Social Media and Crowdsourcing in Planning and Design

Description:
Learn how to use social media technologies and crowdsourcing to enhance public participation. Dive into Facebook and Twitter and learn how to balance transparency with control. Become a master blogger and get your planning message out to the masses. Learn about MindMixer and other online town hall forum and crowdsourcing tools. Discuss how to integrate these new techniques with the traditional public participation process.

Learning objectives
- Learn the benefits and potential pitfalls of social media and crowdsourcing and the essential elements of a successful social media and crowdsourcing strategy.
- Learn how to leverage social media and crowdsourcing to enhance public participation in the planning process.
- Learn how to incorporate public input collected through crowdsourcing into the final plan.

Outline:
Informed by case studies in Fargo, Tuscaloosa, and other cities, armed with statistics, and ready with real world final products in hand, three presenters from a private planning firm, technology company, and public planning department will discuss the benefits and potential pitfalls of using new technologies for community engagement.

- Why Social Media and Crowdsourcing?
- The Essential Elements of a Successful Social Media and Crowdsourcing Strategy
  - Facebook and Twitter – Starting a Conversation with the Community
  - Blogs – Get your Message out there – educate and inform the public
  - MindMixer – Crowdsource ideas and gather feedback.
- Case Study – Fargo Comprehensive Plan – used MindMixer, Facebook, Youtube, and a project blog to engage the community during the comprehensive plan update. Feb 2011-Feb. 2012.
  - The successes and pitfalls from the public planning perspective:
    - Success:
      - Engaging community
        - Great participation, shaped the direction of the plan and city-leader support early-on
        - Surprise! A new generation of participants
      - Creating support from the grass roots
      - Amplifying local voices and experts
        - University town, academics engaged as well as non-profits.
        - Let people participate other than evening meeting hours.
    - Pitfalls:
      - Continuing the conversation and promises made, now what?
      - Meeting expectations, We’re listening, so we need to mean it
      - Staying current, easy for items to become tired

- Case Study – Tuscaloosa Forward Strategic Community Plan to Renew and Rebuild - Tuscaloosa Forward Strategic Community Plan to Renew and Rebuild – After a 2011 devastating tornado, Tuscaloosa used MindMixer, a project blog, and Facebook to quickly built awareness around the plan and create a strategic recovery plan that is truly informed by the public on an accelerated timeline. May 2011 – August 2011.
  - Accelerating the timeline with technology
  - Incorporating feedback into the final document
• Integrating technology into the traditional public participation process. The panel will use projects such as Nashville Long Term Recovery Plan (After the May 2010 flood, Nashville used MindMixer in its recovery process. – May 2010- Jan 2011) and Kansas City, MO Area Plans (As Kansas City updates area plans around the city, it is using MindMixer to engage neighborhoods) to showcase how social media tools can improve the public participation process.
• What's next for social media and planning?
• Questions.

Speakers Bios:

Nick Bowden is the Founder and Chief Engagement Officer of MindMixer. He believes strongly that connected and contributing communities can be built through effective online engagement. Mindmixer has been incredibly fortunate to work with amazing organizations that share that same belief. In his work as an urban planner, Nick saw the existing model for civic engagement was broken, largely because it provided only one option for engagement, community meetings that required citizens to physically show up at a specific time and specific place. In building MindMixer, the founders had high hopes that the model could be improved by providing citizens with access to share ideas, solve challenges, and interact with community leaders at any time, from anywhere. Whether it was transportation, schools, taxes, or climate change, we wanted the conversation to be a mouse click away.

Nicole Crutchfield, ASLA, AICP is a planner and landscape architect for the City of Fargo, North Dakota. She has a combined 20 years of experience in private and public practice. She focuses on finding effective communication methods for better design and implementation in order to enhance the public realm. She works at the regional and local scales to help establish policies leading to livable communities. Part of her work includes translating community needs and design principles for elected officials while helping community members find meaningful participation.

Zach Flanders, AICP is a land use and economic development planner with a passion for creating prosperous and sustainable communities. By harnessing the myriad data available in today's world through statistics and visualization, he is helping city leaders make better decisions and more informed policies. He also leads the web development and social media outreach strategies for BNIM planning projects. His recent experience with leading social media processes includes the Fargo Comprehensive Plan, the Nashville Long-term Recovery Plan, and Grand Boulevard Streetscape Plan in Kansas City.