

[SIGN IN \(/USER/LOGIN?CURRENT=NODE/20916\)](#) [SUBSCRIBE \(HTTPS://WWW.FORTNIGHTLY.COM/INDIVIDUAL-SUBSCRIPTION\)](#)

[ADVERTISE \(HTTPS://WWW.FORTNIGHTLY.COM/ADVERTISE\)](#) [MY CART \(/CART\)](#)

Search



Ω



modernsolutions
power systems conference

REGISTER NOW >>

<https://www.fortnightly.com/simpleads/redirect/24236>

Georgia: On Becoming a Social Media Junkie

2015 Regulators Forum

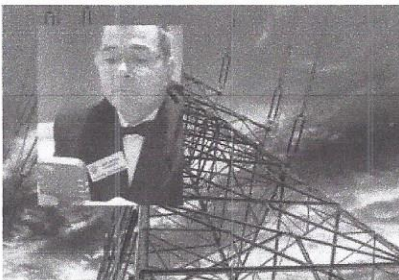
Tim Echols, Georgia PSC

2015 Regulators Forum

Tim Echols, Georgia PSC

Tim Echols was elected statewide to the Georgia Public Service Commission in 2010 and is up for re-election in 2016. He owns 2 electric cars, preaches energy efficiency, and installed solar thermal on his home. He also rages against the EPA. He has three degrees from the University of Georgia, one wife, and 7 kids.

[Fortnightly Magazine - November 2015 \(/node/20871\)](#)



https://www.fortnightly.com/sites/default/files/styles/story_large/public/1511-FFA0c.jpg?itok=rwLJX6Ay

Being in the "energy" business as a commissioner, staff, lobbyist or industry leader is hard enough without social media, right? You have to learn to deal with kilowatts, inverters, dockets, turbines, sub-stations and a host of words created from initials - like NARUC, EPA, FERC, and maybe the NRC. When you add Twitter and Facebook to the mix, it is enough to drive one crazy. Who needs it? Well, we all do, really.

Let's start with the most popular social media - Facebook. You may have thought that Facebook was just for people who wanted to post videos of dogs, cats, their dinner, and of course - selfies. But many in the energy world use Facebook to connect with customers, ratepayers and anyone looking around on the internet.

Companies like Duke Energy advertise their refrigerator recycling program on Facebook. Georgia Power has a special Facebook page dedicated just to their electric vehicle program. Entergy has a Facebook page for every division and uses it to brag on customers and employees. EMCs use the "throwback Thursday" hashtag #TBT to post historic events from their past for their Facebook friends to see.

Twitter, Facebook. Who needs it? Well, we all do, really.

- Tim G. Echols,
Georgia Pub. Serv. Comm'n



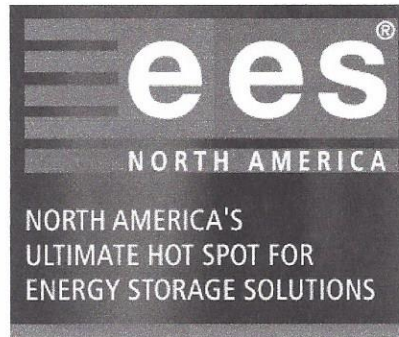
["Twitter, Facebook. Who needs it? Well, we all do, really." - Tim G. Echols, Georgia Pub. Serv. Comm'n](#)

https://www.fortnightly.com/sites/default/files/styles/story_large/public/1511-FFA0c-Echols.jpg?itok=_ZistXam

The California Public Utilities Commission allows anyone to "vent" on their Facebook page, including the posting of photos. Austin Energy's Facebook page is a virtual brag-book of company accomplishments. You get the idea. It is a free scrapbook with settings that give the page owner as much control as you like. In fact, you can even create a "secret" group that only invited people can see.

Let's move to Twitter. Despite what you might think, Twitter is not just for mean people. Believe it or not, Twitter has been with us for almost 10 years now. I first started using it in 2007 and it seemed like a complete waste of time. A professor made me set up the account.

Twitter, unlike Facebook, is not meant for friends and family. Rather, Twitter is for people you are trying to communicate with. For me as an elected commissioner, that is voters and the media. You can follow anyone and they can follow you. No permission is required like on many Facebook pages. Usually, only people who follow you see your messages, so the idea is to increase the number of people who follow you. There are tricks to doing this - which will require another column in the future.



