

U.S. Army Research Laboratory Social Media Program

2014 Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition
Category D: Outstanding Initiatives in New Media (unit category)



By U.S. Army Research Laboratory
Public Affairs Office

ARL



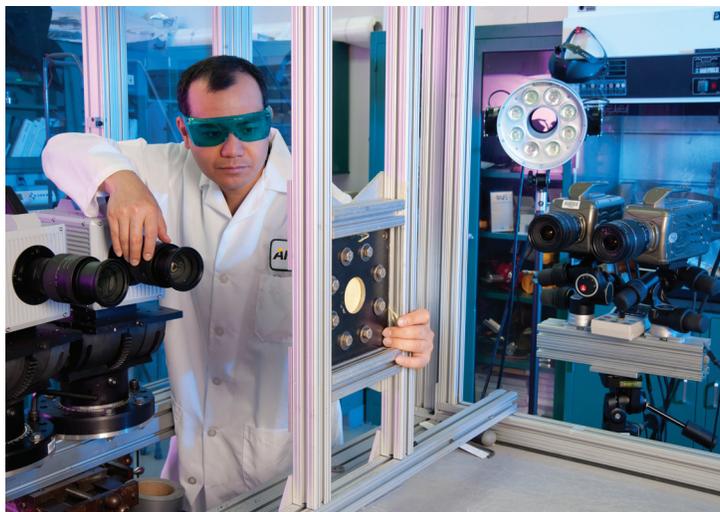
The nation's premier laboratory for land forces

Social media to build awareness using Facebook, YouTube and Twitter

<http://www.facebook.com/ArmyResearchLaboratory>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ARLTVNews>

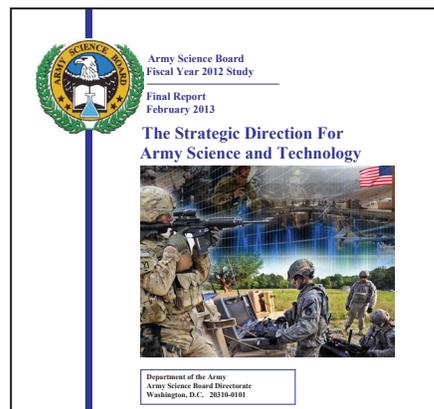
<https://twitter.com/armyresearchlab/>



The U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL) social media presence came about in 2012 in commemoration of the 20-year anniversary. The Public Affairs Office (PAO) kicked off a campaign to build the public image of the laboratory so that it would match the laboratory's contribution to Department of Defense (DoD) science and technology. The ARL Facebook page and YouTube channel was launched in March 2014. We registered the sites with the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs Social Media Division and the Public Affairs chief drafted the first ARL social media policy. The Twitter feed began the following year.

We are working with computer scientists who are interested in expanding the social media presence to incorporate research collaboration tools like Github.com. ARL is breaking new ground for Army.

Research: Secondary research conducted by the Army Science Board in 2012 concluded the reputation of the laboratory was not consistent with its quality of research. PAO conducted qualitative research to get a sense for how media queries originated. We benchmarked ARL with other defense laboratories and Research, Development and Engineering Centers to determine a baseline level of social media engagement and our success rate of proactive storytelling. Based on our findings, we wanted to build the Facebook fan base to 1K "likes", to get the workforce to engage on social media and tell more people that we exist. That began two years ago. This year we revised the social media strategy based on new organizational goals.



Social Media goal: To increase awareness of ARL's vision to be the nation's premier laboratory for land forces using social media channels.

Primary audiences: The target audience for Facebook is ARL's workforce and defense science and technology experts; for Twitter, it is industry leaders, partners and scientists; and for YouTube, the primary audience is industry, local and defense reporters who are doing background research.

Short term objective: To be the Army’s number one social media presence for science and technology in six months as determined by rate of audience engagement and number of Facebook “likes”, Twitter followers and YouTube subscribers.

