CATEGORY T: Outstanding Initiatives in New Media

North Dakota National Guard Public Affairs Office

BACKGROUND

The North Dakota National Guard launched four new/social media sites in March 2009. Plans were in place to implement these avenues of command information, but were sped up when massive flooding appeared imminent. We knew that any disaster would increase the need for fast, accurate information, and these sites provided the tools to better do that.

The four sites we began in March included a Facebook fan page, a microblog through Twitter, photo sharing through Flickr and videos through YouTube. Since then, we've launched an additional Twitter site from a North Dakota National Guard leader and provided training and consultation to North Dakota's Army and Air National Guard recruiting commands to establish Facebook fan pages that link to our primary Twitter account, @NDNationalGuard.

Our communication objectives and target audiences for these sites are explained further below, as is the integration of new and traditional media in the North Dakota National Guard.

OBJECTIVES

We had a number of objectives in mind when we began our social media sites in March 2009, and we have worked diligently to fulfill those objectives. First, we wanted to ensure our main mission of communicating with our target audiences covered all of the major avenues through which those audience members choose to receive information. Telling the North Dakota National Guard story is our top priority. By telling that story, we aim to reinforce and further develop the public's confidence in their Guard, as well as maintain Soldier and Airmen morale. Second, we wanted to showcase the accomplishments of our Soldiers and Airmen to a wider audience. Third, we wanted an opportunity to share more information that traditional Soldiers and Airmen may not always be privy to unless unit leadership is proactive in distributing such updates from the Education Office, Safety Office and more. Fourth, we wanted to engage traditional media on another playing field. Fifth, we embraced the opportunity to recognize the other players who make the Guard successful, primarily employers and family members. Sixth, we aimed to improve recruiting and retention by reaching younger audiences in the method they're most comfortable communicating in.

We strive to keep our tone conversational and engaging on our sites. We understand social media is meant to be just that: social. We ask questions, solicit feedback and comments and have implemented tools, such as a quiz on Facebook, to make the experience even more interactive and beneficial to both the Guard and our audience.

TARGET AUDIENCES/COMMUNITIES

We do not have one or even two main target audiences with our social media endeavors since some sites work better for communicating with an internal audience and some excel more with an external audience.

On **Facebook**, our primary audience is internal. A scan of the 1,289 fans at year end shows that many are North Dakota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen or their family members. While we take into account community members with an interest in the Guard, the focus remains those from within our Guard family.

With **Twitter**, our target audience is primarily external. With the exception of a dozen or so identified followers who serve in the North Dakota National Guard or are married to a service member, the bulk of our followers are media, military-related organizations and members of the general public interested in the North Dakota National Guard. As of Dec. 31, 2009, we had 1,105 followers at www.twitter.com/NDNationalGuard and 211 followers for www.twitter.com/NDNGAberle.

On **YouTube** and **Flickr**, our audiences are mixed. It's more difficult to analyze who is viewing those products, but many are referred there from Facebook and Twitter. We know these products will appeal widely to both internal and external audiences, so we market them that way. Families and Guardsmen want to see their activities and that of other North Dakota Soldiers and Airmen featured, while interested recruits and the general public also have an interest.

Beyond this, we connect with media on Flickr through our news release distribution, enabling them to download high-resolution photographs to accompany a story from our Flickr site.

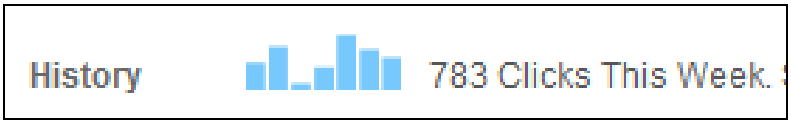
NEW/TRADITIONAL MEDIA OUTREACH

As we moved from solely traditional to a mix of traditional and social media outreach, our primary goal remained the same: tell the North Dakota National Guard story. The two media forms intertwine seamlessly to help us do that.

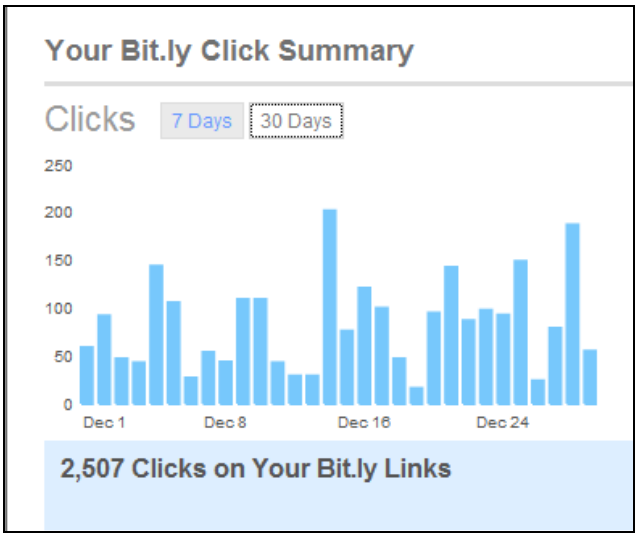
We continue to send media advisories and news releases via e-mail to our media distribution list. When photos accompany those releases, media are directed to our Flickr site to download the high-resolution photos. The advisories and releases also are posted to Facebook, with a link set out via Twitter to alert our wider audience to the information or upcoming activity.

NEW MEDIA CONTENT

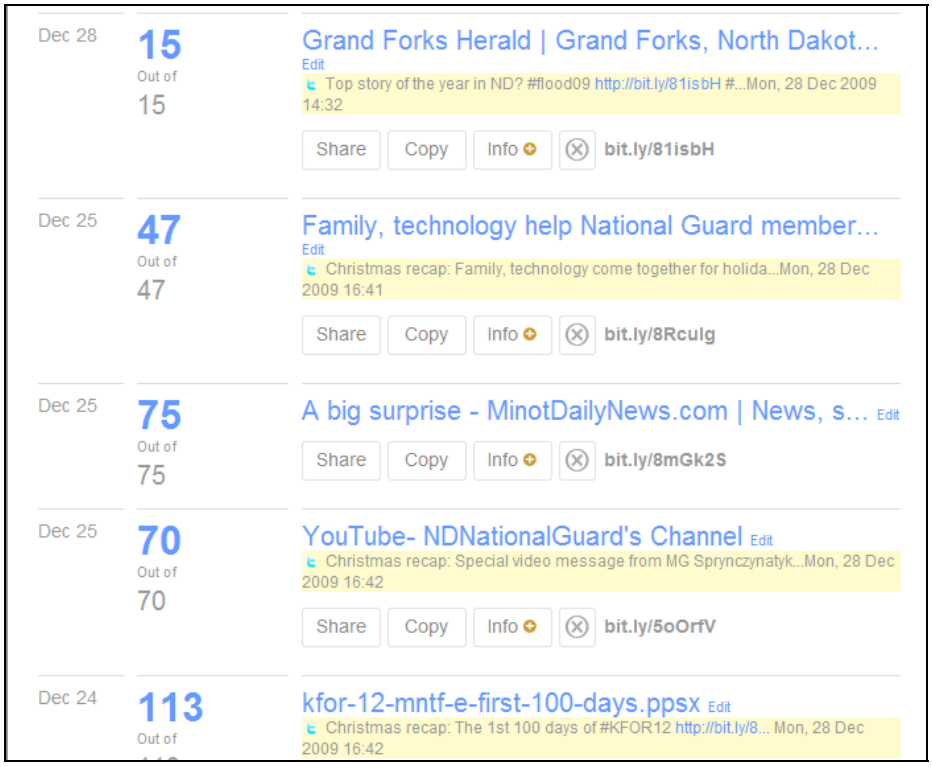
The North Dakota National Guard's social media content falls under four site categories: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr. Our efforts within each area are highlighted here. We use bit.ly to track click-throughs on links from all four, and have seen between 300 to nearly 800 clicks on the links we've pushed out per week.



Christmas week history



bit.ly Click Summary as of Dec. 29, 2009



Tracking Click-Throughs with bit.ly

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/NDNationalGuard

The North Dakota National Guard implemented a Facebook fan page in March 2009. Throughout the first few months of the site's existence, content focused largely on the historic flooding across the state, primarily looking at the Guard's participation, as well as safety and resource information for those affected by flooding.

As the crisis subsided, the page grew to include a wealth of information directed primarily to our target audience: North Dakota National Guardsmen, Guard Families and retirees.

