Social Media—Does the yield justify the effort?
The point of social media is to drive traffic to your website & bring you to the attention of potential new customers and collaborators. Secondarily, it mobilizes and engages a community for greater participation and (potentially) development $$.

Online Rule #1: be data driven.
Collect data to identify who your current "customers" are, and how they find you:
- On application forms ("how did you find out about this opportunity?")
- Via web analysis tools on your website to find keywords, top referrers, and most visited pages
- Add tracking to existing media (QR codes/URL shortener) to enhance data collection
- Discover where information about your station exists on the web (It's there, you just may not control it; ex. Wikipedia, press releases, etc)

Evaluate what you've found to determine what you need to KEEP doing, and what is not effective.

Evaluate what your "brand" is, and how you are communicating it.
- Examine the data--What do customers say about you? How do they describe you?
- How do you WANT to be described? What are your goals? (gap analysis)
- Keep key mission messages same, but you can experiment with different designs
- Use the language of your audience, not academicspeak

BLUF—bottom line up front; Specific call to action in first sentence of emails or media pieces
WIFM—what's in it for me? Immediately explain why someone should care about your work

Alumni—a neglected source of referrals! Are you tracking what happens to your alumni? Tracking how often/how you communicate with them? Do you include grad students, postdocs, REUs, others in alumni?

Online "Rule of 7": People need to see an ad/information 7 times before they are moved to action.
- Isn't actually based on any data; but it does seem to fit a mental model
- People respond more strongly to photos with PEOPLE in them, not pretty nature scenes (there is evidence for this)

Discomforts of online engagement:
- Loss of control
- Informal tone vs. professional tone

Online Rule #2: You can't build a social media platform and walk away from it.
- Communities are built on trust. People trust other people; it is important to maintain personal connections while remaining professional.
- People trust you to share interesting and relevant content. Therefore, your tweets/posts should be enticing and catchy, but never misleading. You are publishing: always fact-check.
- Your own voice is important—try to become a trustworthy voice of your organization. We all have different voices and that is OK.
- The "Chosen Social One" needs to have passion for the audience.
- Facebook should not be just another task on your list of duties. To be successful and social, it means you need to show your passion.

Web Analysis and Tracking Utilities:
- [Google webmaster tools](#)
- [Google web analytics](#)
- [Google web alerts](#) for your station name, etc.
- QR code generation and short URL tracking: https://bitly.com/
- Check with your web/server folks for other tools they may recommend

Technical Twitter tips:
- Try to keep your tweets to about 100-120 characters, not 140. This gives people room to retweet and comment on your gems.
- Use hashtags responsibly, on keywords, e.g. #Ecology #NSF. Don't overdo it: #This #is #silly.
- Engage: take time to respond to people who '@' you. Reply to and retweet interesting tweets from
- others. Together,@s and RTs should take up no more than 60% of your output; and you should
- send fewer RTs than @s.
- Punctuate. Try not 2 use txt spk. Rephrase rather than mangle the English language. And don't swear. Ever.

(Modified from a post about twitter originally by Richard P. Grant on Google+)

Helpful resources about social media:
- [Social Media: A guide for researchers.](#) February 2011.
- [10 Best Practices for Social Media.](#) ASNE Ethics and Values Committee. May 2011.
- Council for Advancement and Support of Education [Best Practices for Social Media](#).
- [Facebook Secrets for Extension Educators](#)
- Scientists are talking, but mostly to each other: a quantitative analysis of research represented in mass media. Julie Suleski and Motomu Ibaraki. Public Understand. Sci. 19(1) (2010) 115–125.
- [Social Media Tips and Tricks: Read Smarter.](#)
- [Social Media Tips and Tricks: Timing is Everything.](#)

Helpful resources about web design
- Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability. 2005. Steve Krug, New Riders Press (2nd Edition).
- [SEO Cheat Sheet](#) by Ian Lurie, Conversation Marketing, 2010

Technical Stuff:
[Facebook's Guide on setting up a page](#)
[Facebook's Guide on Page Analytics](#)