



Seattle Police Department Public Affairs Office

A Law Enforcement Leader in Social Media Engagement

The Seattle Police Department, and specifically the department's Public Affairs Office, has been heralded as a pioneer for use of social media and other web platforms. The SPD Public Affairs Office has repeatedly been profiled in news articles as a leader in social media outreach, provided guidance to other police officials from Dallas, TX, Bainbridge Island, WA, Chapel Hill, NC, Mesa, AZ and Guangxi, China on our outreach techniques, and presented at multiple International Association of Chiefs of Police and City of Seattle panels on advanced-level social media outreach.

“ Seattle police already had one of the most fascinating and amusing—not to mention relevant and informative—law-enforcement Twitter accounts in the country. But the department demonstrated again this weekend that engaging with your audience goes well beyond witty posts in social media. ”

ADWEEK

“Seattle Police Continue Being Awesome by Handing Out 1,000 Bags of Doritos to Stoners, August 19, 2013”

Our Mission and Vision

Over the past six years, the Seattle Police Department has seen a vast increase in public requests for information and heightened expectations for transparency. In response, SPD has undertaken a number of efforts to use new technologies to increase the accessibility of information about police work.

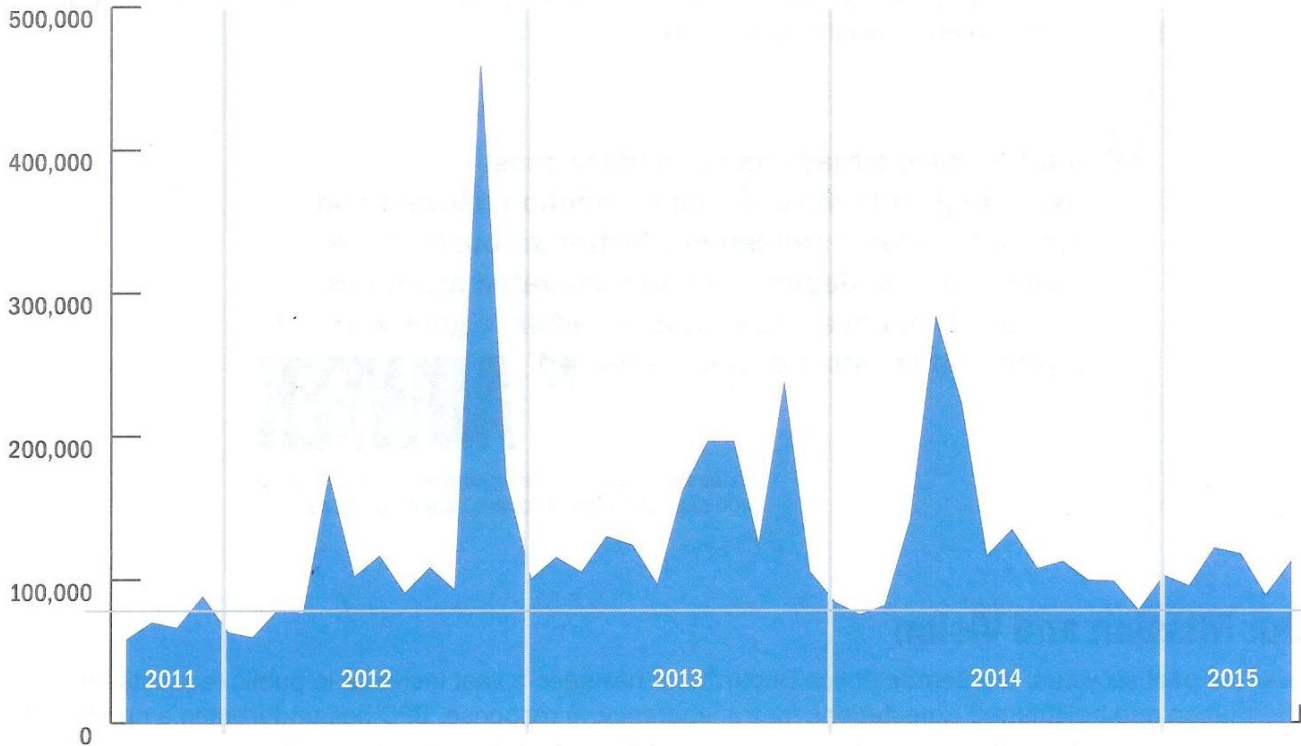
By leveraging social media and other internet tools to increase the accessibility of public records and department information, the Public Affairs Office has established a great deal of public trust by providing clear, transparent, accurate, and timely information about police incidents. The Public Affairs Office has also pushed to use existing technology in unique and innovative ways. In 2012, the department became the first police agency in the U.S. to provide near real-time police dispatch information through Twitter via the Tweets By Beat's 51 feeds, which is now being used as a model by other agencies. SPD has also leveraged the Twitter platform to reunite victims of bicycle and vehicle theft with their property through @GetYourBikeBack and @GetYourCarBack.