NOTES: Used primarily to showcase media advisories and news releases and bring them to a wider audience, we also use the Notes tab to share command messages from the North Dakota National Guard adjutant general, chief of the National Guard Bureau and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

N.D. General in Kosovo joins Santa to deliver holiday message to families

Share

Yesterday at 11:10am | Edit Note | Delete

CAMP BONDSTEEL, KOSOVO – Jolly Ol' St. Nick and wife, Mrs. Claus, helped Brig. Gen. Al Dohrmann, Bismarck, N.D., deliver a special holiday message back to North Dakota on Sunday to families of KFOR (Kosovo Forces) Soldiers serving here.

Dohrmann, commander of Multi-National Task Force-East in Kosovo, offered the greeting via Video Interactive Conferencing technology from the main U.S. headquarters for NATO operations in Kosovo. He was joined by commanders and senior enlisted Soldiers from various units in his command.

"I need to tell you how proud I am of each and every Soldier here," Dohrmann said. "The morale is extremely high. I see Soldiers supporting each other, helping to make time away from you (their families) go a bit easier."

Toward the close of the hour-long video conference, Santa and Mrs. Claus made an appearance, standing behind the general and his cadre and waving to children in the audience back in the U.S. The conference could be seen by Family Readiness Groups gathered in Bismarck, Valley City, Fargo, Grand Forks, Camp Grafton, Minot, Dickinson and California.

Father and Mother Christmas, played by James Webber and Rene Favors, contracted civilian workers at Camp Bondsteel, even took time to call out some of children by name to add extra-special holiday spirit.
Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk, adjutant general of the North Dakota National Guard; North Dakota Gov. John Hoeven and U.S. Congressman Earl Pomeroy joined the North Dakota families in Bismarck for the video conference.

Though the message from Dohrmann was rife with warm holiday cheer and season's greetings, it also contained a number of important points aimed at rumor control.

Dohrmann told families, that contrary to information they may have heard in the media, Soldiers in his task force would not be cutting their deployments short.

"This is not the case," Dohrmann said. "At this time, there are no North Dakota Soldiers scheduled to come home early."

North Dakota National Guard's Notes

N.D. General in Kosovo joins Santa to deliver holiday message to families
Dec 14, 2009

Media Advisory: Guardsmen Bring Spirit of Christmas to Veterans' Home
Dec 14, 2009

Media Advisory: Kosovo Peacekeeping Mission Update to Take Place Today
Dec 13, 2009

National Guard Celebrates 373rd Birthday
Dec 11, 2009

Wreaths Across America ceremony to be conducted Dec. 12, 2009
Dec 10, 2009

U.S. NATO Ambassador visits Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo
Dec 9, 2009

N.D. Soldier shaping young minds in Kosovo
Dec 9, 2009

A new sheriff in town
Dec 9, 2009

Family Ties Run Deep in KFOR 12 MNTF-E
Dec 9, 2009

The Long Kosovo Road: A DANCON Marcher's Story
Dec 9, 2009

Notes Example 1

A BIRTHDAY MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

On December 13, our National Guard celebrates 373 years of service. This continues a heritage that began in 1636 when the Massachusetts Bay Colony's militia companies were organized into three regiments - the North, South and East Regiments, and became our first organized defense forces.

Today, units like the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 101st Engineer Battalion, which traces its lineage back to those first regiments, will mark the occasion from Iraq. They, and tens of thousands of others like them, continue to build on this proud heritage as they serve overseas and perform missions their predecessors in the Massachusetts colony could never have envisioned.

At the same time, we continue to support our governors here at home, performing critical missions to defend the homeland against attacks on our own soil and support our civil authorities when disasters strike. The National Guard has never been more central to our nation's defense or more important to the success of our Army and Air Force. The respect and gratitude shown by the American people for our Citizen Soldiers and Airmen have never been greater. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Citizen Soldiers and Airmen who continue to ensure the National Guard is Always Ready. Always There!

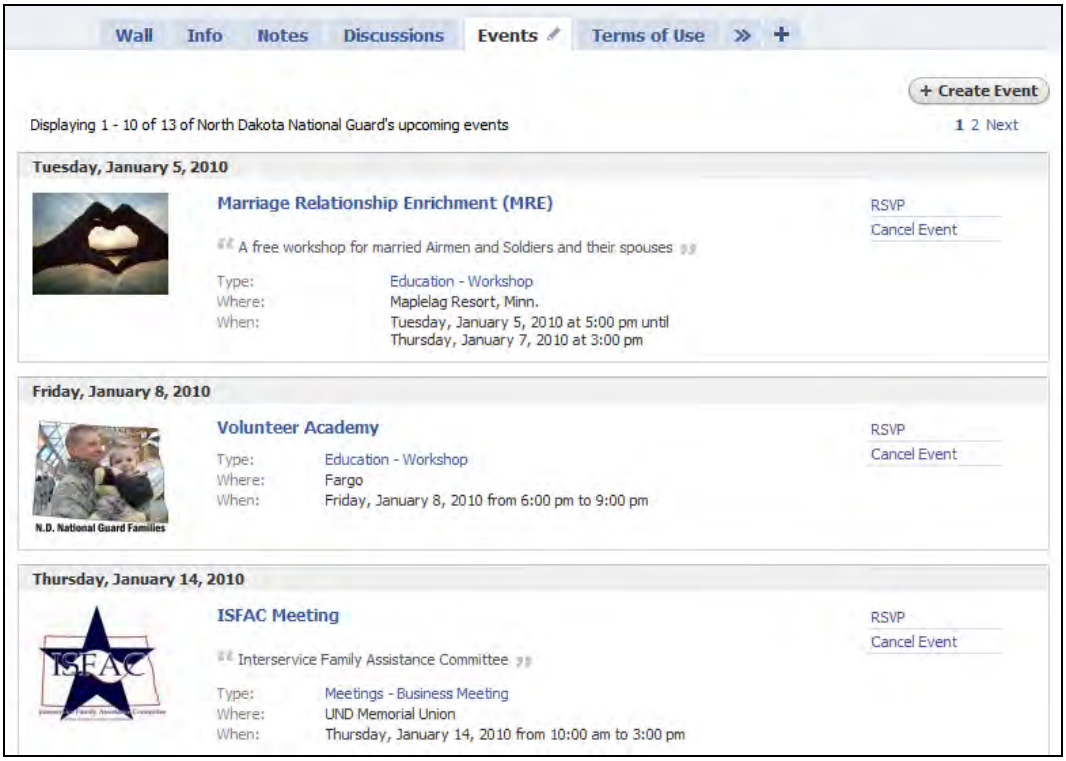
Happy Birthday National Guard!

CRAIG R. MCKINLEY
General, USAF
Chief, National Guard Bureau

Notes Example 2

DISCUSSION: We have been using the Discussion Topics tab on Facebook to categorize and cover topics of interest to our audiences. To date, topics include "News to Use for Guardsmen & Their Families," a conglomeration of beneficial information and resources; "Cool Stuff for Military Members," which provides notices of discounts and offers for those in the military; "Force Protection – Guardsmen's Health" shares health and safety information, including TriCare updates and messages from the North Dakota National Guard Safety Office; "Opportunities for Guardsmen" includes job opportunities and similar posts; "Events & Info for Military Kids" covers youth camps and other kid-related items; "Employers" focuses on ESGR and employer-related information; "Education Benefits" contains updates from the North Dakota National Guard Education Office; "Recruiting and Retention – Army National Guard" and "Recruiting & Retention – Air National Guard" contain information on G-RAP, bonuses and related information; "Civil Air Patrol News" offers updates on the third uniformed service under the North Dakota Office of the Adjutant General; "Retirees' Corner" features information and updates specific to those no longer currently serving in the Guard; "Veterans' Resources" incorporates information from organizations outside of the Guard that support veterans, such as Veterans Upward Bound; and "Civilian Job Opportunities" serves as another location to post announcements for contract positions to work with Guardsmen, veterans and military families.

