Social Media Use by Mentoring Organizations:

A Report on Wave VIII of the Mentor Michigan Census

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Introduction

Background

The use of social media is becoming more prevalent, and mentoring organizations are steadily adopting its various forms to communicate with corporate contacts, mentors and the youth they serve. Mentor Michigan needs to understand how mentoring organizations are using social media so that they may more effectively communicate with them.

Method

Initiated in 2004, the Mentor Michigan Census is an annual online survey of all of the mentoring organizations in the state that have registered their organizations with Mentor Michigan.

Wave VIII of the Mentor Michigan Census (MMC) was conducted in September and October of 2010. One hundred thirty seven mentoring organizations operating 222 distinct programs completed the Census. These organizations operate mentoring programs based in 46 of Michigan's 83 counties, and report serving youth in all 83. With 235 organizations in the Mentor Michigan Registry, this survey achieved a 58% response rate.

Questions about social media were added to Wave VIII of the Mentor Michigan Census. This brief report summarizes the findings.

Note: Some data in this report is aggregated by organizational level (Non-Profit, School-based/Higher Ed., All Others). Sample sizes for these organizational break-downs are quite small so data needs to be analyzed with great care.

Objectives

The objectives of the analysis and reporting of the Social Media Use portion of the Census are to:

- assess mentoring programs' use of social media,
- identify the type of information mentoring organizations are conveying through social media, and
- determine the types of social media mentoring organizations are using to communicate with Mentor Michigan.

Key Findings

Types of Social Media Used

Exhibit 1 Types of Social Media Used by Organization Type Wave VIII of the Mentor Michigan Census (Multiple Responses Allowed)				
	Total n=137	**Non-Profit** n=86	**School-based/ Higher Ed.** n=24	**All Others** n=27
Facebook	68%	80%	42%	52%
Twitter	16	23	0	7
YouTube	14	17	8	7
LinkedIn	10	13	0	11
Blogs	7	9	0	7
MySpace	4	6	0	0
Podcasts	3	1	4	7
Flickr	3	3	0	4
Other	15	9	8	37
None	21	13	54	19
Don't know	2	2	0	4

- The majority of participating mentoring organizations report that they use some form(s) of social media. The exception to this is School-based/Higher Ed. organizations, where just over half of responding organizations (54%) report they use none at all.

- Among organizations that use social media, Facebook is the most frequently used form, with 68% reporting usage. Almost twice as many Non-Profit organizations (80%) as School-based/Higher Ed. organizations (42%) use Facebook.

- Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn are used by some Non-Profit organizations, but of these, only YouTube is used by School-based/Higher Ed. organizations. There is very little reported use of Blogs, MySpace, Podcasts and Flickr among any of the Census participants.

- The social media option "other" is specified by 15% of responding organizations (including 37% of All Others). Email and their own web sites are the most frequently mentioned types of "other" social media used.

- Use of social media does not appear to vary significantly by organizational budget size or number of youth served.

Information Conveyed Via Social Media

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5">**Exhibit 2**
Information Conveyed Using Social Media by Organization Type
Wave VIII of the Mentor Michigan Census
(Multiple Responses Allowed)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>**Total**
n=105</td><td>**Non-Profit**
n=73</td><td>**School-based/ Higher Ed.**
n=11</td><td>**All Others**
n=21</td></tr>
<tr><td>Event Publicity</td><td>75%</td><td>77%</td><td>64%</td><td>76%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Recruitment</td><td>66</td><td>70</td><td>45</td><td>62</td></tr>
<tr><td>Success Stories</td><td>59</td><td>66</td><td>64</td><td>33</td></tr>
<tr><td>Networking</td><td>54</td><td>55</td><td>55</td><td>52</td></tr>
<tr><td>Communication with current mentors</td><td>51</td><td>48</td><td>73</td><td>52</td></tr>
<tr><td>Fundraising</td><td>49</td><td>62</td><td>9</td><td>24</td></tr>
<tr><td>General mentoring awareness/PR</td><td>39</td><td>34</td><td>45</td><td>52</td></tr>
<tr><td>Communication with current youth being mentored</td><td>29</td><td>27</td><td>27</td><td>33</td></tr>
<tr><td>Collaboration with other mentoring programs</td><td>16</td><td>15</td><td>9</td><td>24</td></tr>
<tr><td>Training</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>9</td><td>14</td></tr>
<tr><td>Other</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>9</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Don't know</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>9</td><td>0</td></tr>
</table>

- Mentoring organizations report using social media for a wide variety of purposes. For Non-Profit organizations the greatest use is for event publicity (77%), followed by recruitment (70%) and conveying success stories (66%).

- School-based/Higher Ed. organizations most often use social media to communicate with current mentors (73%), followed by event publicity and conveying success stories (64% for both).

- The greatest disparity between Non-Profit and School-based/Higher Ed. organizations is in their use of social media for fundraising. While 62% of Non-Profit organizations use social media this way, only 9%, or just one, School-based/Higher Ed. organization reports doing so.

- Use of social media for general mentoring awareness/PR (39%) and communication with current youth being mentored (29%) is moderate among all reporting organizations.

- Social media does not seem to play a significant role in mentoring organizations' collaboration with each other, or in regard to training.

Social Media Communication with Mentor Michigan

Exhibit 3 Types of Social Media Used to Communicate with Mentor Michigan by Organization Type Wave VIII of the Mentor Michigan Census (Multiple Responses Allowed)				
	Total n=105	**Non-Profit** n=73	**School-based/ Higher Ed.** n=11	**All Others** n=21
Email	82%	81%	82%	86%
Listserv	25	21	36	33
Facebook	13	12	27	10
Twitter	4	4	0	5
Blogs	1	1	0	0
YouTube	1	1	0	0
Other	2	1	0	5
None	10	11	9	5
Don't know	3	4	0	0

Exhibit 4 Primary Method of Social Media Used to Communicate with Mentor Michigan by Organization Type Wave VIII of the Mentor Michigan Census				
	Total n=92	**Non-Profit** n=62	**School-based/ Higher Ed.** n=10	**All Others** n=20
Email	80%	82%	80%	75%
Listserv	15	15	10	20
Facebook	1	2	0	0
Podcasts	1	0	10	0
Other	2	2	0	5

- Participating organizations use email to communicate with Mentor Michigan far more often (82%) than any other form of social media, and 80% report it is their primary method for communication with the state partnership.

- The nearest competitor is the Mentor Michigan Listserv, which 25% of programs receive from Mentor Michigan. Of course, the Listserv is only one-way communication from Mentor Michigan to mentoring organizations.

- Email and the Listserv are the two primary forms of electronic communication used by mentoring organizations to communicate with Mentor Michigan. Very few respondents use Twitter, Blogs, or YouTube to communicate with Mentor Michigan; none of them are used as the primary method of communication.

Implications

- The relatively low use of Facebook and other social media by School-based/Higher Ed. organizations is surprising. It may be that the staff of these organizations needs training regarding how to maximize the use of Facebook, and social media in general, to support their endeavors. Or the relatively low use may reflect attitudes of school personnel or policies of school administrators regarding Facebook use in educational settings.

- The School-based/Higher Ed. organizations also seem to trail behind Non-Profits in using social media for event publicity, recruitment and fundraising. There appear to be opportunities for all mentoring organizations to improve their use of social media for fundraising.

- Email and the Mentor Michigan Listserv are the most important communication tools for Mentor Michigan right now, but with the high use of Facebook, especially among Non-Profit organizations, Mentor Michigan needs to stay current with the ever-evolving use of social media.