

HUNTINGTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Huntington Memorial Library would like to invite its staff to help the library engage with the community. The ever growing forum of social media has provided an unprecedented opportunity for increased visibility, outreach, communication and advocacy. Our goals are:

- To increase the visibility of the good work we do.
- To educate people about information resources.
- To promote library services.
- To encourage the support of our services and programs.
- To facilitate the open communication between the library and its community.

This policy is not intended to replace other Library policies but, rather, to supplement those policies. As with more traditional resources, the Library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent. The Library is not responsible for enforcing restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of this resource.

GOAL OF A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The goal of a social media policy for the Huntington Memorial Library and its employees is to provide parameters that allow sharing and conversation with the community. Our social media efforts should follow the organization's missions and goals without misrepresenting the ideals and focus of our organization. Social media is used to promote our activities, educate our community and most importantly to provide a forum for conversation.

All employees must follow the constructs of this policy when participating in any social media forum.

HML SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS

Currently the library's social media tools include Pinterest, a blog on the website and eNews (while email is more traditional it does allow recipients to correspond with library personnel). Other outreach efforts like Facebook and Twitter will be incorporated in the summer of 2014 to help create community conversation. These social media tools will evolve over time and HML will adapt as needed. New initiatives and changes in social media usage will be provided at staff meetings.

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

The Director is considered the Spokesperson for the library and will carry the responsibility for making final decisions about social media outreach since it is a part of the total marketing effort for the HML. The Adult Services Librarian will work closely with the Director and will contribute to the social media efforts. Other staff members will be invited to participate at various times and for varying lengths of time. Guidance in content, frequency of posting, responses to negative comments and alteration of technology tools will be provided by the Spokesperson.

All links to social media tools will be posted on the home page of the website. All outreach will adhere to our brand and marketing plan. This includes logo, slogan, name and current fund-raising efforts. At this

time much of the library's visual brand is a work in progress. However, fonts and colors that have been established for our media will be used across all platforms. It's also important to remember that the foundation of a brand is the mission, goals and values of the organization.

HML's mission is to provide current popular materials for all age levels and purchase current reference and circulating materials to the answer information needs of citizens. Some of the central values that we will strive to uphold are:

- High quality customer service
- Education and life-long learning
- Connecting library services to community needs
- Access to information
- Preservation
- Privacy

Employees are invited to be part of the conversation. If a regular employee or volunteer has an idea for a social media topic, they should inform the Spokesperson who will have final say over its use. All employees are encouraged to participate and add value to our social media efforts with care. The guidelines listed below should be followed closely. Any questions or issues should be directed to the Spokesperson.

The Pinterest account will be managed by a staff member. The goal of Pinterest is to provide readers' advisory information and other related fun facts about our library. The account will be monitored daily. Other related Pinterest accounts will be followed to maximize the flow of information. Boards will be developed as new ideas emerge and to create a monthly theme.

A staff member will be responsible for oversight of the Facebook account. The overarching goal of Facebook is to inform followers of current library issues, reader's advisory information and upcoming programs. Posts and comments will be monitored. Responsibilities can be shared with other staff members with the understanding that the participation will be delegated for specific time periods. Participating staff must be familiar with this policy and understand the mission of the library.

A Twitter account will be initiated and used for the duration of the Adult Summer Reading Program. It will be used specifically to create a conversation with the participants of the Camp NaNoWriMo program. A staff member will be responsible for the "tweets" and responses from the community.

Negative interactions from all social media outlets will be reported to the Spokesperson.

RESPONDING TO NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS

Regular employees should inform the Director of any harmful or offensive comments or posts that are observed.

Offensive posts with inappropriate language should be deleted.

Challenging posts should be responded to with the goal of educating the community.

ACCESS TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees may “tune in” to social media tools during the course of the work day if the activity is pertinent to the library’s goals and doesn’t interfere with daily tasks. Staying connected will help keep the library apprised of conversation and activity that should be handled in a timely manner. The Director should be informed and should respond to all controversial posts quickly and with a positive, helpful attitude.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

Overall, it’s important to remember that the internet never forgets. Interactions should be honest in approach and true to the library’s goals. When engaging in conversation with our community, the library will maintain a professional and helpful tone. All staff should remember that even when using personal social media, the larger community will associate them with HML.

The following instructions should be followed when interacting outside of approved library work:

- Be responsible. Blogs, wikis, photo-sharing and other forms of online dialogue (unless posted by authorized Library personnel) are individual interactions, not corporate communications. Staff are personally responsible for their posts.
- Don’t tell secrets. Your job may give you access to confidential information about coworkers and customers. Respect and maintain the confidentiality that has been entrusted to you. Don’t divulge proprietary information, internal documents or personal details about other people.

The following guidelines should be followed when posting or commenting as authorized library personnel:

- Be smart. A blog or community post is visible to the entire world. Remember that what you write will be public for a long time – be respectful to the library, employees, patrons, organization donors, and protect your privacy.
- Respect the privacy of others.
- Write what you know. You have a unique perspective on the organization based on your experiences and knowledge. Let your personality show so you can create compelling and interesting information. Never perpetuate hearsay or negative gossip.
- Include links. Reach out to other groups and include their information in order to connect to bigger conversations and to reach new audiences.
- Be respectful. It is fine to disagree with others but don’t insult readers, employees, bosses, vendors or sponsors. Use language that is appropriate for all age groups and don’t use insults, obscenities or other disparaging language.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Social Media: any web application, web site, or web account created and/or maintained by the HML which facilitates an environment for library staff and library users to share opinions and information about library-related subjects, events or issues. HML recognizes and respects differences in opinion. This policy governs public use of these tools for any purpose.

Policy: a definite course of action adopted for the sake of expediency, facility, etc. In the case of the HML Social Media Policy, it means the rules of conduct that are specific and can only be altered by the governing body's revision.

Guideline: an indication of a future course of action. For the HML Social Media Policy, guidelines are loose instruction on the expected behavior.

Personal use: posting on other social media for personal use means posting to sites unrelated to the mission of HML. There is a fine line between personal and professional. You will be known as an employee of HML so everything you post can be considered to represent HML even if that isn't the intention. Remember to behave professionally in your interactions.

Professional use: posting to HML's social media outlets for the purpose of representing HML.

Employee: paid professionals that work at HML.

Spokesperson: the person whose job description includes the responsibility for social media outreach.