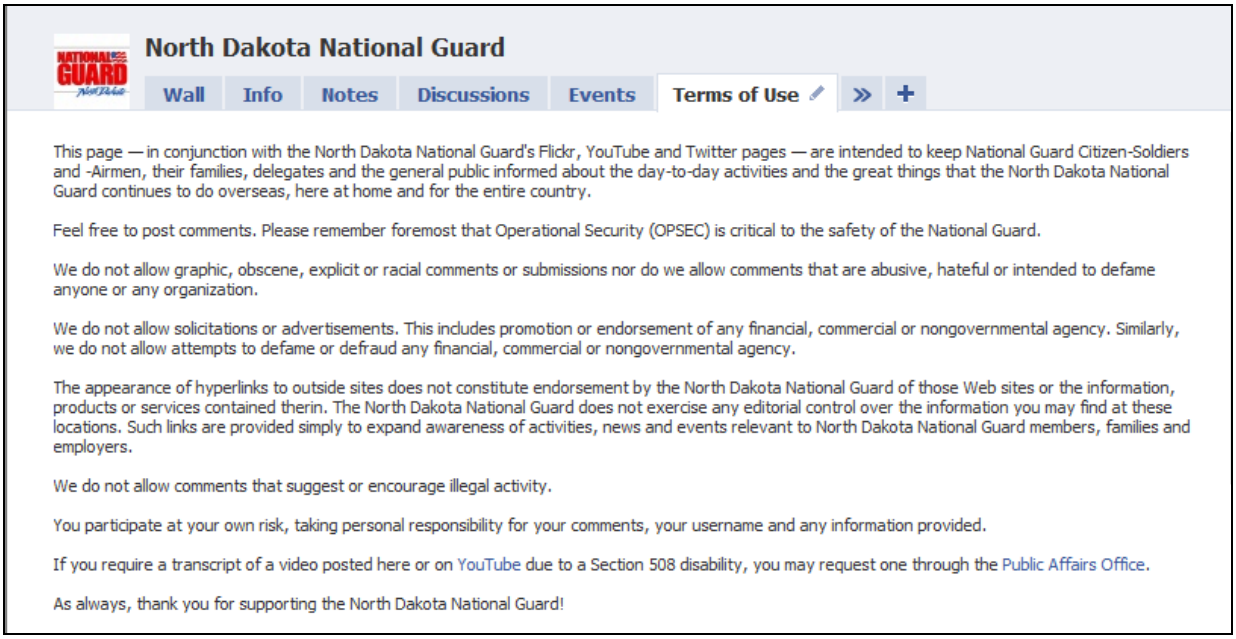
EVENTS: The events tab is a way to enhance the promotion we do more traditionally for Guard-related events, as well as a way to showcase to those outside of the North Dakota National Guard family (media, potential recruits, general public) all that we do to take care of our Soldiers, Airmen and their families.



Events Example 1

Events Example 2

TERMS OF USE: We developed a Terms of Use tab on Facebook to clarify what is and is not acceptable for public input on the site. To date, there has only been one violation, and it was quickly and professionally resolved. The tab also allows us to address Section 508 and offer transcripts for videos posted to YouTube and Facebook. (Related to Section 508, we also ensure that all photos have complete caption information and that pages are well-organized so as to appeal to screen-reading devices as well as those with cognitive impairments.)



North Dakota National Guard

Wall | Info | Notes | Discussions | Events | Terms of Use

This page — in conjunction with the North Dakota National Guard's Flickr, YouTube and Twitter pages — are intended to keep National Guard Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen, their families, delegates and the general public informed about the day-to-day activities and the great things that the North Dakota National Guard continues to do overseas, here at home and for the entire country.

Feel free to post comments. Please remember foremost that Operational Security (OPSEC) is critical to the safety of the National Guard.

We do not allow graphic, obscene, explicit or racial comments or submissions nor do we allow comments that are abusive, hateful or intended to defame anyone or any organization.

We do not allow solicitations or advertisements. This includes promotion or endorsement of any financial, commercial or nongovernmental agency. Similarly, we do not allow attempts to defame or defraud any financial, commercial or nongovernmental agency.

The appearance of hyperlinks to outside sites does not constitute endorsement by the North Dakota National Guard of those Web sites or the information, products or services contained therin. The North Dakota National Guard does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations. Such links are provided simply to expand awareness of activities, news and events relevant to North Dakota National Guard members, families and employers.

We do not allow comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity.

You participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information provided.

If you require a transcript of a video posted here or on YouTube due to a Section 508 disability, you may request one through the Public Affairs Office.

As always, thank you for supporting the North Dakota National Guard!

PHOTOS: While we maintain the bulk of our online photographic presence on Flickr, we maintain several albums solely on Facebook, as well. Toward the end of 2009, we felt confident enough in our management of the site to open photo-posting permissions to our fans. We plan to encourage additional participation among Soldiers, Airmen, Families and employers in sharing photos of their experiences with the Guard.

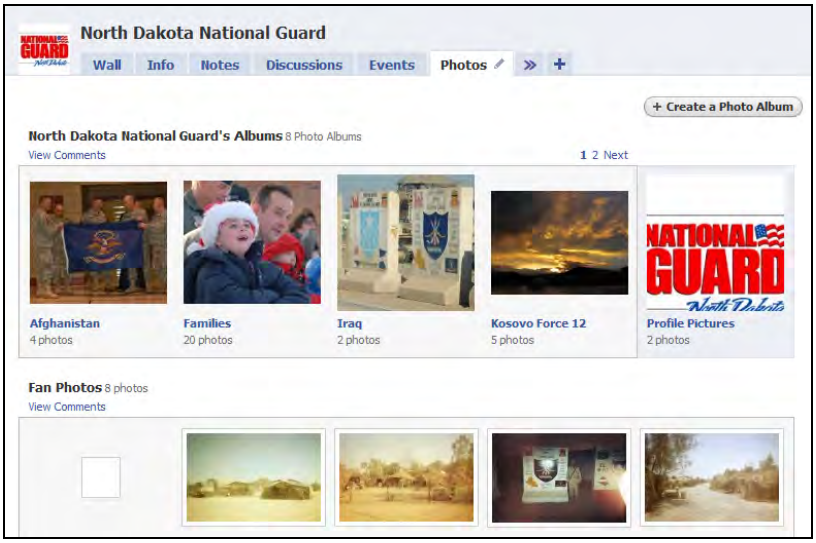
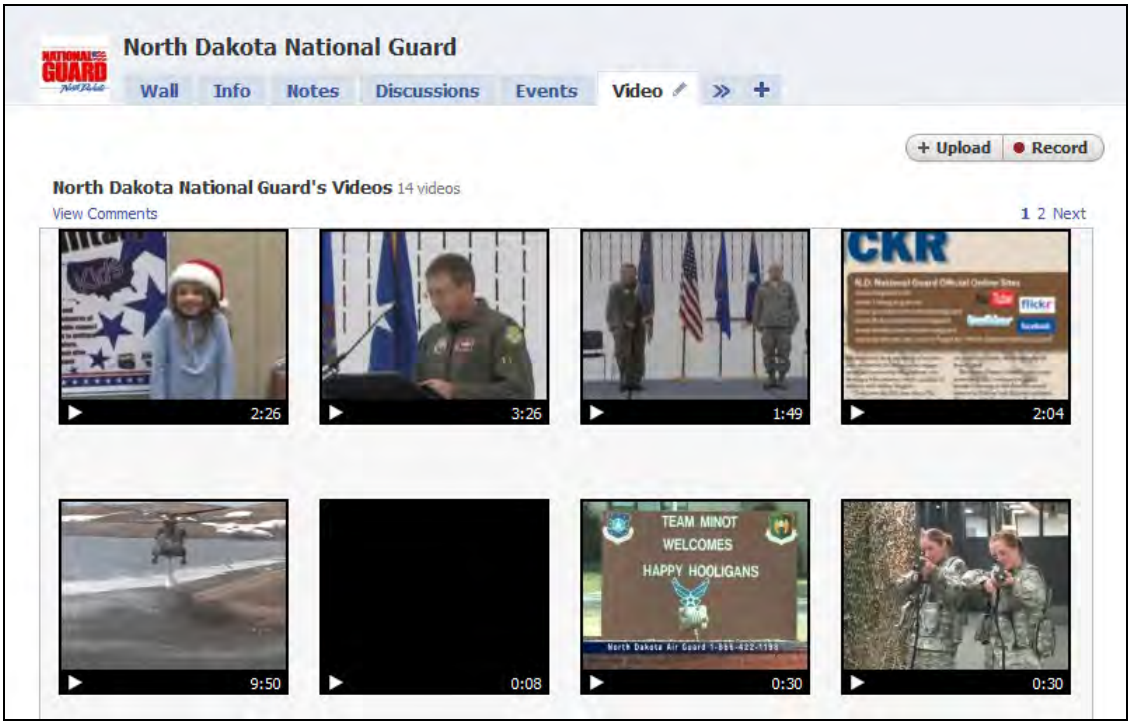