Long term objectives:

- To increase awareness of ARL’s research focus through social media in such a way that we see an increase of 5 percent in activity related to top campaigns that were posted on social media by FY16.
- To impact the opinion regarding a closed government, as measured by a 10 percent increase in ARL social media engagement with academic and industry stakeholders by FY16.
- To increase employees’ social media participation, as measured by more online workforce engagement; social media post ideas and awareness of posted content by FY16.

Strategies and Tactics:

Outside experts/Journalist/ industry bloggers	Workforce/government experts (scientists & engineers)
<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship building • Increase transparency of ARL’s S&T portfolio <p>(We have to be careful about operational security, as public sources in some cases account for 80 percent of leaked information)</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage employees as brand ambassadors • Draw attention to the lab’s strategic vision
<p>Tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Twitter to engage media, scientists & engineers, industry leaders • Actively respond • Re-tweet and post relevant messages from partners • Promote the work of media when they visit the lab; and post their articles online • Thank partners who tweet pictures of our experts at their events; use their products • Link to relevant YouTube videos when we write news releases with related content • Routinely post from Army and relay the Soldier tie between ARL and troops • Follow major commands like XVIII Airborne Corps and “like” their content 	<p>Tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use social media to promote workforce talent, research and cohesion • Routinely ask ARL scientists and engineers how they use social media and adapt the program to incorporate their suggestions • Post interesting photos from individual labs for a more authentic perspective of ARL • Ask questions • Make a big deal of internal successes on Facebook • Post pictures of internal events that show camaraderie • “Follow” scientists and engineers who do social media well

Here's what we did:

In January we had more than 1K likes on our Facebook page, with a reach average of 800. We tracked the posts with the most engagement in 2014 and we used that to build the audience

Today we have 8K "likes". The reach this week is 3,444. With Twitter we more than doubled our followers from 1,400 to 3,397.



Synergy:

We leveraged outside social media channels to expand our reach, like using the award-winning DoD "Armed with Science" blog. The Defense Media Activity produced a video to help us make science more relatable.

Army.mil messaging:

We synchronize with Army messaging campaigns in 2014, so during the Army Birthday Week, we celebrated the “total force” with brags about ARL people, our most valuable resource. We also posted the history of the Army Song; and reposted articles from Army social media that week.

In Honor of the U.S. Army's 239th Birthday.... meet the newest major at Army Research Laboratory, Jonathan Judy, who was promoted from captain on June 17 by Col. Matthew Clarke, who commands the U.S. Army Simulation & Training Technology Center. On a day-to-day basis Judy helps protect Army networks. Off-duty, he spends time with his wife and daughter, and he enjoys golfing. Congratulations to the Judy family!



1,449 people reached Boost Post

Like · Comment · Share 41 10 2 Shares

Leonard Ndouga, Steven Reick, Katie Neack and 38 others like this.

Kevin Brennan Congratulations Sir! --Kevin - VTC Tech ARL
June 18, 2014 at 9:36am · Like

Carla Shepherd Congratulations.....
June 18, 2014 at 9:38am · Like

Annie Morgan Congratulations! You are fortunate to have such a great guy working for you!
June 18, 2014 at 2:43pm · Like

ARL U.S. Army Research Laboratory shared a link
Posted by Joyce P. Brayboy [?] · November 5, 2014

Yesterday ARL released its public science and technology campaign plans. A main purpose of the publication is to help others in the S&T community see areas of potentially shared interests.

ARL Army's corporate research laboratory guides technology with sharper focus
www.army.mil

The U.S. Army Research Laboratory released its Science and Technology Campaign Plans for 2015 - 2035, Nov. 4, 2014, to...

634 people reached Boost Post

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We published the ARL Technology Campaign Plans with a two-minute empathetic video from leadership.

