

Mining Matters

MINING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Many mining and exploration groups are on-line via social networking media. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and the World Wide Web are offering businesses opportunities to contact shareholders, communities, and the interested public like never before.

Locally, NovaGold recently embraced all of these sites.

“We’re actually trying to show the personality of the company to give people a different way of communicating with us,” says Rhylin Bailie, a spokeswoman for NovaGold. “Any opportunity that you have to engage with people is a positive opportunity if you do it properly,” she said. “This is just a different method of doing it.”

NWCC’s School of Exploration and Mining (SEM) has been on Facebook awhile, encouraging interaction between students and community.

“The SEM Facebook is actually a pilot project for NWCC to explore the use of social media as a tool,” says Rob Maurer, Industry Liaison and Employment Advisor for SEM. “With over 1700 members our Facebook group has been a great way for our graduates and industry to stay in touch. It is also great for marketing. The messages and personal photos from graduates are effective because they are seen as sincere. We can say our training is great because that is our job, but when former students are saying it, it has stronger effect.”

The Association for Mineral Exploration BC has an extensive social media network on Facebook and Twitter, with a new blog established for its annual Roundup convention. The Smithers Exploration Group relies heavily on its website to disseminate information. The Regional District of Bulkley-Netchako maintains a website with blogs. Even Barrick Gold has a Twitter feed.

Ariadna Peretz, who manages NovaGold’s presence online, said the two-way communication with shareholders is also key to successful relationship building with them.

“If we want to turn social media into something valuable, we have to keep in mind that it is social,” Peretz says. “That it is about talking and conversing, not just about bragging about what we’re doing.” ■

“Mining Matters” is a bi-monthly column written by Anastasia Ledwon, P.Geo., and welcomes your feedback and questions at general@smithers.ca.

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