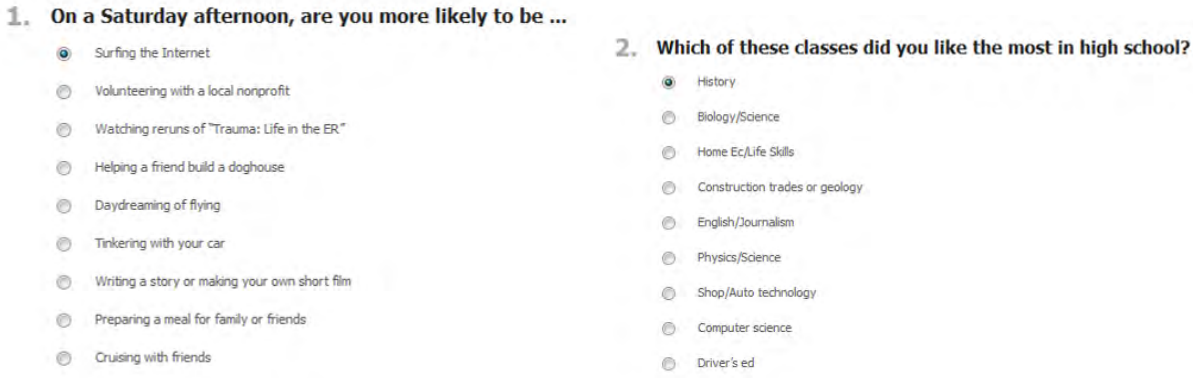
Photo Tab Example

VIDEOS: Like photos and Flickr, we primarily load videos to YouTube. We share a select few on Facebook, as well, to garner some interest in the video productions.



Video Tab Example

Based on the popularity of quiz applications and the way they can spread on Facebook, we also developed a North Dakota Army National Guard-specific quiz titled, "What Type of Soldier Should I Be?" (Link: http://bit.ly/6t66BZ). Participants answer a series of questions on their interests (see below) before being matched to a group of MOS possibilities that might be a good fit for them. They can publish their results to their Facebook profiles and invite their friends to take the quiz, as well.



3. If you were to pick just one book from a library, what would it be?

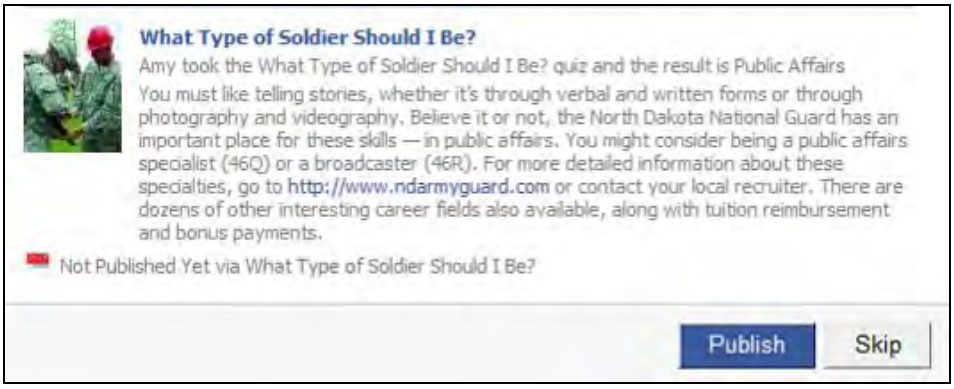
- "Strunk & White's Elements of Style"
- "Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War"
- "Zen Driving"
- "Faith Under Fire: An Army Chaplain's Memoir"
- "The Joy of Cooking"
- "How to Keep Your Muscle Car Alive"
- "The 56th Evac. Hospital: Letters of a WWII Army Doctor"
- "Computer Programming Tips & Tricks"
- "Readers' Digest Complete Do-It-Yourself Manual"

4. What Web site are you most likely to spend time on?

- www.PCMag.com
- www.VideoTechniques.com
- www.Vatican.va
- www.cooking.com
- www.WebMD.com
- www.FlyingMag.com
- www.mapquest.com
- www.HowStuffWorks.com
- www.HowStuffWorks.com

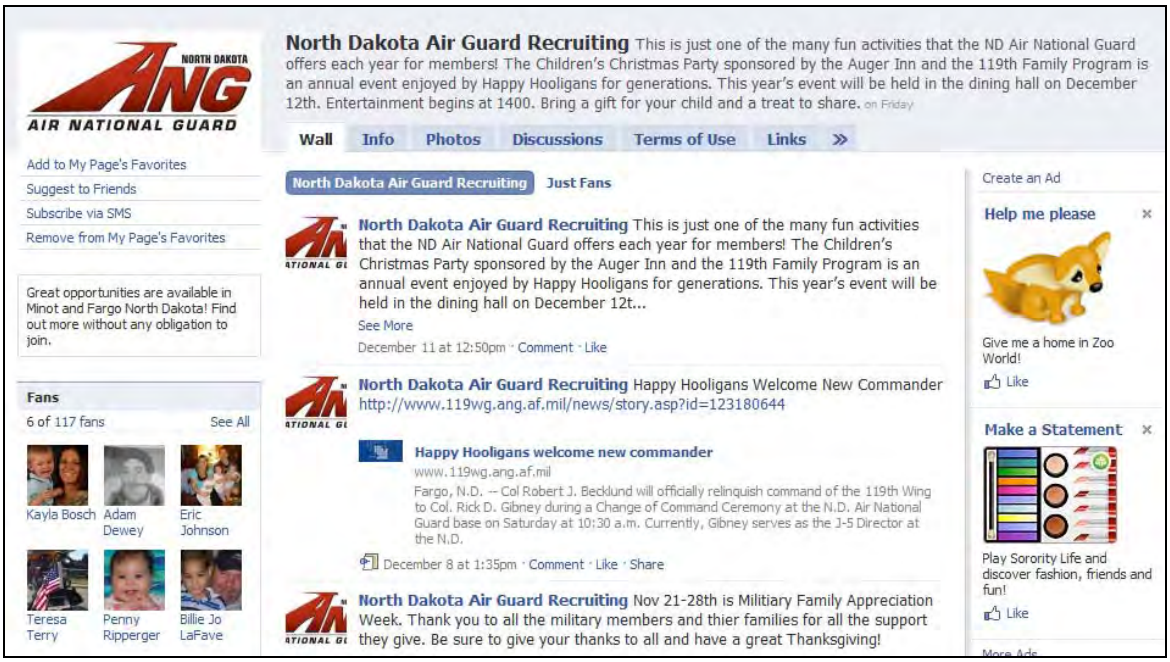
5. What show would you be most likely to download or rent?

- "Modern Marvels" from the History Channel
- "The Net"
- "The Fast and the Furious"
- "ER: The Complete First Season"
- "Top Gun"
- "Oh, God!"
- "Dead Poets Society"
- "American Chopper Season 1"
- "Julie and Julia"



Sample Quiz Result

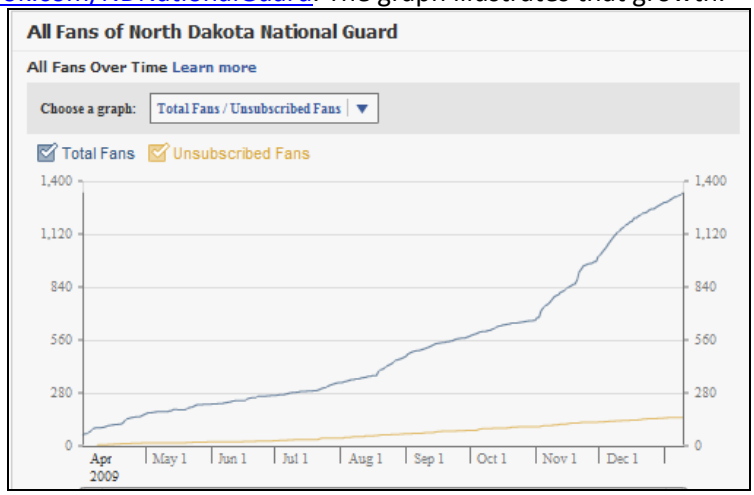
As the year went on, the North Dakota National Guard Public Affairs Office mentored the North Dakota Air National Guard recruiting staff to help them develop a page to target young, potential recruits. The site — http://www.facebook.com/NDNationalGuard?v=app_4949752878&ref=nf#/pages/North-Dakota-Air-Guard-Recruiting/158221117578 — syncs with the @NDNationalGuard Twitter account; this allows them to benefit from the external following built on Twitter while driving more people back to the recruiting-related information. From Oct. 14 through the end of the year, the North Dakota Air National Guard Recruiting fan page grew to about 120 fans.



