

# Connecting the Campus to Campus Archaeology

## Using Digital Social Media for Community Outreach and Engagement

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### Archaeology

The Campus Archaeology Program (CAP) mitigates and protects archaeological resources on Michigan State University's (MSU) campus while working with multiple departments to be good stewards of the cultural heritage of MSU & East Lansing.

We consider engagement to be a significant part of our mission. By engagement we mean the incorporation and education of various communities in all aspects of our research, the discovery of MSU's past, and how good stewardship can be accomplished.



Digital social media use internet technologies to develop social dialogue among individuals and communities. As noted by Wikipedia, it supports the democratization of knowledge and information, transforming people from content consumers to content producers. CAP uses digital social media as tools to link archaeology and communities in its missions of engagement and stewardship.

### Real-time engagement

We use Twitter, Facebook, & Flickr to share information from the field, archives, lab, and office in real time. We can show each step of the archaeological process from beginning an excavation to finishing the report. This allows the community to be engaged in the process of discovery. They make the discoveries with us.

### New communities

Digital social media allow us to connect with anyone in the world who has access to a computer or a phone. This means that we can engage communities that are not able to visit in person, including those in their offices, alumni in other states or countries, other archaeologists, the President of the University, and the physical plant staff who are busy elsewhere on campus.

### Two-way discussion

Digital social media provide the opportunity for our new communities to ask us questions in real time about every step of the research process. In turn, we can provide information & begin a conversation about the past.

### Community

CAP interacts with a number of communities on various scales: students, faculty, staff, alumni, administration, other departments/units, contractors, local citizens, governments, other archaeologists, & schoolchildren.

Each community has a stake in MSU's stewardship, but they are seldom given an opportunity to participate directly, continuously, & at all levels. CAP's methods of engagement must be accessible, two-way, transparent, multi-media, and in real-time.

