Representing Yourself and Your Agency Online: Why it is Important to be Cautious About Using Social Media

**DO**

- Make your profile “private” and limit access to your personal information.
- Remember you are always representing your agency.
- Write smart! Always think before you type.
- Be aware of the dangers of posting photographs – once in cyberspace, anyone can find them!

**What is Social Media?**

Any online communication used by individuals for the purpose of social interaction & networking. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Facebook®
- MySpace®
- YouTube®
- LinkedIn®
- Foursquare®
- Wikipedia®
- Twitter®
- Yelp®
- Flickr®
- Blogs, etc.

**DON’T**

- Write or publish anything you wouldn’t put on a billboard.
- “Friend” clients, former clients, or their families.
- Use the Internet as a forum to “vent” about work, your agency, or clients’ information. (Bosses, co-workers or clients could stumble upon your site!)

**Protection**

- Protecting clients’ personal information, even if you think no one will see it
- Divulging too much information may lead to threats, violence and/or loss of employment
- Protecting your program from misrepresentation, loss of credibility, respect and even funding
- Protection from lawsuits

**Professionalism**

- Agencies and staff are bound by law and professional ethics, including:
  - Treating clients with dignity and respect
  - Honoring clients’ rights to confidentiality
  - Maintaining appropriate boundaries with clients
- Representing yourself online should be done with the same level of professionalism displayed in any other public arena