Until late 2011, the Public Affairs Office had been called “Media Response”. The new name “Public Affairs” reflects a key shift in our guiding philosophy towards making information available in ways that truly serve our community.

Audience Growth

In 2012 the Department contracted with a former journalist to increase public outreach by developing and refining content on the department's existing—but underutilized—outreach channels, including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and the Department's news blog, The SPD Blotter. Since then, SPD has doubled web traffic on the Department's blog (in 2014, there were more than 1,500,000 pageviews on the SPD Blotter, accounting for over half of the City of Seattle's .gov blog traffic).

Increase in Blotter Traffic 2011-2015



Public Affairs Information Channels



SPDBlotter spdblotter.seattle.gov

Your primary source for SPD news, updated 24/7 with major crime events.



SPD Twitter [@SeattlePD](https://twitter.com/SeattlePD)

Get all the breaking news updates and centaur jokes that have made SPD's Twitter account one of the most followed police feeds in the nation.

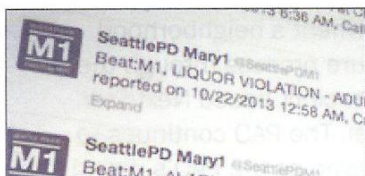
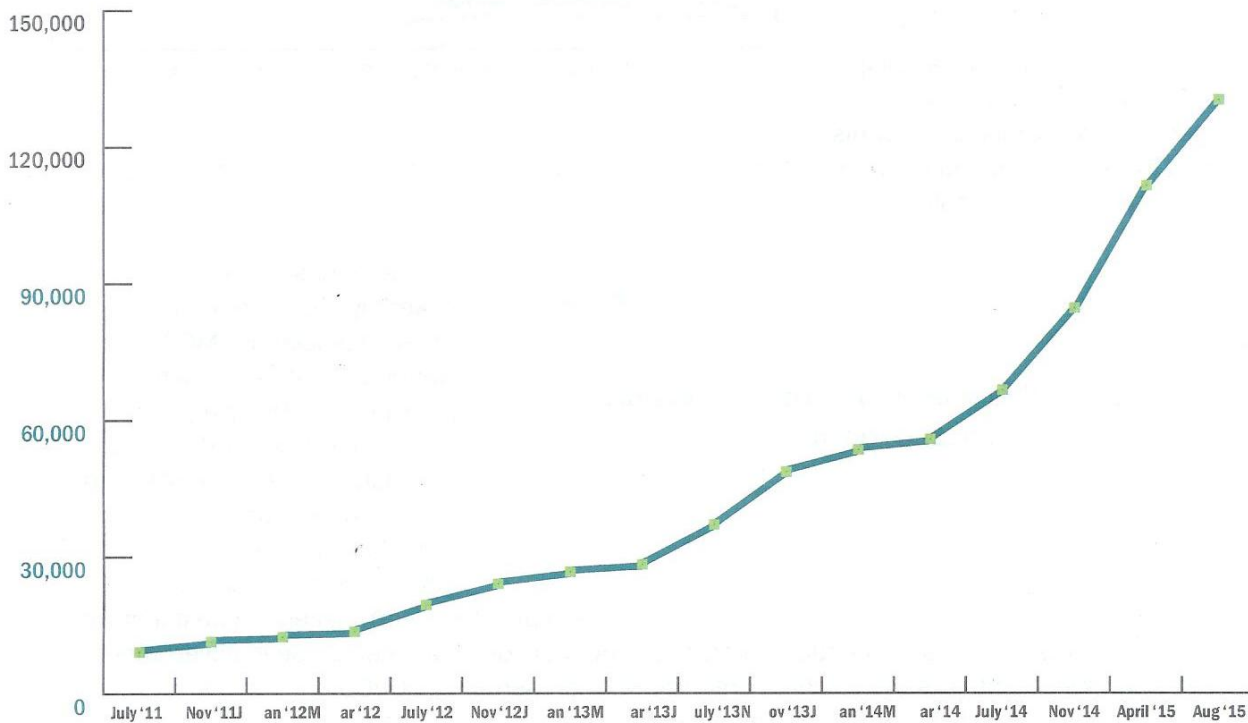