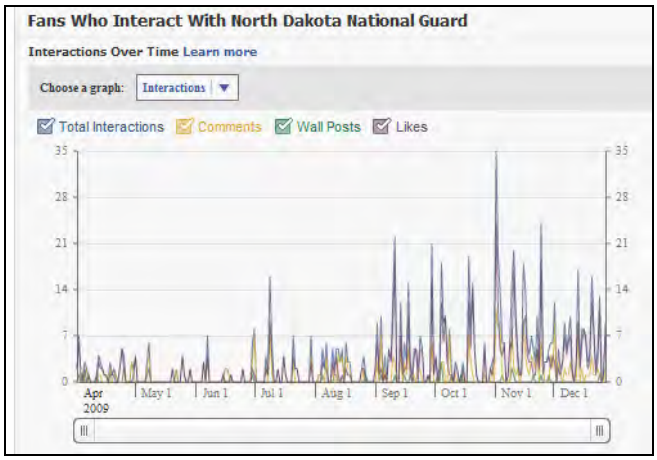
As the year came to an end, the North Dakota Army National Guard recruiters were in the process of developing the same.

<u>Facebook Impact/Statistics</u>

- From March through the end of 2009, we gained 1,289 fans at www.facebook.com/NDNationalGuard. The graph illustrates that growth.

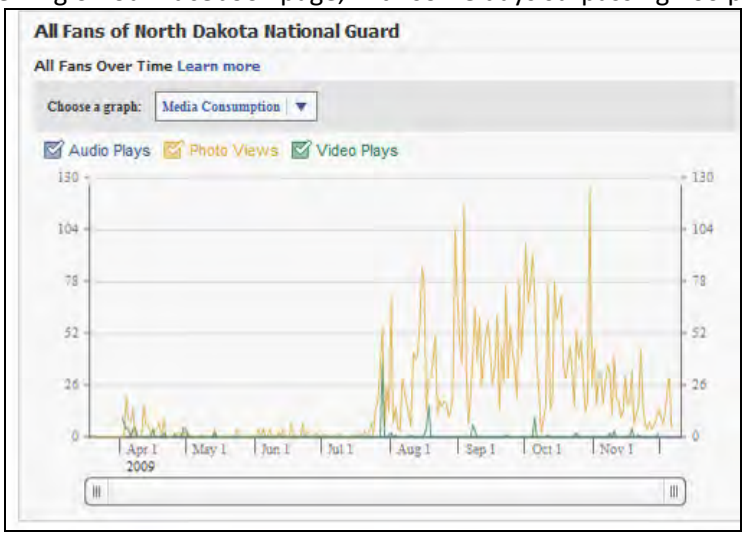


- Our level of interaction on the site also has grown significantly since March, as more people fan the page, comment and "like" the posts.



Example from Dec. 16, 2009

- Although we refer viewers to YouTube for videos and Flickr for photos, there still is a fair amount of viewing on our Facebook page, with some days surpassing 100 photo views.



- At year end, the "What Type of Soldier Should I Be?" Quiz boasted 79 monthly active users, and several people became fans of the application after it was developed in October 2009.

TWITTER: www.twitter.com/NDNationalGuard and www.twitter.com/NDNGAberle

Our first tweet from @NDNationalGuard was sent March 19, 2009, shortly before historic spring flooding struck the state. Early on, our content focused almost entirely on flood information, which included crisis communication, news and feature release updates, links to photos and video of the Guard response and education.

We found the **crisis communication** angle especially beneficial. Just 10 days into tweeting, we became aware of rumors stating that we were “dropping sand bombs” on levee breaches — which does not promote a safe image of the Guard. We sent the following tweet to our, at that time, limited number of followers, and reached 5,000 people within three minutes due to retweets.

> Rumor control: We have giant, 1-ton sandbags avail to place in trouble spots with a Black Hawk; they're not "sand bombs" that are dropped.
>
> 8:00 PM Mar 28th from web

Here are some other examples of our Twitter use to prevent rumors and provide accurate information during the flood.

> Guardsmen walk dikes, neighborhoods to provide security. They are not used to trigger an evacuation, but to assist law enforcement.
>
> 6:21 PM Mar 29th from web

> @jennydavis You're welcome! Just wanted to clear up any misconceptions that if you see a uniform they are there to evacuate. Not the case.
>
> 6:53 PM Mar 29th from Web in reply to jennydavis

> NDNG in the News: http://tiny.cc/DJUHy To clarify, we don't "drop" 1 -ton sandbags, we use a helo to lower them & place the bags on levees.
>
> 12:59 PM Apr 13th from web

Lake LaMoure: We have trucks hauling riprap to help shore up Cottonwood Creek Dam area. 1500 cu/yds so far today, 200 more to go.
10:28 AM Apr 19th from web

We have photos of Lake LaMoure prior to last night's efforts posted. Updates coming later. http://bit.ly/Zv6cY
7:41 AM Apr 19th from Twittertise

Lake LaMoure: We have a fuel truck parked @ the airport 6 miles from the dam. Black Hawk has refueled 3x now as it continues to place bags.
6:56 AM Apr 19th from web

We've been working through night to reinforce the emergency spillway at Lake LaMoure. 1st 1-ton sandbag placed by helo @ 2330; 78 down now
6:45 AM Apr 19th from web

This tool proved useful at helping to counteract rumors and misinformation after the flood, as well.

NDNationalGuard Contrary to news reports, the NDANG base in Fargo was not locked down last night.
less than 5 seconds ago from web

Throughout not only the flood, but the rest of the year, we used Twitter to **reach a wider audience with our traditional public affairs products**, including media advisories, news releases, photos and videos. Here are some of the many examples of how we did this.

National Guard helicopter crew rescues stranded citizens: http://tiny.cc/fiXM4
4:36 PM Mar 24th from web

Deployment-hardened Soldiers, Airmen Use Familiar Barriers to Dam Rising Floodwaters http://tiny.cc/o8PfX
6:21 AM Mar 26th from web

It's getting closer: http://ow.ly/gRzO BIG mission begins next month.
8:43 AM Jul 9th from web

One of our Happy Hooligans is running the Fargo Marathon FROM IRAQ! http://ow.ly/5AYd
9:04 AM May 7th from web

NDNG general receives 2nd star; promotion comes with assignment in Korea http://ow.ly/i1dl
12:57 PM Jul 23rd from web

NDNG Soldier prepping way for Pres. Obama's visit to Ghana this week http://ow.ly/gli7
4:07 PM Jul 7th from web

Watch an incredibly powerful message from one of our chaplains http://bit.ly/2FVmT1
7:00 PM Aug 4th from Twittertise

[VIDEO] Check out the cool stuff our ND Airmen do: http://ow.ly/j4HR #nationalguard
3:10 PM Aug 4th from web

How many Guardsmen does it take to stop a flood? Watch this: http://bit.ly/zkUfw
9:30 AM Aug 2nd from Twittertise

Fantastic #flood09 response music video up on our YouTube site! http://www.youtube.com/watc...
8:51 AM Apr 3rd from web

http://twitpic.com/2x9v8 - Pic of the Day-Spc. Krista M. Dahl patrols the dike in Pembina with local volunteers, Peggy S. Reimer and Ale ...
1:56 PM Apr 6th from TwitPic

Tons of aerial shots of flooding in Valley City, taken by Spc. Drew Balstad http://bit.ly/hWRu8
4:00 PM Apr 18th from Twittertise

Twitter also gives us a forum to share some **command information items** that don't regularly make it to a wider audience through traditional media. These items include the National Guard's history, economic impact and interesting facts that promote the Guard's service. Here are just a few examples.