(<https://www.fortnightly.com/simpleads/redirect/24241>)

How much can you say in 140 characters you might ask? That is what a "tweet" is limited to - the same as a traditional text message. Actually, you can say quite a bit because you are forced to boil it down to the core message quickly. By adding a link, which

1	2 (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C1&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	3 (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C2&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	next (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C1&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	last (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C2&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)

Tags:

- [Obama \(/tags/obama\)](#)
- [Clean Power Plan \(/tags/clean-power-plan\)](#)
- [Oregon \(/tags/oregon\)](#)
- [Ackerman \(/tags/ackerman\)](#)
- [South Dakota \(/tags/south-dakota\)](#)
- [Chris Nelson \(/tags/chris-nelson\)](#)
- [Echols \(/tags/echols\)](#)
- [Georgia \(/tags/georgia\)](#)
- [Paul Roberti \(/tags/paul-roberti\)](#)
- [Rhode Island \(/tags/rhode-island\)](#)
- [CPP \(/tags/cpp\)](#)
- [Technology \(/tags/technology\)](#)
- [customer \(/tags/customer\)](#)
- [Workforce \(/tags/workforce\)](#)
- [decarbonize \(/tags/decarbonize\)](#)
- [business model \(/tags/business-model\)](#)
- [Renewable \(/tags/renewable\)](#)
- [DG \(/tags/dg\)](#)
- [HB 2193 \(/tags/hb-2193\)](#)

[SIGN IN \(/USER/LOGIN?CURRENT=NODE/20916\)](#) [SUBSCRIBE \(HTTPS://WWW.FORTNIGHTLY.COM/INDIVIDUAL-SUBSCRIPTION\)](#)

[ADVERTISE \(HTTPS://WWW.FORTNIGHTLY.COM/ADVERTISE\)](#) [MY CART \(/CART\)](#)

Search



10

How can we make the most out of energy moving at the speed of light?

<https://www.fortnightly.com/simpleads/redirect/24236>

Georgia: On Becoming a Social Media Junkie

2015 Regulators Forum

Tim Echols, Georgia PSC

2015 Regulators Forum

Tim Echols, Georgia PSC

Tim Echols was elected statewide to the Georgia Public Service Commission in 2010 and is up for re-election in 2016. He owns 2 electric cars, preaches energy efficiency, and installed solar thermal on his home. He also rages against the EPA. He has three degrees from the University of Georgia, one wife, and 7 kids.

[Fortnightly Magazine - November 2015 \(/node/20871\)](#)



<https://www.fortnightly.com/simpleads/redirect/24241>

journalists do, followers can get more.

Just make sure the link matches what you tweet out. The "Politifact" project took a tweet I did on solar jobs in Georgia and deemed it a "half-truth" on the front page of the local section of the Atlanta Journal Constitution because the figure in the link did not match what I put in the "Tweet." Pause, fact-check, then Tweet is the take home lesson there.

For utilities, many use it for "breaking news" types of alerts: power outages, emergency info, etc. Twitter is the social media of choice for media types and they are the most prolific users of this platform in my opinion. They use Twitter to "tease" stories they write and drive internet traffic to their article, blogs or website. Nothing wrong with that I guess.

PPL Electric and many utilities have staff who monitor their Twitter feed and allow customers to report outages, communicate concerns, or whatever - which the utility can then respond to. The PUC of Texas uses Twitter to provide followers with info about hearings, customer service information or agency news. ERCOT uses their Twitter feed to advertise job openings, provide historical info and provide forecast details. NARUC uses their Twitter account to "live tweet" interesting photos and tidbits from their nationwide meetings. *Fortnightly* uses Twitter to push out magazine content - always using a link so readers can get directly to the content.

The EPA has 323,000 Twitter followers, which is huge. They have a Twitter account for every region and use it many times per day to communicate propaganda, uh, meaningful information to their followers. These include photos of the Administrator and various staff busy at work, info on grants, programs, and of course, info on the Clean Power Plan. In fact, the EPA has its own hashtags on Twitter such as #CPP, #ActOnClimate, #DisasterPrep, #CleanPowerPlan and maybe soon to be #GetRidOfEchols. Let's hope not.

