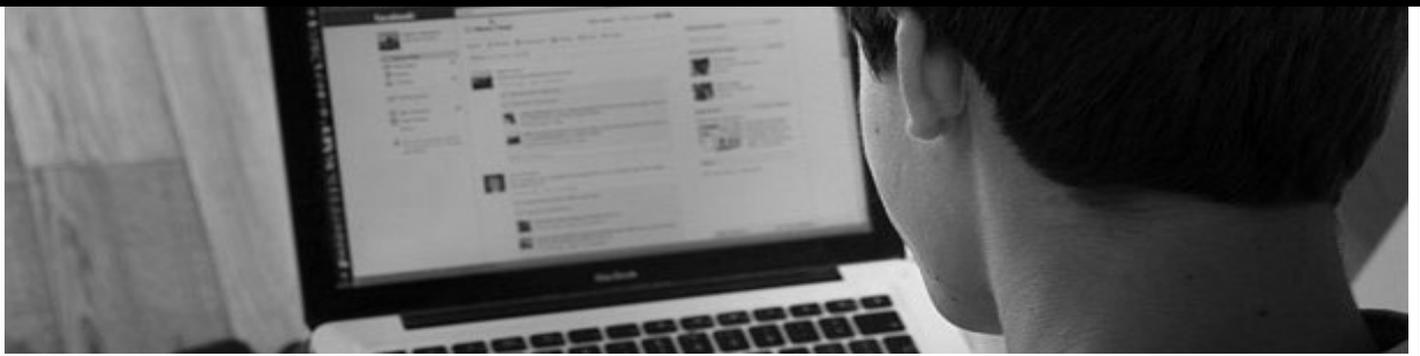


On the record:

2013 Sir Rupert Hamer Award case studies



Keeping track of social media at Victoria University

As is the case in many organisations, social media can quickly dominate the recordkeeping landscape. Victoria University made the decision to develop and implement a system that would successfully ensure all recordkeeping requirements relating to social media were met. As such, they received a Sir Rupert Hamer Recordkeeping Award for their pioneering work in the recordkeeping of social media.

The Category: Victorian Government Agency

About Victoria University:

Victoria University (VU) is a multi-sector institution offering short courses, apprenticeships, certificates, diplomas, degrees and postgraduate studies. The university's flexible learning pathways mean that students can choose their own study journey, entering from various points and exiting when they have reached their goal. With more than 50,000 students enrolled across nine campuses, their teaching, training, research, scholarship and partnerships are locally relevant and globally significant.

The Challenge:

How do you track, manage and classify an abundance of records being created through social media? Like so many of the world's leading universities, Victoria University uses social media to communicate with students, staff and alumni. Every tweet, status update and image represents a new record being created by the university and its community, and within a short space of time the organisation was confronting the new challenges of managing records in the digital era. Victoria University needed a system to address recordkeeping considerations around social media including determining which, if any, outputs of the various social media channels needed to be captured, how the capture might happen, and other issues regarding social media.

The Solution:

The genesis of Victoria University's social media recordkeeping program was an audit of current social media channels and a survey of staff regarding social media use. At the same time, the Social Media Working Group was established to report to the Web Intranet Social Media Advisory Group. This new group provided opportunities for interested parties to meet monthly to share experiences, coordinate activity and monitor social media at the university. Members represented users from marketing, website, student communications, international, counselling, records management, and academia. Members of the Social Media Working Group acted as advisors to the project, articulating their requirements and providing advice when needed including the pitfalls and potential issues.

Approach:

.Following the social media audit and the development of a social media framework, Victoria University launched a social media recordkeeping system which had two core components:

- A social media register
- A program to automatically capture tweets from university accounts.

The register was developed in consultation with the Social Media Working Group and listed current social media accounts as well as providing a series of questions for staff wishing to establish new accounts. Answering these questions before adding an account to the register meant they had to think strategically about their social media presence, and consider possible implications and issues. The register was published on the intranet and promoted widely.

Victoria University assessed various Twitter capture tools against a range of criteria; from their automation capabilities to their ability to capture multiple accounts, searches and replies, and output in non-proprietary formats, as well as an ability to capture basic metadata along with the content of the message and run on internal systems and servers.

The identified product was piloted by capturing one of the university's Twitter accounts and then once it proved successful, was rolled out further to capture multiple accounts and search terms. During the assessment process, the assessment criteria proved very useful and it was decided it would be used to assess other social media capture tools, when the need arose.

Progress was reported at monthly meetings, and overall responsibility for the project lay with the Chair of the Social Media Working Group.

The Result:

This project assisted greatly with the overall management and oversight of social media at Victoria University.

For the first time, the audit and resultant register provided a clear picture to Victoria University of just how many accounts there were and what they were for. This led to the rationalisation of some accounts with similar purposes – but more importantly, meant that staff interested in creating new accounts could look at the register and see if a similar account already existed. This not only meant efficiency gains in staff time and effort, but also better social media reach, as staff were able to tap into existing audiences and more effectively spread their message.

The automatic capture of tweets delivered greater business efficiency and reduced risk. Staff members who had manually captured tweets and responses via screenshots, which was often time consuming and ineffective, were now able to focus on their core business of monitoring and responding to the social media.

The automatic capture also allows for the quick deletion of any inflammatory or derogatory messages and additionally means that tweets are retrievable if required for grievances or other situations.

The capture has enabled insights to be gained about peak times of social media use, sentiment and key trends. This has proved useful to the marketing department in planning new events and tie-ins with existing university activities such as Open Day. It has also meant that social media can be better integrated into other activities, allowing for increased efficiencies and better use of staff time when planning new activities or events.

In regards to retention and disposal, a decision tree was produced to assist staff determining when records of social media need to be kept, which also addressed key components of the Public Record Office Victoria's Social Media Policy.

Key Discoveries:

- A decision tree helps an organisation assess social media accounts to determine if they hold records which need to be captured.
- Social media capture systems not only deliver efficiencies and reduce risk, but they also open up new opportunities for an organisation.
- A register of social media channels will help staff minimise duplication and maximise the impact of their communications.

Benefits of Entering:

Preparing the award entry allowed the team to review and reflect on the successful networks and the collaboration developed which resulted in the project's success. While the entry did not reveal any new findings, it did provide an opportunity for Victoria University to summarise the key elements of the project.

The award win has been promoted internally and was very well received by senior management. The award is currently being displayed in the Deputy Vice Chancellor's Office. The marketing department has also promoted the award through the Victoria University staff newsletter and on the intranet. Externally, it was acknowledged and discussed at the Victorian Higher Education Records Management and Archives Group (VHERMAG).

If Victoria University had a suitable project that met the Sir Rupert Hamer Award criteria, they say they would definitely enter again.