Fast Fact: Since 9/11, the NDNG has mobilized more than 2,800 Soldiers and more than 1,600 Airmen in support of GWOT. #nationalguard
1:59 PM Aug 4th from web

We're up to 41,912 workdays spent on flood ops now. MN aviation & USCG still helping. In all, about 850 still on duty in ND.
8:03 AM Apr 28th from web

Fast Fact 2: Today, we're authorized 4,500+ Soldiers and Airmen in units across this great state! #militarymon
12:48 PM Jul 27th from web

Fast Fact: When the Dakota Territory split into ND/SD, ND was authorized 1 infantry regiment with 10 companies. #militarymon
12:48 PM Jul 27th from web

Answer to today's Quick Ques: MG David Sprynczynatyk is the 20th adjutant general since ND became a state in 1889.
3:29 PM Jul 23rd from web

Quick Ques: Anyone have a guess as to how many adjutants general we've had since ND became a state?
3:19 PM Jul 23rd from web

Anyone been to Camp Grafton Training Center near Devils Lake, ND? They train 60% of all ARNG/Army Reserve engineers.
1:00 PM Jul 24th from Twittertise

Did you know ... the NDNG began as the Dakota Territorial Militia back in the 1860s. #militarymon #nationalguard
7:30 AM Jul 27th from Twittertise

Fast Fact: The annual direct economic impact of the NG in ND is more than $195 million annually! #nationalguard #military
11:26 AM Jul 23rd from web

Memorial Moment: NDNG Soldiers Spc. Phil Brown and Spc. James Holmes, 141 ECB, were KIA 5 years ago today in Iraq. http://ow.ly/5P6r
11:47 AM May 8th from web

As with Facebook, we use Twitter to help further promote **Guard-related events**, as well.

Come hear our 188th Army Band play during the grand opening of Oscar Zero, a piece of ND military history http://ow.ly/gAwF #militarymon
10:37 AM Jul 8th from web

Come say thanks to the 191st MP Soldiers who served a year in Iraq. Freedom Salute @ 2PM today in Fargo @ the FargoDome!
11:00 AM May 31st from web

Register now for the fishing tourney sponsored by the Military Service Club at Camp Grafton (near Devils Lake, ND) http://bit.ly/Dt5k9
11:00 AM Jul 21st from Twittertise

Check out the ARNG #4 IndyCar @NDStateFair beginning Friday! http://ow.ly/hN3Y
9:50 AM Jul 21st from web

Come to "Relax with the FACs - Devils Lake" Monday, October 26 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Governor Hoeven has...
http://bit.ly/18qNgT
11:40 AM Oct 20th from Facebook

The micro-blogging format has also enabled us to **"live-tweet" events**, essentially bringing real-time updates via phone or computer to those who may not be able to attend an event.

Live tweeting from Ghana with MG Spry. Rob Keller and Connie Spry also are live via phone with local ND media. Tweet your questions now!
12:28 PM May 13th from web

Check out The Forum for a great photo of one of our returning Airmen meeting his son for the 1st time! http://www.inforum.com/
7:46 AM Aug 19th from web

Watching MSgt Clemenson meet his baby for the 1st time. He had watched the birth from Iraq via Skype.
3:51 PM Aug 18th from mobile web

They're deplaning now! Six Happy Hooligans officially on Fargo ground after 6 mos in Iraq.
3:40 PM Aug 18th from mobile web

Hector airport is filling up. The plane with our Airmen returning from Iraq is still listed as on time. Just a few more minutes!
3:33 PM Aug 18th from mobile web

Just 1 hour until our remaining 6 Airmen return from Iraq! Will you be at the Fargo airport to welcome them? #nationalguard
2:37 PM Aug 18th from web

20 Airmen are now home from Iraq, just leaving the Fargo airport with their families. 6 more arriving at 3:36 PM today. #nationalguard
1:32 PM Aug 18th from web

Just 1 hour until the first group of Airmen return from Iraq today! Will you be at the Fargo airport to welcome them home?
11:50 AM Aug 18th from web

We follow, and are followed by, the majority of North Dakota **media** who use Twitter. The forum has allowed us to interact with them to pitch stories and respond to inquiries. By showcasing their stories on the Guard through Twitter, we're also able to reinforce that the coverage they give us is valued. The first example below (with Donnell Preskey from KXMB-TV) illustrates a time when we were able to be a part of a story on fitness based on her request for people who bike to work. The second illustrates one of the ways we interact with media through Twitter (and may have influenced them to get on Twitter since Retha Coclasure began using the site after doing a story on the North Dakota National Guard's social media efforts).

@dnellp You know we stay physically fit! We'll be calling you soon with some names for your story.
1:14 PM Jun 17th from web in reply to dnellp

@rethajc Hi Retha, Welcome to Twitter! Thanks for the great piece last week on our new media efforts.
9:24 AM Jun 25th from web in reply to rethajc

Have a question for MG Spry on our use of new media, incl Twitter? Call 888-598-8464 in the next 15 min & watch @ http://www.am1100.tv
10:31 AM Jun 15th from web

Tune in now to hear Maj. Gen. Sprynczynatyk talk about our new media efforts: http://www.am1100.tv/#
10:19 AM Jun 15th from web

kateschell @NDNationalGuard Thanks for letting KX ride along with the soldiers this morning! The story will air at 6pm. :)
10:43 AM Aug 21st from web in reply to NDNationalGuard

Beyond our main (@NDNationalGuard) Twitter site, we launched a secondary site this year: @NDNGAberle. Col. Mike Aberle, who commands the 68th Troop Command and works full-time as the J1 for the North Dakota National Guard, mans the account as a way to share additional Guard information, especially that which relates directly to the J1 field. The account was implemented in October 2009 with

the first tweet sent on Oct. 22. The recent tweets below showcase how this is supplementing the @NDNationalGuard Twitter stream.

#1 Tweet Thank you @NDNationalGuard for assisting me in this Twitter set up!
10:31 PM Oct 22nd from web Reply Retweet

Reintegration Program Fills Gap for Guard and Reserve http://www.health.mil/Press/Release.aspx?ID=1056 #militarymon
5:35 AM Dec 14th from web

NDNationalGuard NDNG hosts 3-day emergency disaster management course in Ghana: http://bit.ly/6xOuMC http://bit.ly/7fpgJ5
9:34 AM Dec 11th from Facebook
Retweeted by NDNGAberle and 1 other

CounterSuicide #suicide A Mounting Suicide Rate Prompts an Army Response (Time Magazine) http://is.gd/5mHYp
5:24 AM Dec 14th from EasyTweets
Retweeted by NDNGAberle

@uscoastguard @usmc @navynews @afpaa @usarmy @nationalguard @thenatlguard @NDNationalGuard GOOD #MilitaryMon Morning
5:26 AM Dec 14th from web

Wishing LTC Jackie Huber from @NDNationalGuard a Happy Birthday today -- unlike the @NationalGuard Birthday-- she is NOT 373 yrs old today
7:24 PM Dec 13th from TweetDeck Reply

Happy 373rd Birthday National Guard! HOOAH! (@nationalguard)
5:30 AM Dec 13th from web

Computer users can access 2-1-1 ND resources online at http://bit.ly/8I4CSg •Military, Veteran and family member support.
7:42 PM Nov 30th from TweetDeck

Dial 2-1-1 in ND. Easy-to-remember statewide number that connects people to health and human services and community resources.
7:41 PM Nov 30th from TweetDeck

ND Families can now apply for grants from the NDNG Foundation to attend TAPS - 701-333-2058
7:38 PM Nov 30th from TweetDeck

Since 2003, the North Dakota National Guard has provided support for the families of North Dakota Fallen Heroes to attend TAPS.
7:38 PM Nov 30th from TweetDeck