Using hastags allows a user to assign a particular subject to a Tweet, and the EPA uses hashtags as well as anyone. Followers searching or tracking a "trend" may discover your account and begin following you as a result of a hashtag. If you are on Twitter, try using a hashtag the next time you tweet.

And probably best of all, Twitter allows people to get instant customer service-assuming the account is monitored. I often use it when trying to communicate with a company like Delta Airlines when I am in a crowd. Their response time is within seconds and I don't have to bother people around me at the airport with one of those obnoxious phone calls. You know the kind I am talking about. When I have my airline issue resolved, I just go back in and delete that Twitter activity. If I don't, it is sitting there for all the world to see.

And therein is the issue with social media for some. They feel uncomfortable having people see the details of their life, business or issue. But guess what, the Millenials are coming, and they are happy for

	first (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C0&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	previous (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C0&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	1 (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C0&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
2	
	3 (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C2&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	next (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C2&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	last (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C2&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)

Tags:

- [Obama \(/tags/obama\)](/tags/obama)
- [Clean Power Plan \(/tags/clean-power-plan\)](/tags/clean-power-plan)
- [Oregon \(/tags/oregon\)](/tags/oregon)
- [Ackerman \(/tags/ackerman\)](/tags/ackerman)
- [South Dakota \(/tags/south-dakota\)](/tags/south-dakota)
- [Chris Nelson \(/tags/chris-nelson\)](/tags/chris-nelson)
- [Echols \(/tags/echols\)](/tags/echols)
- [Georgia \(/tags/georgia\)](/tags/georgia)
- [Paul Roberti \(/tags/paul-roberti\)](/tags/paul-roberti)
- [Rhode Island \(/tags/rhode-island\)](/tags/rhode-island)
- [CPP \(/tags/cpp\)](/tags/cpp)
- [Technology \(/tags/technology\)](/tags/technology)
- [customer \(/tags/customer\)](/tags/customer)
- [Workforce \(/tags/workforce\)](/tags/workforce)
- [decarbonize \(/tags/decarbonize\)](/tags/decarbonize)
- [business model \(/tags/business-model\)](/tags/business-model)
- [Renewable \(/tags/renewable\)](/tags/renewable)
- [DG \(/tags/dg\)](/tags/dg)
- [HB 2193 \(/tags/hb-2193\)](/tags/hb-2193)
- [RPS \(/tags/rps\)](/tags/rps)
- [CAISO \(/tags/caiso\)](/tags/caiso)
- [California \(/tags/california\)](/tags/california)
- [MACT \(/tags/mact\)](/tags/mact)
- [111\(d\) \(/tags/111d\)](/tags/111d)
- [Hydro \(/tags/hydro\)](/tags/hydro)

[SIGN IN \(/USER/LOGIN?CURRENT=NODE/20916\)](#) [SUBSCRIBE \(HTTPS://WWW.FORTNIGHTLY.COM/INDIVIDUAL-SUBSCRIPTION\)](#)

[ADVERTISE \(HTTPS://WWW.FORTNIGHTLY.COM/ADVERTISE\)](#) [MY CART \(/CART\)](#)

Search



1/1



modernsolutions
power systems conference

REGISTER NOW >>

<https://www.fortnightly.com/simpleads/redirect/24236>

Georgia: On Becoming a Social Media Junkie

2015 Regulators Forum

Tim Echols, Georgia PSC

2015 Regulators Forum

Tim Echols, Georgia PSC

Tim Echols was elected statewide to the Georgia Public Service Commission in 2010 and is up for re-election in 2016. He owns 2 electric cars, preaches energy efficiency, and installed solar thermal on his home. He also rages against the EPA. He has three degrees from the University of Georgia, one wife, and 7 kids.

[Fortnightly Magazine - November 2015 \(/node/20871\)](#)



<https://www.fortnightly.com/simpleads/redirect/24241>

you to see what they had for dinner, who they are hanging out with, what they are doing, and even the swimsuit they are so proud of.

