

Social Media Resources

Policy Option 1

This policy applies to the social networking activity of all employees, contractors, business partners or other parties with a material interest in [COMPANY], and will establish guidelines for employees to follow when communicating online in reference to [COMPANY].

[COMPANY] recognizes that social media technology – such networking sites, personal sites, and weblogs (“blogs”) – can have very useful applications to the workplace (for business development, lead generation, research, etc.). Certainly, by visiting social networking sites and posting content, employees can develop ideas, share knowledge, and connect with current and potential customers and colleagues. [COMPANY] will allow every associate the opportunity to express and communicate online in ways that cultivate a professional Internet presence.

Company Assets

When using social media resources, all employees must remember that the use of company assets (such computers, Internet access, email, etc.) is intended solely for purposes relevant to the responsibilities assigned to each associate. Social networking sites are not defined as a requirement for most positions, and certain job titles within [COMPANY] may not be permitted to access these services in any capacity. For employees allowed to access these services, only a reasonable and limited amount of use of company assets should be allotted for social networking services.

Social Networking

Online social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn can be advantageous to business development, but employees must follow some general guidelines and adhere to business etiquette when utilizing such resources:

- Online social networking during work hours is restricted to work-related activities. Legitimately, [COMPANY] management is concerned that the use of social networking sites during work hours can decrease productivity of its employees.
- LinkedIn is the professional network for adding work-related colleagues. Unless there is a business reason to do otherwise, employees should use Facebook and MySpace (and similar sites) for personal networking only and not feel pressured to add coworkers, vendors and clients as “friends” unless they want to do so. [COMPANY] recommends that employees do not access personal social networks on company time.

Some social networking sites, such as LinkedIn, allow members to “recommend” current or former co-workers. [COMPANY] forbids employees to independently supply such recommendations to or receive them from other current or former employees of [COMPANY], for reasons of company liability. All communication of this type should be referred to Human Resources for verification before being posted.

Twitter

Recently, Twitter has become very prevalent in the workplace. The dominant concern with Twitter is not the time required to create posts, but rather the concentration and focus that keeping up with numerous, multi-directional conversations entails.

Do not, under any circumstances, allow your Twitter posting to interfere with work and projects. [COMPANY] will not prohibit tweeting while at work, but the grand majority of tweets posted on company time should be work-related.

All employees posting on Twitter are to keep these simple policies in mind: be professional, kind, discreet, and authentic; represent [COMPANY] well; and consider that anything posted to the Internet, even if deleted by the poster, never fully disappears.

The company may elect to represent itself on Twitter with one person appointed by [POSITION TITLE, such as "VP of Communications"] who will "own" and be solely responsible for generating the content of the company brand Twitter account.

Social Video

[COMPANY] recognizes that viewing a quick video on YouTube can spark creativity and alleviate the pressures of a stressful day. In addition, some YouTube videos are educational and may generate ideas that, when applied, benefit the workplace. [COMPANY] management therefore does not expressly ban employee use of YouTube during work hours – however, employees must moderate the time spent watching YouTube videos. Employees cannot let use of YouTube interfere with completing work or projects on billable time.

Weblogs (Blogs)

Industry-related blogs can undoubtedly be invaluable sources of inspiration and information. [COMPANY] requests that employees refrain from reading personal or non-industry blogs on company time. While employees are encouraged to seek out knowledge that will allow them to better equip themselves for the demands of their position, or to more fully understand company activity and goals, employees cannot let reading blogs interfere with their work or projects.

Policy Option 1

Employees of [COMPANY] are allowed to blog during working hours as long as the blog's aim and content are related to job activity. A blog is defined as a shared on-line journal or website where users can post entries about their personal experiences, hobbies, interests and, in some cases, work experiences. Corporate blogging is the use of blogs for business purposes.

As an employee, you must make it clear that the views that expressed in the blog are yours alone and do not necessarily represent the views of your employer. In addition, please adhere to the following blogging guidelines:

1. Do not reveal confidential and proprietary information.
2. Ensure that blogging does not interfere with work requirements.
3. Consult with immediate supervisor if questions arise about appropriateness of blog content.

Policy Option 2

Employees who maintain personal websites or weblogs and discuss matters related to [COMPANY] must bear in mind that although the website or weblog may be a personal venture, some readers may view you as a de facto spokesperson for the company. Therefore, the following guidelines must be followed:

4. Make it clear to your readers that the views that expressed in the blog or on the website are yours alone and do not necessarily represent the views of your employer. This can be done by using the following disclaimer: The views expressed on this website/weblog are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer.
5. Do not disclose confidential or proprietary information. Consult [COMPANY]'s confidentiality policy for guidance.
6. Consult your immediate supervisor if you have questions about the appropriateness of publishing information about concepts or developments related to [COMPANY].
7. Since a website or weblog is a public space, be respectful to [COMPANY], our employees, our customers, our partners, and others.
8. Do not use company trademarks or company graphics on your website or weblog.
9. If you have questions about your personal website or weblog activity as it relates to [COMPANY], please address your questions to the Human Resources Department.