SPD Website seattle.gov/police

The one stop shop for everything SPD: report crime, view crime maps, learn about crime prevention and much more.

Seattle Police has also developed a massive following on its main Twitter feed, @SeattlePD. @SeattlePD currently has over 53,000 followers, the most of any public agency in Washington State and the third-most of any municipal police agency in the United States. SPD's Twitter following has allowed the PAO to rapidly disseminate public safety information during times of crisis, while also providing a direct line of communication for customer service, questions and dialogue about patrol responses, traffic citations and other police work. The PAO's use of Twitter has enhanced the level of positive interaction between the police department and the public it serves.

@SeattlePD Twitter Growth 2011 - 2015



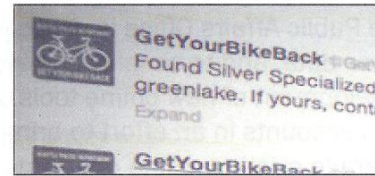
Tweets by Beat seattle.gov/police/tweets

Tweets By Beat works a lot like a police scanner, providing information about your neighborhood in near real time.



Nextdoor nextdoor.com/seattlepd

Neighborhood based police officers have an opportunity to address public safety issues with residents on our rapidly growing Nextdoor platform.



Get Your Bike Back [@getyourbikeback](https://twitter.com/getyourbikeback)

Missing a bike? Get Your Bike Back tweets bikes that have made it to our found property warehouse. Follow us and see if we've found it.

Recognition

The Public Affairs Office's extensive and creative use of social media platforms has garnered positive press for the department in the New York Times, Forbes, Time Magazine, Mashable, GQ, CNET, BuzzFeed, AdWeek, RollingStone, The Colbert Report and the Rachael Maddow Show as well as a number of other local, national, and international news outlets.

The SPD Public Affairs team won the 2014 PRWeek Awards Public Sector Campaign of the Year for its I-502 marijuana education legalization campaign. For his contributions towards increased information transparency, Jonah Spangenthal-Lee received a 2013 Key Award from the Washington Coalition for Open Government.



SPD Doritos featured in RollingStone's "Threat Assessment"



Leah Shaffer
@LeahabShaffer

Follow

PR folks take note: This is how you write a press release.
spdblotter.seattle.gov/2012/11/09/mar...

7:15 AM - 13 Nov 2012

5 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE



Our team has been asked by the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCC), National Institute of Justice, International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), #140 Character Conference NW, and the City of Seattle to speak to other law enforcement and government agencies about

how SPD utilizes social channels. Members of the PAO team are also frequently asked to guest lecture for the University of Washington and Seattle University on the topic of social media use in government. In 2012, Sgt. Sean Whitcomb was the co-chair, organizer and presenter of COPCOM in Vancouver B.C., which was a conference specifically designed for law enforcement communication teams. Whitcomb is also a co-organizer of a nationwide Officer Safety Campaign effort hosted by MCC, and was a featured speaker at the 2014 IN-NW Social Media & Digital Marketing Conference.

What's Next for SPD Public Affairs?

The Public Affairs Office is actively working expand the availability of the Department's neighborhood crime data, and to simplify and increase the transparency of the public disclosure process through the development of new online tools. Additionally, the PAO has recently launched Precinct based Nextdoor.com accounts in an effort to bring online engagement to the neighborhood level. The PAO continues to leverage existing online platforms to reach the widest possible audience. However, as the PAO's digital footprint increases, so does the public's expectation of near-instantaneous responsiveness. Reliably delivering excellent customer service is contingent on future investment in Public Affairs resources.