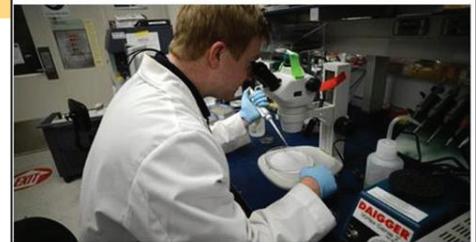
In Honor of the U.S. Army's 239th Birthday.... and in recognition of the total force, that includes the U.S. Army civilians, we are celebrating Samantha Wallace who received her doctorate in electrical engineering from Morgan State University. She began her career at ARL in February 2008 as a student contractor. Wallace attended Baltimore Polytechnic Institute. She says she is determined to use her educational and work experiences to help others. (<http://www.arl.army.mil/www/default.cfm?article=2490>)
U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command U.S. Army Materiel Command



Operationally driven:

The primary focus of the ARL social media program is to increase awareness of ARL as a leader in basic science and technology for ground forces.

Scientists at Army Research Laboratory want to make synthetic peptides better for detecting an array of harmful substances.



Soldier uniforms may one day detect, neutralize biological threats
www.army.mil

Scientists at the Army Research Laboratory in Adelphi, Maryland, have developed and are producing in small batches synthetic peptides they believe will serve as great replacements for animal-grown antibodies currently used to detect biological...

1,324 people reached Boost Post

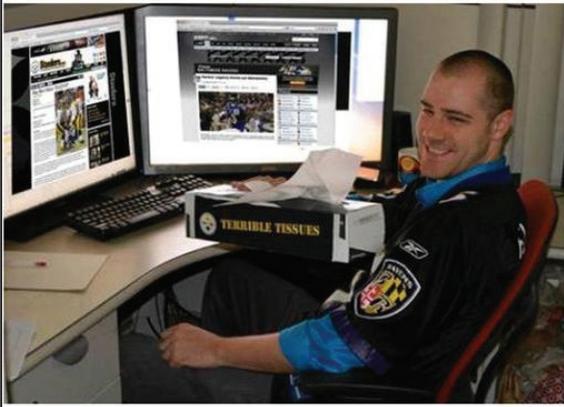
Like · Comment · Share 2 Shares ARL

Mekinolia Fetu, Jean Velasquez, Lynn M Davis and 52 others like this.

Fun:

We have fun on social media without losing sight of ARL's vision to be the nation's premier laboratory for land forces. Internally, we work together to think of questions to pose, like, "Who inspires you?"

Football rivalry is back! Brian Panneton from the simulation sciences branch of ARL is only wearing the Ravens Jersey because beloved Steelers lost Thursday night. Don't forget to wear your favorite jersey for ARL's Tailgate Fridays. Call Scott Adams for tailgating guidelines at 410-278-6351.



Have a great weekend!

1,078 people reached Boost Post

Like · Comment · Share 37 7

Rmn Bacolod, Shangying Wang, Marc Angeli and 34 others like this.

John Dixon I cant solve it, but I love the idea.
September 26, 2014 at 2:50pm · Like

James Cain Thankfully my son can solve it. I would just give him a call.
September 26, 2014 at 3:04pm · Like

Deepak D Rathi Fourier Series ...
September 26, 2014 at 4:14pm · Like

Mike Shadow-forever Wolframalpha saves the day
September 26, 2014 at 5:31pm · Like · 1

Jorge Gamaliel Frade Chávez Fourier coefficients and Hilbert Space. Orthogonality and dot product for vectorial spaces.
September 26, 2014 at 6:28pm · Like

Jorge Gamaliel Frade Chávez Metrics for Infinite-dimensional vector spaces.
September 26, 2014 at 6:33pm · Like

Hieu Truong Nguyen Viet Linh

ARL U.S. Army Research Laboratory
January 16, 2014

If you were to define science, how would you complete this sentence:
"Science is....?"

548 people reached Boost Post

Like · Comment · Share 1 5

James Campbell likes this.

James Campbell curiosity!
January 16, 2014 at 3:31pm · Like

Ted Muehl conceivable applications of mathematics.
January 16, 2014 at 3:40pm · Like

Eric Blecke Awesome.
January 16, 2014 at 5:33pm · Like

Kaream Ellington Everthing we know and do not know.
January 16, 2014 at 8:22pm · Like

Nick Chaires making a DeLorean go back to 1985 while listening to Huey Lewis.
January 17, 2014 at 2:10pm · Like

ARL US Army Research Lab
@ArmyResearchLab

ARL experimenting w/new peacetime @USArmy tropical camouflage pattern RT @inteldump We can take it, 4/1 in July.

