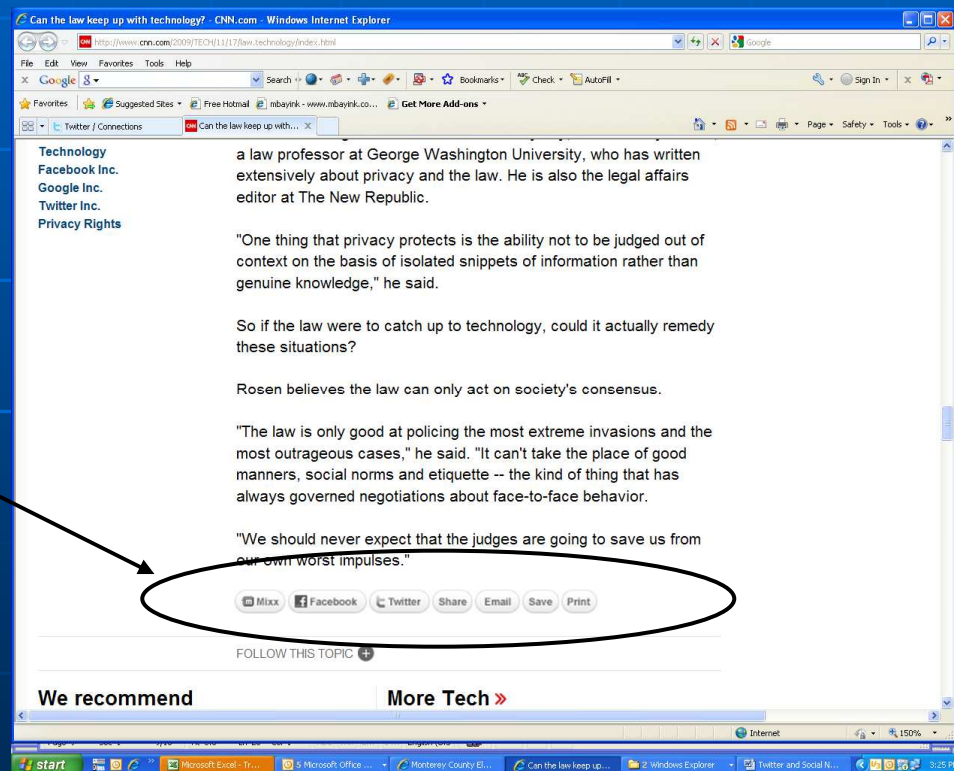
“Share” it

“Email” it

“Save” it

Or simply

“Print” it





www.twitter.com/MontereyVote

she follows me ...
she follows me not ..