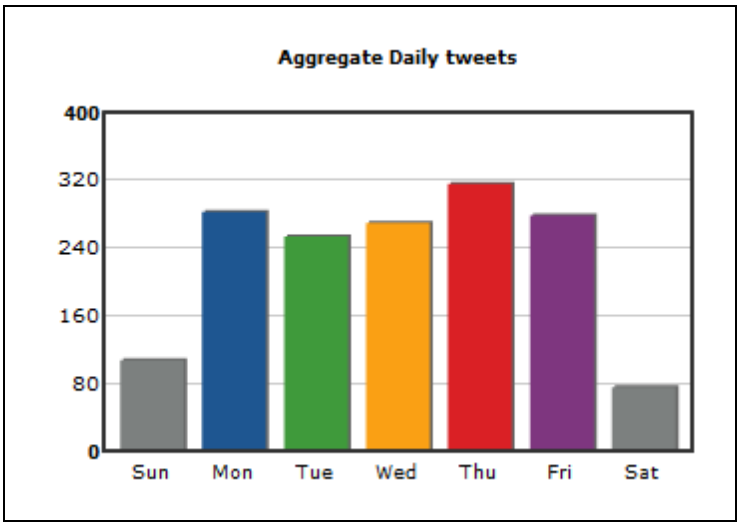
ND-TAPS supports North Dakota families of our fallen service members- http://bit.ly/8GEmE4 details: 701-333-2058
7:37 PM Nov 30th from TweetDeck

We continue to look for ways to expand and enhance our activities on Twitter. During the latter half of 2009, we took advantage of Twitter's new list feature to create two public lists: http://twitter.com/#/list/NDNationalGuard/guardleaders for leaders within the National Guard and http://twitter.com/#/list/NDNationalGuard/nationalguard for other National Guard accounts. Additionally, our @NDNationalGuard account is featured on 68 lists created by Twitter users; those lists have an additional cumulative following of 308 additional people. The @NDNGAberle account is listed 34 times with a cumulative following of 196 additional people.

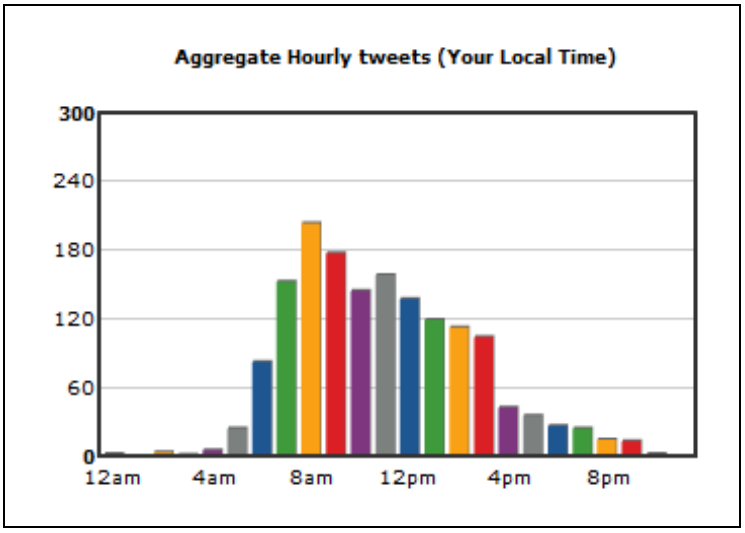
In the coming year, we anticipate launching www.twitter.com/NDNGTAG, a Twitter account for North Dakota's adjutant general.

Twitter Impact/Statistics

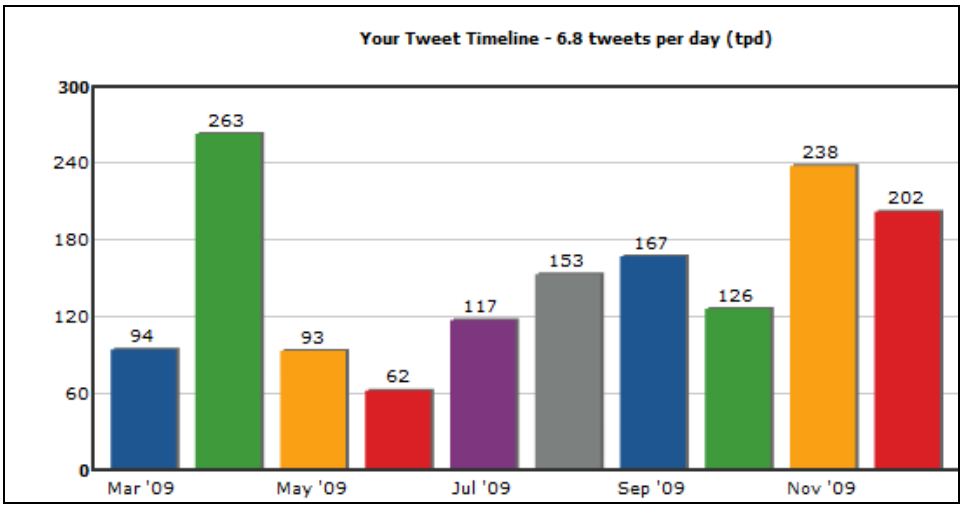
- As of Dec. 31, 2009, we had 1,105 followers at www.twitter.com/NDNationalGuard and 211 followers for www.twitter.com/NDNGAberle.
- From March 19 through Dec. 31, 2009, @NDNationalGuard sent 1,568 tweets, and from Oct. 22 through Dec. 31, 2009, @NDNGAberle reached out to his followers with 658 tweets.



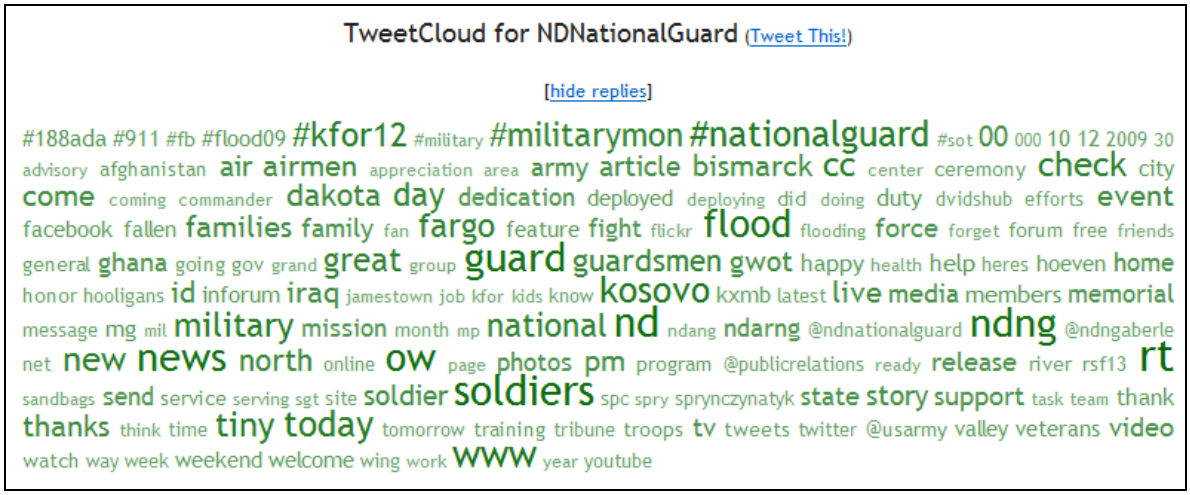
- Based on the Direct Marketing Associations formulation for Twitter impressions, we averaged between 80,000 to more than 110,000 impressions per week during the latter part of 2009 on @NDNationalGuard.
- Our aggregate of daily tweets from tweetstats.com shows that while our tweets are more heavily concentrated during the work week, we ensure we're reaching out to our followers nearly every day.



- Our tweet timeline from tweetstats.com shows that we average 6.8 tweets per day. The most prolific month — April 2009 — is when flooding was at its peak in North Dakota. Tweets trailed off in May and June, when the person responsible was attending military schools and maintaining the site from afar, before rising again throughout the rest of the year.



- Our Tweet Cloud gives a picture of many of the topics that have filled our tweets this year.



YOUTUBE: www.youtube.com/NDNationalGuard
The North Dakota National Guard launched a YouTube presence on March 19, 2009. Early on, it became a place to showcase the Guard's efforts during the historic flooding across the state from late March through early June. During the course of the flood, we posted 112 videos to the www.youtube.com/NDNationalGuard, which garnered nearly 7,000 views.

Since the flood, about 20 additional videos have been posted, including broadcasts from Hooligan News (produced by the North Dakota Air National Guard), documentation of ceremonies and events and music videos that showcase Soldiers and Airmen in action and command messages delivered directly from our adjutant general, Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk.

