

SMI's proudly presents the 7th annual

SOCIAL MEDIA

WITHIN THE DEFENCE AND MILITARY SECTOR

6 - 7 DECEMBER 2017 LONDON, UK

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Following on from the success of previous events, SMI's [7th Social Media within the Defence & Military Sector](#) returns to London in December at the Copthorne Tara Hotel in Kensington. The event will explore how social media is being increasingly intertwined with military operations and utilising digital communications as an overall new front in warfare.

In the run-up to the conference we caught up with Brad Kimberly, Defense Media Activity, US Department of Defense, for a quick Q&A regarding the subject matter. Here's what he had to say:

SMi: Tell us about you – what is your role in the defence / military social media environment and what perspective do you bring to the conference?

BK: I run the U.S. Department of Defense Social Media team at Defense Media Activity. We operate the top-level social media accounts for the DoD. As such, I'll bring a perspective of how high-visibility accounts operate at such a high level in the U.S. government.

SMi: What current projects have you been working on?

BK: Last year, I briefed the #MilSocialMedia conference on our new Social Media Operations Center. We launched that with great success in December 2016. In 2017, we're "under new management" with a new administration, so we're actively working to transition our messaging to match our new leaders' priorities. I'll be talking more about this at the conference this year.

SMi: From your industry expertise, what are the major trends and developments in Social Media for this specific sector in 2017?

BK: Live streaming 360 video. We've been experimenting with 360 video, and we were one of the first accounts on Twitter to natively upload 360 video. Right now, we're interested in doing Facebook Live 360, but we need to solve the challenge of transmission limitations. Will we have large enough bandwidth through a data provider to allow 360 videos to live stream at high quality? Depending on cellular congestion, it's not as simple as using your cell phone provider.

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An interview with US DoD



Brad Kimberly
 Defense Media Activity,
 US Department of Defense

Brad will be speaking on Day Two of Social Media Within the Defence & Military Sector. He will be giving a presentation entitled "Military Social media: Under New Management"

7th Social Media within the Military & Defence Sector Conference
 6-7 December 2017, London, UK

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SMi: As a key player in Social Media utilisation, what are the challenges you face personally and what do you see as challenges for the industry in general?

BK: Personally, my biggest challenge is to not take on projects that I can't continue operating. For instance, if I were to start a new blog site or social media site, will I be able to continue operating it if my staffing size changes drastically? I don't want to start something that I can't see to fruition.

SMi: Where do you see the biggest potential for growth and development in using Social Media for recruitment in the next two years?

BK: If recruitment is one of your goals in using social media, I think it's important to know where that pool of potential recruits primarily exists on social media. As always, compelling and targeting content is paramount when it comes to meeting communication goals. Getting that content on the right platforms to reach those potential recruits is absolutely required. That said, a social-only campaign isn't the solution. Social should be just a part of the overall communications plan in regards to recruiting. Let's not forget TV, radio, print, and web. They all have a role to play.

SMi: Are there any sessions and speakers at the conference that you are particularly looking forward to hearing about and why?

BK: I'm a fan of Andrew Morton. We've known each other for years. Also, I can't wait to see Hans Damen again. I met him two years ago at the conference, and his presentation was amazing. He's the coolest general I've ever met. Also, his moustache is legendary.

SMi: What is your favourite social media platform and why?

BK: I don't know if I have a preference. Each platform offers me something the others don't. Facebook is a great place to engage with my audience. Twitter is a great place for putting out live news coverage. Instagram lets our audience see a completely different perspective of our military. It depends on what your goal is.

SMi: What are your three top tips for social media novices in getting the best out employing this in our communication strategies?

BK: 1) Don't ever rest on your laurels. The sites are constantly changing, and you will need to adapt to those changes and the needs of your audience as well. 2) Everything you post should be done because it's part of your social media strategy. Don't have a strategy? Get one. Write it down, and follow it. 3) Be your own thing. You'll be tempted to copy something another account has done. Instead of copying them, try to develop your own amazing piece of content.

You can follow Brad on Twitter: [@BradKimberly](https://twitter.com/BradKimberly)

Hear more from Brad at the [7th Social Media within the Defence & Military Sector](#) event this Autumn. [Click here](#) to view the full agenda.

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