Policy Option 3

Blogging is a form of public communication. Your public communications concerning [COMPANY] must not violate any guidelines set forth in your employee handbook or the company policy manual, whether or not you specifically mention your employee status.

You may participate in [COMPANY]-related public communications, including blogging, on company time. However, if doing so interferes with any of your work duties and/or responsibilities, [COMPANY] reserves the right to disallow such participation.

You must include the following disclaimer on published public communications if you identify yourself as a [COMPANY] employee or if you regularly or substantively discuss [COMPANY] publicly:

The opinions expressed here are the personal opinions of [your name]. Content published here is not read or approved by [COMPANY] before it is posted and does not necessarily represent the views and opinions of [COMPANY]."

In addition, you must adhere to the following guidelines:

10. You may not communicate any material that violates the privacy or publicity rights of another.
11. You may not personally attack fellow employees, customers, vendors, or shareholders. You may respectfully disagree with company actions, policies, or management.
12. You may not disclose any sensitive, proprietary, confidential, or financial information about the company. This includes revenues, profits, forecasts, and other financial information, any information related to specific brands, products, product lines, customers,

operating units, etc. You may not disclose any information about any specific customer.

13. You may not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful or embarrassing to another person or any other person or entity. This includes, but is not limited to, comments regarding [COMPANY], [COMPANY] employees, [COMPANY]'s partners and [COMPANY]'s competitors.

Topic Matter Guidelines

[COMPANY] employees are encouraged to use the following guidelines in social networking practices:

- Be relevant to your area of expertise;
- Maintain professionalism, honesty, and respect; and
- Apply a "good judgment" test for every communicative activity related to [COMPANY].

Regarding "good judgment": Employees must carefully consider the possible consequences of all content posted on social networking sites. Employees guilty (in any capacity) reflecting negatively upon [COMPANY] or of leaking information, trade secrets, customer data, or upcoming announcements are subject to disciplinary measures, including termination, to be applied at the company's sole discretion. Activity evidencing good judgment includes making verifiable statements about [COMPANY] and its products and services; spreading facts about ideas, products, or events that have already been made public; or popularizing information available on the company web site.

Employees will be held fully accountable for all material in reference to [COMPANY] that they post online and should keep this in mind when utilizing social media services. The company encourages all communication to be made in a manner which identifies the employee and establishes his or her credibility. In addition to clearly identifying themselves, employees must state that any opinion professed is solely individual and not one officially professed by [COMPANY].

Inaccurate or Defamatory Content

Employees who participate in online communication deemed not to be in the best interest of [COMPANY] will be subject to disciplinary action. As previously mentioned, this online communication can include (but is not limited to) dispersing confidential company information, leaking data, and opining inaccurate, distasteful, or defamatory commentary about the company.

Disciplinary action can include termination or any other intervention deemed appropriate by Human Resources.

Off-Limits Material

This policy defines the following subject matters as strictly forbidden from any uncoordinated public exchange or online discourse – except through mechanisms managed internally by [COMPANY] communications or marketing groups – and therefore as off-limits for social media communication:

- Intellectual property
- Trade secrets
- Customer data

- Financial information
- Proprietary information such as layoffs, strategic decisions, etc.
- [ADD MORE, if applicable]

If any employee becomes aware of social networking activity that would either be deemed distasteful by [COMPANY] management or fail the “good judgment” test, they are encouraged to contact the anonymous social media response center at: [EMAIL ADDRESS].

Policy Option 2

[COMPANY] expressly forbids its employees from visiting social media-related sites in the workplace. Under no circumstances should any employee of [COMPANY] use company assets (such as computers, Internet access, email, etc.) to utilize social media technologies on billable company time.

Employees are expected to adhere to this no-use policy even if there is no web filter for blocking online social networks and media-related sites in place. [COMPANY] reserves the right to apply such filtering technology at any time, without warning, and at its own discretion.

[COMPANY] requests that its employees remember that company technological assets are intended solely for purposes relevant to the responsibilities assigned to each associate, and that social networking sites are not defined as a requirement for any position within [COMPANY]. Therefore, the use of company resources to peruse social networking or media-related sites is not permitted. Any activity conducted on such sites by employees will be considered dilatory and counterproductive to the company’s goals and mission.

The company may elect to represent itself on Twitter with one person appointed by [POSITION TITLE, such as “VP of Communications”] who will “own” and be solely responsible for generating the content of the company brand Twitter account. The HR department, also, may be allowed access to social media sites, for purposes such as acquiring public information on current or potential employees.