
(name of company)

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY



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Introduction. Social networking is becoming increasingly popular in businesses and with the general public and is a useful tool for the news department. While social networking can be useful, if improperly used, it can result in a variety of adverse consequences, such as disclosure of sensitive or confidential information, copyright violations, and potential damage to the station's reputation.

Definition of Social Networking. As used in this policy, "social networking" means communicating with others over the Internet for social purposes. Typically, this interaction occurs on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace or "blogs", but can also occur on "media sites" that are offered by television networks, newspapers, and magazines, and permit

Application of Policy. This policy applies to all types of social networking activity (a) using the station's computers, mobile devices, or other technology, and (b) using non-company technology when linked to the station's systems. Nevertheless, when engaged in social networking on non-company technology that is not linked to the station's systems, employees should use this policy as a guide. In addition, they should never attribute such postings to the station or imply that they are endorsed or written by the station; if work affiliation is listed, the posting should include the following disclaimer: "*The statements and views expressed in this posting are my own and do not reflect those of my employer.*"

Information Technology (IT) Policy. Use of the station's IT systems for social networking must comply with the station's IT policy. Use of the handheld devices may be prohibited in some circumstances, including during courtroom proceedings. In all cases, station-issued technology must be used in accordance with all applicable rules.

Use of Station Time. Reporters and other station employees who have been approved to manage blogs or participate in social networking sites on the station's IT systems for work-related reasons should confirm approval of the site(s) by the Station Manager or IT Director. Those employees may access the approved site(s) as necessary for the performance of their duties.

Limited personal use of the station's IT systems to access social networking sites is permitted, but should be limited, not interfere with or impact normal business operations of the station, comply with all station policies, not compromise the security or reputation of the station, not burden the station with unreasonable incremental costs, and comply with all other provisions of this policy.

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Social Networking Site Terms of Use. Anyone participating in a social network for any reason is responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the site's terms of use. Any concerns about the terms of use for a site should be reported to the IT Director.



Contact Information. Many networking sites permit users to search for or import contact information from the user's contact list. Due to confidentiality and privacy concerns, users are prohibited from importing or uploading any station contacts to any networking sites where the information may be used beyond name recognition software purposes.

Content of Postings. Some social networking sites may provide an appropriate forum to keep current on matters of interest, to make professional connections, and to locate links to other pertinent sources. Users must be careful, however, that their online postings do not adversely impact or create problems for the station or its audience. Users are personally responsible for all content they post on social networking sites. Remember that it is difficult to delete content once posted to a site, so be cautious when writing any posting.

If a user has a question about the propriety of any posting, he or she should consult the Station Manager or IT Director. Users must follow these guidelines for all postings:

1. Use the same judgment in writing your postings that you would in writing any formal letter. Post only content that you would be comfortable having the station, your colleagues, the station's audience, and the general public read, hear, or see.
2. Do not express personal opinions about other people, other stations, or about potentially controversial topics such as politics and religion, or offer referrals, endorsements, or recommendations for or about others.
3. Refrain from posting any content that could be characterized as defamation, plagiarism, harassment, advertising, false light, an invasion of privacy, a copyright violation, or infringe on other rights.
4. Do not post anything that would potentially embarrass you or the station, or call into question your or the station's reputation, including photographs or other images.
5. Do not discuss station business, unless the station authorizes you to do so.
6. Do not leak confidential information.
7. Be careful to identify all copyrighted or borrowed material with appropriate citations, links, or permissions.

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8. Ensure that your posting is accurate, truthful, respectful, and is spelled correctly with appropriate grammar, language, and tone.

9. Obtain approval from the station's legal counsel before responding to an inaccurate, accusatory, or negative comment about the station, its employees, its broadcasts, its guests, or an inquiry about any other legal matter.



10. Unless previously authorized by the station, do not use the station's logo or suggest you are writing on behalf of the station.

11. Don't use the station's network or email lists to influence polls, rankings, or web traffic.

12. Show good judgment when "friending" someone within a social network.

13. Monitor your site regularly and promptly remove any inappropriate content.

14. Obey the law. Refrain from posting any information or conducting any online activity that may violate applicable local, state, or federal laws and regulations.

Disclaimer Statement. Whenever there is a possibility of confusion, postings should include the following disclaimer: *"The statements and views expressed in this posting are my own and do not reflect those of my station."*

Violations of This Policy. Due to the importance of this policy, the station cannot tolerate violations. All station personnel, including managers and staff, are subject to sanctions for violations of this policy. Consequences may include such measures as immediate termination of employment, or any other action deemed appropriate by the station under the circumstances.

Limitations. Nothing in this Policy should be construed to prohibit communications that are protected by law.