

## **SOCIAL MEDIA INTEGRATION**

Presentation by  
Amy Fraser Maple  
NA Inter-District Conference  
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The workshop on Social Media Integration was presented by Amy Fraser Maple, a member of the Zonta Club of Southfield Area, Southfield, MI. She lives in Bloomfield Hills with her husband, Dale and their 4 year old son, Rex.

The presenter's professional background is in non-profit management. After having spent over fifteen years with various Girl Scout Councils, Amy is currently "between successes" and awaits her next leadership challenge. She is also a certified instructor of Trainers and recently completed the leadership training, "Coming into Your Own", a partnership with Girl Scouts USA and The Ashland Institute.

A member of Zonta International since 1988, her career as a Zontian has included serving as President of the Southfield Area Club, Chairman of the Service/Status of Women Committee for District 15 from 2002-2006, and Secretary of District 15 from 2006 to the present.

Away from Zonta, Amy has a very busy life in Bloomfield Hills. She is active as a deacon in her church, Kirk in the Hills, Presbyterian USA, and will serve as director of their Vacation Bible School this summer.

As Amy said, her home is Michigan – always has been, always will be. She is a new member of Toastmasters International. As an avid fan of hockey, she was in shock that NBC scheduled back-to-back games in the Stanley Cup Finals.

At the beginning of the presentation, several image-provoking analogies were mentioned. The first was the mention of Wilma and Betty Flintstone talking to each other via their over-sized shell telephones. A second image was the analogy of a

scene from the movie “Grease” where Rizzo and Frenchie make a stop at the Drive-in’s ladies room. Rizzo confides to Frenchie her concern she may be pregnant. Frenchie swears to “take it to the grave”, yet by the time the two of them reach their cars, the rumor has spread throughout the Drive-in.

While those methods of communication were quick, they were not thorough nor reliable or accurate, and certainly left the intent and accountability in question. As an example, Amy went to the first table in the meeting room and whispered into one Zontian’s ear, asking her to pass the message to her left, and so on. Several minutes lapsed before the message reached the final person.

Our presenter then asked the participants to fast forward to the Digital Age and she introduced Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Facebook was founded in the early 2000’s by two friends at Harvard. LinkedIn was introduced in 2002 and Twitter in 2006.

Similarities of the three most popular personal pages included the following:

- All are free and accessible to anyone with an email account
- All serve to connect users with one another
- All have bells and whistles, some free and some available at an additional charge
- While language translations may vary, all are global
- The user has control of who’s connected to them, the level of privacy, etc.

FACEBOOK is intergenerational. You can include personal and professional connections, and can create a group account for your Club or District. Facebook allows you to download photos or videos, and provides the ability to communicate with each other, i.e., “Wall to Wall”.

LINKEDIN has professional and business connections. Think of it as a virtual business card and/or resume. Subscribers can create a group account for your Club

or District. Users can join in discussions, and add website links (i.e., Zonta International, district website or club website). LinkedIn offers the ability to communicate with each other via "Status Updates". Joining a group will enable its logo to appear on your page.

TWITTER is the new kid on the block. It also is intergenerational and can follow anyone (within reason). Subscribers can communicate with each other, but not in an open forum. It will be super handy at ZI Convention for sending notice of a meeting place to friends, communicating with Delegates on the floor, and to follow candidates for office.

How can you participate fully: First, create an account which can always be updated later. As a matter of etiquette, post a photo or another form of identification, such as a logo, cartoon character, or something that identifies you. Avoid the boiler plate. Above all, you can utilize the power of "ignore".

Various ways to integrate the Zonta International mission are available in social media outlets, such as the ZI policy on circulation/networking and blogging. It enables one to establish consistency in logos and images of Club or District accounts. Facebook and LinkedIn allow the use of free "event features for membership recruitment, fundraising, scholarship applicants. They are considered a targeted upgrade to advertise. When used for membership, they keep prospective members from "falling through the cracks".

