Social Media in Public Involvement

Findings from the 2018 Assessment of the Practice of Public Involvement in Florida

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Changing Public Involvement Processes

Fewer public meetings and increased use of technology (social media, online surveys, and interactive maps).

Changes made to public involvement

- **Yes**: 19 MPOs
- **No**: 3 MPOs
- **Not sure**: 5 MPOs
Emergence of Social Media

The challenges from social media come from balancing the appropriate tone for official government communication with the informal communication that takes place on social media platforms.
# Diverse Techniques for Public Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Involvement Technique</th>
<th>Number of MPOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio/TV advertisements</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated web page</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitated meetings</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newspaper advertisements</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visioning workshops</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Open houses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive GIS applications</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker’s bureau</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone hotline</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
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As of 2023, the most commonly used techniques are Radio/TV advertisements and Dedicated web page, while Telephone hotline is the least used.
Most and Least Effective Techniques for Public Engagement

### Most Effective Techniques

- **Public meetings**: 7
- **Newspaper advertisements**: 4
- **Community fairs**: 3
- **Surveys**: 2
- **Facilitated meetings**: 2
- **Newsletters**: 1
- **Individual/small group briefings**: 1
- **Radio/TV advertisements**: 1
- **Interactive GIS applications**: 1
- **Other**: 1
- **Social media**: 1

### Least Effective Techniques

- **Public meetings**: 8
- **Newspaper advertisements**: 7
- **Newsletters**: 4
- **Community fairs**: 3
- **Facilitated meetings**: 2
- **Dedicated web page**: 2
- **Open houses**: 1
- **Telephone hotline**: 1

(Number of MPOs)
“...which platform do you find most effective. My response would definitely be Twitter!” – Palm Beach TPA
Typical Uses by Platform

**YouTube**

YouTube is effective for complex projects.

**Facebook and Twitter**

Facebook and Twitter are commonly used to post:
- Fliers and press releases related to public meetings
- Project decisions and safety campaigns

**Facebook Live**

Facebook Live sometimes serves as a platform to broadcast online meetings.
Regularly Scheduled Posts

Yes: 44%
No: 30%
Not sure: 22%
No answer: 0%
Active Monitoring

- Continuous
- Hourly
- Daily

Pie chart showing:
- Yes: 59%
- No: 8%
- Not sure: 11%
- No answer: 22%

- Continuous
- Hourly
- Daily
Designated Social Media Staff

- Executive Director
- Administrative assistant
- Public information officer
- Dedicated outreach coordinator
- A consultant

- Yes: 67%
- No: 11%
- Not sure: 0%
- No answer: 22%
Policy Guidelines

Number of MPOs with social media policies in place:

- 15 MPOs have policies requiring director approval.
- 6 MPOs have policies removing negative language.
- 3 MPOs are not sure.
- No MPOs have no answer.

Policies range from requiring director approval to removing negative language.
Study Findings Related to Social Media

- Many MPOs noted that social media either helped or had the potential to help them reach an appropriate level of public involvement.
- Several MPOs mentioned that it would be useful to have social media training.
- Some MPOs found newspaper advertisements and community fairs to be more effective than social media.
- Some MPOs use social media interactions as a performance measure.
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