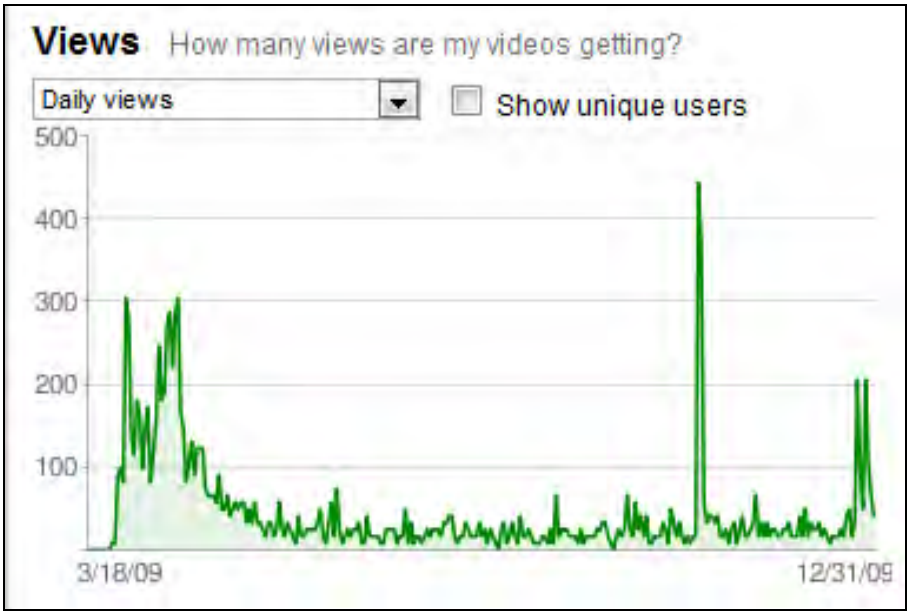
We also have used YouTube to interact with media. When KFYR-TV out of Bismarck wanted to interview our deputy public information officer in Fargo (nearly 200 miles away), we decided to record comments

on a video and post it to YouTube. For the story on the Guard's social media endeavors, KFYR-TV filmed the soundbites from a computer playing the video off of YouTube.

More recently, we have been able to connect people in North Dakota with their loved ones deployed to Kosovo by posting video the 116th Public Affairs Detachment from North Dakota has shot during the deployment for Kosovo Force (KFOR) 12.

YouTube Impact/Statistics

- As of Dec. 31, 2009, www.youtube.com/NDNationalGuard had 131 videos showcased and three playlists.
- After nine months, the Guard's YouTube site had received 6,188 channel views and 12,979 total video views. This graph showcases the number of daily views from the site-launch date, March 18, 2009, through year end.



- Twenty-three people have subscribed to receive the North Dakota National Guard's YouTube updates.
- The most-played video on the North Dakota National Guard's YouTube channel received 1,239 views in eight months.

FLICKR: www.flickr.com/photos/NDGuard

As with the North Dakota National Guard's other social media sites, we launched Flickr in March 2009, and our sets soon became filled with flood-response photos. We quickly upgraded to the Pro account in order to have access to unlimited uploads, storage, sets and collections, along with statistics and ad-free browsing.

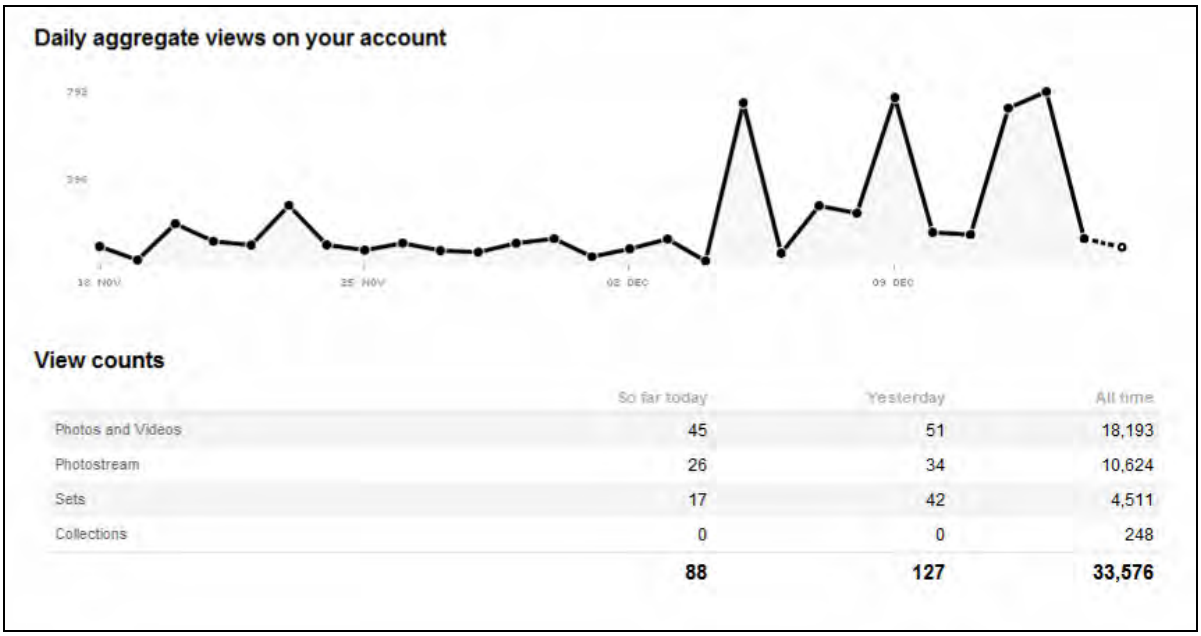
During spring flooding, we grouped photos into sets based on date and location. During the 100-day response, we received more than 9,000 photo views.

By year end, numerous more sets had been added to showcase the North Dakota National Guard at work and play. The picture sets give people a glimpse into deployed life, drill, ceremonies and Guardsmen volunteering their time off-duty or celebrating holidays with their families.

On Oct. 1, 2009, we began directing media to Flickr, rather than an FTP site, to download high-resolution photographs to accompany media advisories and news releases. This is an improvement over the FTP site because media can see what they have to choose from more easily, and they also can see other activities that may spark their interest in an additional story.

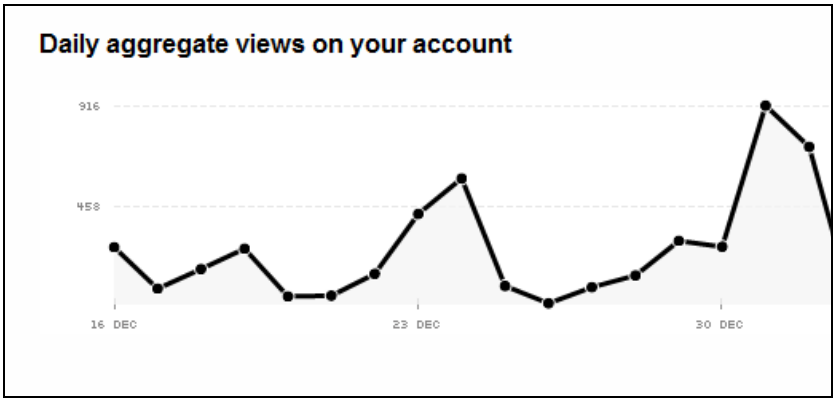
Flickr Impact/Statistics

- As of Dec. 31, 2009, we had uploaded 820 photos to Flickr.
- Since March, those photos have received 38,181 views on Flickr. (The graph below shows



	So far today	Yesterday	All time
Photos and Videos	45	51	18,193
Photostream	26	34	10,624
Sets	17	42	4,511
Collections	0	0	248
	88	**127**	**33,576**

Nov. 18-Dec. 13 Sample



Dec.16-31 Sample

CONCLUSION

Our social media presence has grown extensively in the past nine months, and we expect that it will continue to grow throughout the coming year. The statistics and feedback we have received show that it is being well-received. Additionally, it has opened up numerous opportunities to further interact with traditional media.

Beyond our success online, we've found that our social media experience is opening more avenues for Community Relations. We have responded to information requests from across the country on social media best practices. Furthermore, our staff has presented on their social media expertise during several conferences, including the Central Region Public Affairs Conference (May 2009 in South Dakota), FEMA External Affairs Conference (June 2009 in Colorado), the North Dakota Association of Counties annual conference (September in North Dakota) and the Public Affairs Training Workshop (October in Virginia).

As the year ends, we continue to look for opportunities to connect with our internal and external audiences through social media, as well as traditional media avenues.