

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Casting a reality check on real-world conundrums

Twitter Jitters

"If the client was streaming the session live to virtual attendees as well, I would be happy to incorporate it into my presentation. I would make sure that the Twitter feed is not shown on the screen because it's too much of a distraction for the audience, and a tech moderator is present to feed comments/questions to me from the attendees via the Twitter feed. That way, I can interact with the virtual and live audiences simultaneously, and I don't need to know Twitter."

—Glenn Thayer, Colorado Springs, Colo.



A client asks you to deliver a program and incorporate Twitter into your presentation.

You've been meaning to get on the Twitter train, but haven't done so yet. You could probably learn it quickly, but you are wondering if you should confess that you are not familiar enough with the technology to use it.

What would you do?

"What would make a difference is the venue, the content and the context. Just because one can do it doesn't mean you should."

—Eileen McDargh, CSP, CPAE, Dana Point, Calif.

"I would tell the client that I'm their girl if they want customer service. But, if they want to learn from the Twitter Goddess, they should call Gina Schreck, CSP."

—Ruby Newell-Legner, CSP, Littleton, Colo.

"A speaker not on Twitter? The first question should be: Why the heck not?!"

I would ask to what extent they want to incorporate Twitter. Then, I would admit (in this hypothetical) that I am not actively using the tool. Based on the amount of time I'd have to prepare, I may or may not be able to effectively incorporate some basics of the tool."

—Nora Burns, Denver, Colo.

"I would take the opportunity to learn the technology and integrate it into my program. Twitter really isn't that complicated. Besides, there's nothing like real-time, honest feedback being sent to the entire universe to keep you humble on the platform!"

—Dan Stockdale Harriman, Tenn.

"I would respond to the client by posing the question, 'What would Shakespeare do?' To tweet, or not to tweet, that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of 140 characters, or to take arms against a sea of troubles by raising our arms in the audience and asking the question in person? Ay, there's the rub.

This should confuse the client to the point that they drop the subject altogether, and you can proceed with your program as planned."

—Dale Irvin, CPAE, CSP Downers Grove, Ill.

What Would You Do? is a regular column that presents a real-life dilemma faced by professional speakers. NSA members are encouraged to submit a dilemma for possible discussion in this column. Please submit dilemmas to ethics@nsaspeaker.org. NSA reserves the right to edit submissions for length and style. All dilemmas will be anonymously attributed. Opinions expressed are those of the individual respondents, not NSA.