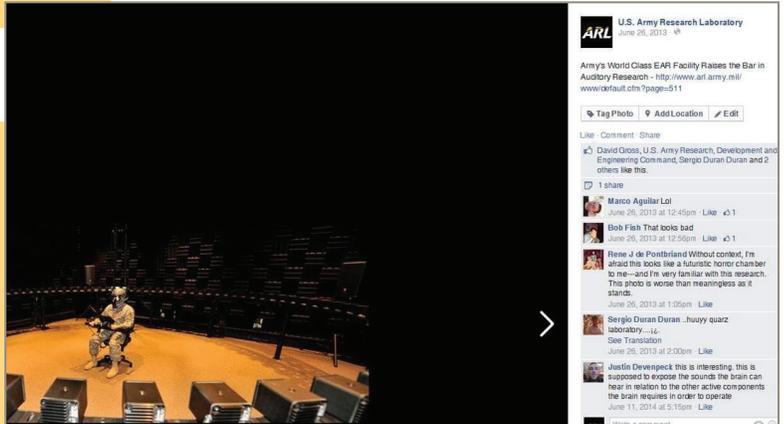
RETWEETS 2 FAVORITES 2 3 3

8:19 AM - 9 Jul 2014

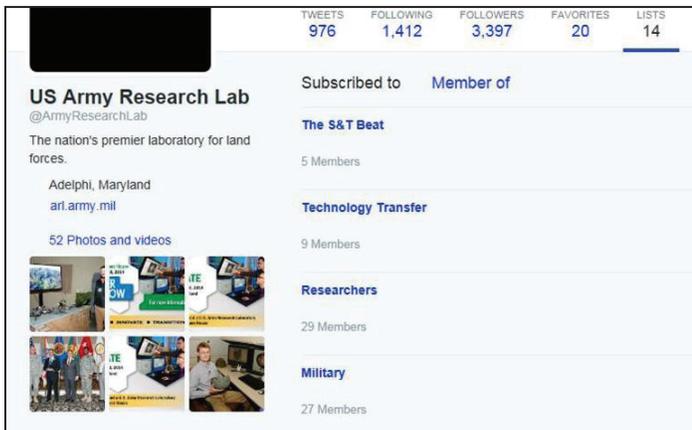
Feedback:

When loyal participants offer feedback, whether bad or good, we listen.

Within an hour of posting this Facebook and Twitter cover photo, we received messages and posts with negative comments. Social media is about trying new things. Not all of what we do works, but we measure, listen to the audience and adjust.



Conclusion:



In 2014 ARL's social media presence has expanded more than 100 percent on each platform. We have had more participants, more engagement and more exposure for the quality of research. More importantly, the quality of people behind the science that has led to ARL's reputation is highlighted in ways not before possible. On Facebook, we incorporated questions, quotes and regular engagement with our higher headquarters, the Research, Development and Engineering Command and the Army Materiel Command to create synergy. On

Twitter, we incorporated lists to track key stakeholders, what they are talking about and what is important to them. We've broken news based on tweets from our Twitter lists. We build relationships that started online by simply re-tweeting and favoriting, which have led to coverage by those partner PAOs when our scientists and engineers visit their organizations. Social media partners post content that we could reuse; likewise, we share content that includes outside visiting experts. With YouTube, we refer journalists to video casts about heavy topics prior to related interviews. Our YouTube channel has doubled subscribers this year to 224. The most viewed video has 4,833 views.

Social media has allowed us to synchronize communications across the channels we already use to make messages more clear and effective.

We have increased the number of internal regular contributors on our platforms.

This year we will streamline the posting process, incorporate social media training and hone in the strategy that guides day-to-day activities. We have come a long way, and it is just the beginning.