



The Computerworld Honors Program

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Final Copy of Case Study

Status:

Laureate

Year:

2013

Organization Name:

California Department of Motor Vehicles

Organization URL:

www.dmv.ca.gov

Project Name:

DMV Social Media Program

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:

Innovation

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

With responsibility for licensing over 23 million drivers and registering over 33 million vehicles, the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is often described as the "face of California state government." As part of its commitment to serving the public, DMV continually looks for innovative ways to educate customers and respond to customer needs. DMV's social media program was created to provide customers with another avenue to receive information, communicate with the department, and resolve customer issues or concerns. DMV has a multipronged social media strategy to engage and inform its customers utilizing Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. DMV regularly posts facts, time saving tips and frequently asked questions on Facebook and also sends up

to nine tweets throughout the day. YouTube is used to disseminate helpful customer education videos on a range of topics. As an alternative to visiting a field office or calling a phone center, customers regularly use social media channels to ask DMV-related questions, post comments, learn about DMV services and processes, or raise questions about specific customer service issues. In order to meet customer expectations, the department regularly monitors Facebook and Twitter throughout the business day and targets to respond to all social media inquiries within two hours. While no significant challenges were encountered during program development, implementation required the creation of policies and procedures to guide the department's use of social media. DMV has also taken advantage of several technologies that make it easier to manage social media updates. For example, Sprout Social, gives the department the ability to schedule and send tweets throughout the day, increases reporting capabilities, and provides demographic data to ensure our outreach and messaging appropriately reflects DMV's customer base.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

The California DMV was an early adopter of social media. DMV became a member of YouTube in October 2007, a member of Twitter in February 2008, and joined Facebook in July 2009. The department has taken an incremental approach to using social media for customer engagement. DMV initially began with the posting of driver education and safety videos on its YouTube channel. Over time, the department has expanded the content available on YouTube to include public service announcements, video press releases, and other DMV-related content. The department initially joined Twitter and Facebook with the intent of using the social media channels to support one way outgoing communications to customers. In July 2009, the department identified the opportunity to better utilize the interactive capabilities provided by social media and launched a six month pilot program focused on Twitter. This pilot expanded the department's use of Twitter to include active monitoring and response to customer tweets related to DMV issues and questions. With the pilot's success, DMV's social media program expanded to include more active monitoring, using Facebook as a citizen engagement tool. Today, our social media program simultaneously employs Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in order to cross-message, educate, and communicate with customers. DMV has evolved the social media program using technologies such as Hootsuite, and Sprout Social to enhance tracking, reporting and timeliness of communications. The department has also standardized response times for customer inquiries and uses a coordinated communication effort between all medias to announce and disseminate relevant information to customers; such as updates on systems, office hours or closing, and new changes to forms and transactions. By

enhancing our approach and combining communication efforts, each of the social media tools continues to successfully increase customer engagement and improve customer communication and education opportunities.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

Yes. Implementation of the project is complete. DMV now manages its social media program as part of its ongoing operations.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

The California DMV social media program serves customers throughout the state and seeks to engage and support those who need to conduct business with us. DMV's social media benefits those customers by increasing accessibility and interactively sharing information. The growth of the DMV social media programs provides an example of the benefits to California citizens. In 2011, 5,683 Facebook users "liked" DMV on Facebook and 5,708 Twitter users followed the department. By the end of 2012, the number of Facebook followers increased to 9,585 and Twitter followers to 8,818, a growth of 68% and 54%. In the month of December 2012, DMV had 440 Facebook public comments or links, 635 Tweet mentions, and 1,307 re-tweets of DMV tweets. DMV YouTube channel has received over 25,748,751 views since its creation. The following recent Facebook posts and tweets illustrate the benefits derived from DMV's use of social media. (For privacy purposes, any identifying information was removed) Facebook user: "Vehicle registration renewal online is done and so convenient! Thank you." Twitter user: "thanks for implementing 'Virtual Hold,' finally I don't have to spend 45 minutes on the phone listening to low quality music." CA DMV response: "You're welcome! Here are some other time-saving tools DMV offers <http://tinyurl.com/7yjepka>" Twitter user: "Painful here at Daly City @CA_DMV. ONE person doing both vehicle verification & drivers tests. Sigh..... CA DMV response: "CA DMV would like to hear more about your DMV visit. Please complete the Customer Service Comment Card. <http://tinyurl.com/6mq3yph>" Twitter user response: "Done. Thanks for asking!" Facebook user: "I'm out of state today, what is the address of the place to send my license plate renewal?" CA DMV: "Send your renewal to....." Facebook user: "Thanks DMV!"



Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

The California DMV was one of the first motor vehicle departments in the nation to develop a comprehensive social media program and was also an early adopter and promoter of social media within California state government. The department's program has demonstrated the value of social media as not only a communication channel, but also as a customer engagement and service delivery channel. Our interactions with customers in a real time and public environment has served as a model for how other public agencies can use social media to promote a transparent and responsive customer-oriented culture. DMV regularly receives requests from other public agencies to learn more about the structure, benefits, and lessons learned from DMV's social media program. The department's collaboration with other interested public agencies has helped to inform the development and adoption of other social media programs, helping to expand the overall transparency and responsiveness of the government as a whole.