



CONFERENCE OF COURT PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS

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Fifth Report Released on New Media's Impact on the Judiciary

LAS VEGAS, NV – Courts continue to implement rules to control the use of new media technologies including Facebook and Twitter in the courtroom while becoming more approving of the media sending real-time dispatches from court proceedings, according to a survey report released today by the Conference of Court Public Information Officers.

The *2014 CCPIO New Media Survey* contains the results of a national survey of judges and court personnel conducted in June. It provides the judicial community in the United States its first year-to-year comparison spanning five years of data unveiling how social media and broader changes in the media industry are impacting state and local judges and courts.

In addition to the survey results, the report details recent developments in the past year including advisory opinions and examples by courts using social media. It is available for download at www.ccpio.org.

Since the publication of the last *CCPIO New Media Survey*, courts are becoming increasingly more comfortable using new media tools to connect with the public and fulfill their obligation to be open, transparent, and understandable institutions. At the same time, lawyers, judges and courts have continued to be wary of new media use and its influence on the integrity of proceedings, judicial ethics, and other concerns. The *2014 CCPIO New Media Survey* reveals the judicial system is more accepting of the use of new media in the courtroom, but the majority of courts are still slow to embrace new media as they cautiously guard against the risks it presents.

The results of the 2014 CCPIO New Media and the Courts Survey reveal several major conclusions:

- In 2014, 37 percent of the courts have a social media policy for their courtroom compared to about 29 percent a year ago.
- Social media use by courts is growing. Compared to 2013, Facebook use by courts is up by more than 5 percent; Twitter use increased by 3.5 percent and YouTube by 3.2 percent.

- Court officials are less concerned about the media sending messages from the courtroom during proceedings than in past years. A year ago, nearly 66 percent of court officials objected to the media sending messages. In 2014, the gap has narrowed with only 46 percent saying it's inappropriate and 39 percent permitting it.
- In a complete reversal of opinion, more than 50 percent of court officials believe the media should be allowed, with some restrictions, to take photos and videos of a court proceeding. Only 35 percent object to photos and videos this year, an 11 percent drop from a year ago.
- Court personnel still remain wary of social media use and three-quarters do not use any social media in their professional lives. A growing number of respondents – 41 percent – indicated privacy concerns with using Facebook. In 2013, this number was 30 percent.

The survey was conducted by the Conference of Court Public Information Officers, an organization of more than 120 communications professionals working in state and federal courts in the United States and worldwide. Partners in the project include the National Center for State Courts in Williamsburg, Va., the nation's leading center for research assistance to the country's state court systems, and the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University.

The survey findings are part of a national collaborative research project now entering its sixth year, which monitors the impact of new media on the courts.

More than 9,100 individuals in the court community were invited to participate in the electronically distributed survey. Of the total individuals who completed the survey, 32.5 percent responded they were judicial officers. Results of the 2013 survey showed 31.5 percent of respondents to be judges; 33.4 percent were judges in the 2011 survey; and 31.4 percent were judges in the 2010 survey.

“Judges and the courts increasingly recognize the impact new media is having on the judicial process inside and out of the courtroom. The research highlights the need for education, introspection and dialogue to ensure these technologies and their uses are understood,” said Thomas Hodson, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University. “Judiciaries daily are driven to reach diverse audiences to meet the needs of the public and promote transparency. New Media technologies are increasingly becoming a tool to accomplish this.”