

<i>SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY</i>	POLICY	
	Document Number:	EA-AD-PL-2006
	Version Number:	01

1.0 Purpose:

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) recognizes the value of social media as a tool to increase community engagement. Social media, as part of a coordinated communications and outreach plan, offers many benefits, including: providing excellent customer service, retaining and attracting new customers, building support for VTA projects, gathering input and knowledge from our communities, sharing the expertise of VTA employees with stakeholders, and fostering a culture of transparency that inspires trust in government.

VTA has an interest in managing what is said in social media on its behalf, when, and by whom, to ensure the accuracy, timeliness, fairness, consistency and non-harassing nature of what is published. VTA also has an interest in protecting its reputation.

As VTA uses social media to join the online dialogue about our services, projects and community, VTA employees should follow clear policies and procedures to ensure that our communications are consistently high quality. The purpose of this policy is to clarify who can be active in social media on behalf of VTA, and the procedures to appropriately use social media at work.

2.0 Scope:

This policy applies to all VTA employees and contractors and covers both VTA-sponsored social media accounts and employees' personal use of social media as it relates to VTA.

3.0 Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to this policy for engaging on behalf of VTA or personally in social media.

4.0 Policy

4.1 Who can speak for VTA in social media?

4.1.1 Only designated employees approved by the Deputy Director of Communications, the Manager of Customer Service/Customer Relations, or the Administrator of Social Media and Electronic Communications are authorized to speak on behalf of VTA in social media. The Administrator of Social Media may authorize other employees or contractors to use social media on behalf of VTA. This permission may be constrained to a specific role or program, and may be revoked at any time.

<i>SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY</i>	POLICY	
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	Version Number:	01

4.2 Official VTA Social Media accounts

- 4.2.1 Official VTA social media accounts may only be created with the approval of the Deputy Director of Communications and under the direction of the Administrator of Social Media.
- 4.2.2 VTA's official website, www.vta.org, will remain the official location for content and information about VTA services, programs, and projects.
- 4.2.3 Comments and content by members of the public on VTA social media sites are not considered official public input. Any official public input must be directed to the appropriate channels for that particular project or program.
- 4.2.4 Content posted by third parties on social media sites associated with VTA will not constitute a representation, agreement or endorsement of that content by VTA.
- 4.2.5 VTA reserves the right to remove content that violates its Comments and Posting Policy, which will be displayed prominently wherever possible on VTA social media sites. VTA will take steps to inform employees and the public about this policy. The Comments and Posting Policy, at time of writing, is as follows:

We welcome your comments as a means of chiming in on the conversation, suggesting improvements, and sharing your own experiences. To keep our community focused, we have set some guidelines:

Please respect your fellow readers and exercise appropriate restraint in drafting and submitting a post. In that regard, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority reserves its right to delete any post that contains language or imagery which: is off-topic; is false, defamatory or misleading; compromises public safety or operations; disparages a group or individual on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation; is commercial; contravenes law; contains spam; invades personal privacy; has sexual content; is obscene; includes any link to another site; or infringes on a copyright or other proprietary right

1. *Comments or Wall posts in HTML format (or URLs) are acceptable as long as they are non-commercial, relevant to the topic or public transit in general, and comply with VTA's Comments and Postings Policy.*
2. *To protect privacy, do not include phone numbers, email addresses, or other private and personal information in the body of your comments. VTA will delete comments that are determined to contain personal information.*

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	Version Number:	01

3. *VTA reserves the right to delete or block a "Friend" or "Follower" for repeated non-adherence to any of the above guidelines. Comments and postings by third parties may not reflect the opinions or positions of VTA.*
4. *VTA reserves the right to change these guidelines at any time at its sole discretion. The most current guidelines will be publicly available on VTA's Comments and Posting Policy tab.*
5. *Social media is not an official VTA communications channel. Comments in these venues are not considered official public input or part of the official public record. Visit vta.org for official VTA communications channels.*

It is VTA's goal to keep the most current and accurate information available to the public on this site. However, various events can occur that could affect the timeliness of the information and the accuracy of the content. VTA does not control and is not responsible for the content of linked sites or pages. The inclusion of a linked site or page does not constitute an endorsement or promotion by VTA.

4.3 Employee use of personal social media sites

- 4.3.1 Employees' use of personal social media sites should adhere to all other applicable VTA policies and the VTA Electronic Media Policy. VTA reserves the right to monitor employee use of social media sites accessed on VTA equipment. Users should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality when using these VTA resources.

4.4 Disciplinary Action

Violation of this Social Media Policy; Standards of Conduct Policy 410; Sexual and Other Forms of Harassment or Discrimination Policy AS-HR-PL-2120; and all other policies related to employee conduct can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement and applicable VTA policies. Employees should direct all questions about the policies, rules or procedures set forth herein, to their immediate supervisor, the Deputy Director of Communications, or the Administrator of Social Media and Electronic Communications.

4.5 Training Requirements:

All VTA employees who will use social media on behalf of VTA must be trained by the Administrator of Social Media.

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5.0 Definitions:

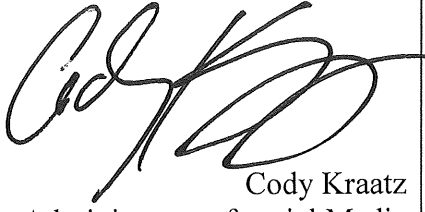
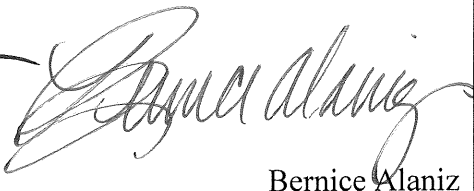

- 5.1 Social Media: Include but are not limited to blogs, podcasts, discussion forums, online collaborative information and publishing systems that are accessible to internal and external VTA audiences (e.g. wikis, Ideascale, geo-location crowdsourcing tools), RSS feeds, photo and video sharing (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Vine, Instagram), and social networks (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn).
- 5.2 Blog: Short for “Web log,” a site that allows an individual or group of individuals to share a running log of events, news and personal insights with online audiences. Many mainstream media organizations now operate blogs on their websites. Microblogs are another version of a blog, but usually have a limited number of characters allowed, making each blog post very brief. One of the most popular microblogs at time of writing is Twitter.
- 5.3 Podcast: A collection of digital audio files distributed over the Internet, often using syndication feeds or an online “store” like iTunes, for playback on portable media players, mobile devices and personal computers.
- 5.4 Wiki: Allows users to create, edit, and link Web pages easily; often use to create collaborative Websites called “Wikis” and to power community websites. The best-known example at time of writing is Wikipedia.
- 5.5 RSS feeds: A format used to publish updated content such as blog entries, news headlines or podcasts and “feed” this information to subscribers via an RSS reader, widget, or emails. This enables subscribers to stay up-to-date with new content published on their favorite Websites without having to visit each individual website. RSS stands for “really simple syndication.”
- 5.6 Crowdsourcing: The practice of obtaining needed services, ideas, knowledge, expertise, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people, and especially from an online community, rather than from traditional employees or suppliers.

6.0 Summary of Changes:

Initial release of this policy.

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7.0 Approval Information:

<i>Prepared by</i>	<i>Reviewed by</i>	<i>Approved by</i>
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