In keeping up with scholarship recipients, Facebook and LinkedIn allows clubs to maintain relations by keeping in touch during their stay at colleges or universities. They are also the potential nucleus for starting Golden Z Clubs and a potential source for future scholarship applicants. They allow us to keep Zonta International in front of our future Zontians.

Your own account allows you to advocate by posting the question “What’s on your mind?” You can also follow local decision makers to keep abreast of policy affecting our mission.

A handout referencing the myths and risks of social networking was provided to all participants.

## **THE MYTHS**

### **It will become a time suck.**

This will come true only if you let it. While the initial setup process may take part of an afternoon, once you’re up and connected to colleagues, a social network won’t require much time to maintain. In fact, your network can save you time by helping you find who you need quickly. Of course, any social network will require a modicum of attention and time in order for you to get the most of it. But then again, so does email, and you’d hardly want to give that up.

### **I’ll lose my privacy.**

Nearly every social network has ways of ensuring that your profile data is only viewable to those you have invited to see it. A stranger browsing Google won’t be able to trawl for your email or contact information—unless you have put it in your public profile. And remember, you don’t have to list any contact info you’re not comfortable disclosing. Worries of identify theft are ill-founded as well, as even those within your network would never see information like your Social Security number, date of birth, or home address. Think of it this way: There’s already bountiful information about nearly everyone on the Internet these days. At least with a social network profile (which tends to rank highly on Google) you control some of it.

### **I’m not tech savvy enough.**

If you’ve managed to click on any story to read it, you’re more than savvy enough to use any social network. It’s true that some sites, such as MySpace, can expect users to know basic HTML, but both Facebook and LinkedIn do all the heavy lifting for you.

LinkedIn, in particular uses a clear, simple interface designed with the site's average user—aged 41—in mind. Filling out an online profile is just like typing a resume or filing out a form, one that's decidedly simpler than, say, a 1040A.

## **THE RISKS**

### **I'll be deluged with spam.**

Nearly every social network implements safeguards to keep spam at a minimum. And nearly every social network fails to some degree. MySpace says users abandoning the site in droves after spam artists started using profiles as bait for illicit websites. Facebook users are sometimes deluged when friends inadvertently send out requests to install applications. And users on LinkedIn have been barraged with promotional email requests for introductions from overzealous contacts. MySpace and Facebook are still struggling with the issue, but there is a quick fix for LinkedIn. If someone's outreach gets a little heavy handed, you can easily remove the pest from your contacts without them even knowing. (None of the major social networking sites inform contacts when you remove them from your network.)

### **My personal and professional lives will collide.**

Who you are in the office can be very different from who you are outside of it, and online social networking can focus unwanted attention on that distinction. To avoid uncomfortable overlaps, make sure your contacts on LinkedIn are only those you know professionally. (Unless you're both in the same field, it's probably best to ignore your brother-in-law's requests to link to you.) If you use sites like Facebook for professional networking, set up two separate accounts—one to meet with others in your industry, and another to keep up with friends from college.

### **My mistakes will come back to haunt me.**

A stain on your virtual record can be difficult to get rid of. Specious advice, passive-aggressive recommendations, a white lie about your job history—these things can stick around for years after the fact. And don't assume that simply deleting your profile will fix the problem. Facebook faced a wave of anger from users this February

after it was discovered that bits of old profiles remained even after users deleted them. (Facebook now says the problem is fixed.) Just as with e-mail, think twice before you type.

In summary, the presenter offered three brief take-aways from her presentation:

1. Be courageous—if Amelia Earhart could fly across the Atlantic solo, you can surf the internet.
2. Emerging generations are very comfortable with social media. Recruiting emerging generations will be easier for clubs who embrace social media outlets.
3. More information is needed to assist Zonta International in crafting comprehensive guidelines and/or policy on use of social media for members, clubs and districts.

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Please reference the Zonta International website for two items concerning the use of social media. One is a message from ZI President Beryl Sten regarding blogging and the other is the Networking Policy and Guidelines, [both are available on the Zonta International website, www.zonta.org.](#)

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