The world is changing. #WeMustAdjust

More State Utility Commissioners in Their Own Words

[Oregon - Situated 'Quite Well' \(http://www.fortnightly.com/fortnightly/2015/11/oregon-situated-quite-well\)](#)

Susan Ackerman, chair, Oregon PUC: States that have coal-dependent economies will likely have more difficulty complying with the Clean Power Plan than states like Oregon. There will be rate impacts to be sure. The trick will be compliance at the most reasonable cost that that can be assured. [Read more> \(http://www.fortnightly.com/fortnightly/2015/11/oregon-situated-quite-well\)](#)

[South Dakota - A 'Unique' Fuel Mix \(https://www.fortnightly.com/fortnightly/2015/11/south-dakota-unique-fuel-mix\)](#)

Chris Nelson, vice-chairman, South Dakota Pub. Utils. Comm'n: Seventy-three percent of our generation is carbon-free, yet the EPA's 111(d) rules require a 48 percent reduction in our CO₂ emission rate. That steep reduction will be very difficult to achieve and will be costly for our electric customers. The commission's chief concern is keeping a lid on consumer prices, especially given the pressure exerted by EPA. [Read more> \(https://www.fortnightly.com/fortnightly/2015/11/south-dakota-unique-fuel-mix\)](#)

[Rhode Island - The Challenge of an Aging Infrastructure \(https://www.fortnightly.com/fortnightly/2015/11/rhode-island-challenge-aging-infrastructure\)](#)

Paul J. Roberti, Rhode Island PUC: Clearly, one of the most significant issues we face today is aging infrastructure. It's akin to a marathon - a race we absolutely have to finish. Since 1990 we've replaced more than 65,000 miles of cast iron and bare steel pipe, but we still have a long way to go. [Read more> \(https://www.fortnightly.com/fortnightly/2015/11/rhode-island-challenge-aging-infrastructure\)](https://www.fortnightly.com/fortnightly/2015/11/rhode-island-challenge-aging-infrastructure)

	first (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C0&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	previous (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C1&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	1 (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C0&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)
	2 (/fortnightly/2015/11/georgia-becoming-social-media-junkie? page=0%2C1&authkey=43d89a282520d3fbac3fd25693393e2672746ea3122658656c094409e3fd1cfc)

3

Tags:

- [Obama \(/tags/obama\)](#)
- [Clean Power Plan \(/tags/clean-power-plan\)](#)
- [Oregon \(/tags/oregon\)](#)
- [Ackerman \(/tags/ackerman\)](#)
- [South Dakota \(/tags/south-dakota\)](#)
- [Chris Nelson \(/tags/chris-nelson\)](#)
- [Echols \(/tags/echols\)](#)
- [Georgia \(/tags/georgia\)](#)
- [Paul Roberti \(/tags/paul-roberti\)](#)
- [Rhode Island \(/tags/rhode-island\)](#)
- [CPP \(/tags/cpp\)](#)
- [Technology \(/tags/technology\)](#)
- [customer \(/tags/customer\)](#)
- [Workforce \(/tags/workforce\)](#)
- [decarbonize \(/tags/decarbonize\)](#)
- [business model \(/tags/business-model\)](#)
- [Renewable \(/tags/renewable\)](#)
- [DG \(/tags/dg\)](#)
- [HB 2193 \(/tags/hb-2193\)](#)
- [RPS \(/tags/rps\)](#)
- [CAISO \(/tags/caiso\)](#)
- [California \(/tags/california\)](#)
- [MACT \(/tags/mact\)](#)
- [111\(d\) \(/tags/111d\)](#)
- [Hydro \(/tags/hydro\)](#)
- [wind coal \(/tags/wind-coal\)](#)
- [Natural gas \(/tags/natural-gas\)](#)
- [CAPX2020 \(/tags/capx2020\)](#)
- [PPA \(/tags/ppa\)](#)
- [purchase power \(/tags/purchase-power\)](#)
- [NARUC \(/tags/naruc\)](#)
- [EPA \(/tags/epa\)](#)
- [FERC \(/tags/ferc\)](#)
- [NRC \(/tags/nrc\)](#)
- [Twitter \(/tags/twitter\)](#)
- [Facebook \(/tags/facebook\)](#)
- [Duke \(/tags/duke\)](#)
- [Austin \(/tags/austin\)](#)
- [PPL Electric \(/tags/ppl-electric\)](#)
- [Texas \(/tags/texas\)](#)