

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY MADE EASY

DO-IT-YOURSELF REPUTATION PROTECTION

CONDITIONS OF USE: THIS TEMPLATE IS OFFERED AS A STARTING POINT FOR ORGANISATIONS WANTING TO FRAME AN **INTERNAL** SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR STAFF. THIS IS **NOT** DESIGNED FOR EXTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE, NOR FOR SETTING AN ORGANISATION'S STANDARDS OR STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY-FACING SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT.

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FLAME TREE
MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

BACKGROUND

The intention of this template is to provide the user with a solid starting point for framing a social media policy that suits their organisation's needs. This policy is aimed at an organisation's staff use of social media rather than covering off on the community-facing aspects of social media use. This template is based on one originally set up for the education sector, importantly drawing a distinction between the professional and private social media lives of employees.

Flame Tree Media has drawn on policies from across Australia and internationally, and public and private sector organisations.

Feel free to use it as you see fit, however in its current form it needs to be customised for your circumstances. As well, you will need to insert clauses appropriate to your organisation and industry. It is not comprehensive in this regard. Sections that are highlighted require your particular attention.

We strongly advise you to draw on the expertise you have in your organisation or access to otherwise. This may involve reference to your communications and/or marketing department, HR, department heads, staff associations and legal department.

- *Flame Tree Media is an Australian-based media services consultancy that plugs clients into where they need to do be.*

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[YOUR ORGANISATION'S NAME AND/OR LOGO]

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. PURPOSE: WHAT IS THIS POLICY ABOUT?

- 1.1. The [YOUR ORGANISATION] Social Media Policy provides staff with guidelines for:
 - social media activities and accounts established for [YOUR ORGANISATION] or associated with [YOUR ORGANISATION];
 - personal social media accounts and activities that involve content or subject matter associated with [YOUR ORGANISATION];
 - establishing social media accounts for [YOUR ORGANISATION] or for activities associated with [YOUR ORGANISATION].
- 1.2. The policy seeks to align with existing [COMPANY OR OTHER] policies, relevant legislation, [OTHER RELEVANT REQUIREMENTS] and current industry best practice.
- 1.3. The policy seeks to manage and mitigate risks to [YOUR ORGANISATION] posed by the use of social media. These include reputational risks to [YOUR ORGANISATION] and its employees, the posting of inappropriate or unlawful material, breaches of privacy and confidentiality, and breaches of other law.

2. SCOPE: WHAT AND WHO DOES THIS POLICY COVER?

- 2.1. The policy covers [SPECIFY RELEVANT STAFF OR GROUPS OF STAFF, CONTRACTORS, PERHAPS VOLUNTEERS].
- 2.2. The policy does not cover [SPECIFY EXCLUDED STAFF OR GROUPS OF STAFF].
- 2.3. The policy seeks to provide a broad understanding of the responsibilities attached to social media activity, accepting it is impossible to capture every conceivable situation or to imagine emerging situations.

3. DEFINITION: WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

- 3.1. Social media refers to online services for discussing, publishing and sharing information between people and for creating online communities. These services can have closed or open membership and can be in the form of websites, web pages, applications, and email or messenger services.
- 3.2. Currently, "social media" can mean to include:
 - social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn);
 - video, audio and image sharing websites and applications (e.g. YouTube, iTunes U, Vimeo, Flickr, Instagram);
 - blogs, wikis and online diaries (e.g. WordPress, Blogger, Wikispaces);
 - microblogging sites (e.g. Twitter, Yammer, Tumblr);
 - [SPECIFY OTHER].

4. IN GENERAL: WHAT ARE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

- 4.1. Social media provides the opportunity to create, promote and share content for the enrichment of the interests of [YOUR ORGANISATION]. Without discernment about its



use, however, social media can compromise the reputation of individuals and organisations. These guiding principles can mitigate risks:

- Protect your digital reputation and that of [YOUR ORGANISATION]. The digital footprint lasts forever;
- Ensure the boundary between the professional and personal is clear
- [ADD OTHER KEY PRINCIPLES HERE]

5. POLICY DETAIL: WHAT IS PERMITTED AND WHAT IS NOT?

5.1. Professional: Guidelines for [YOUR ORGANISATION'S] official accounts

- 5.1.1. [YOUR ORGANISATION] operates a number of official social media accounts. These accounts are maintained by [RELEVANT PART OF YOUR ORGANISATION]. These accounts include [NAME SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS].
- 5.1.2. Official accounts represent the interests of [YOUR ORGANISATION]. Content placed on these accounts, by those authorised to do so, is regarded as having the endorsement of [YOUR ORGANISATION].
- 5.1.3. Those individuals or groups wanting to set up social media accounts associated with [YOUR ORGANISATION] need to seek permission.
- 5.1.4. Requests to establish social media accounts should be emailed to [RELEVANT PERSON, DEPARTMENT] and outline:
 - the purpose of the account;
 - [AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION].
- 5.1.5. Official accounts must meet the social media guidelines and other requirements of the [ORGANISATION'S MARKETING, OR OTHER, DEPARTMENT], including and not limited to:
 - [STIPULATE CONDITIONS. AND ADD OTHER RELEVANT CLAUSES HERE. THIS IS THE DETAIL WHERE THE DEVIL LIVES.]

5.2. Personal: Guidelines for staff and their private accounts

- 5.2.1. It is understood staff will be personal users of social media. Staff need to be aware of the risks when personal usage intersects with their professional lives.
- 5.2.2. The following are key directives for staff about their personal use of social media. It is not an exhaustive list. Staff must:
 - ensure it is clear that views expressed are their own;
 - not post anything that would bring [YOUR ORGANISATION] into disrepute;
 - not act in a way that compromises their professional duties;
 - [STIPULATE OTHER CONDITIONS AGAIN, THE MEAT IN THE SANDWICH.]

6. BREACHES: WHAT HAPPENS IF THE POLICY IS CONTRAVENED?

- 6.1. Failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of employment terms and, depending on the circumstances, a breach of [OTHER SPECIFIC LEGISLATION, COMMON LAW, YOU NAME IT].



- 6.2. Depending on the circumstances of the breach, disciplinary action may be warranted ranging up to termination of employment and/or the involvement of other authorities.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES: HOW IS THE POLICY MANAGED?

In this section outline who is responsible for distributing the policy and to whom, and who is responsible for administering the policy, including handling queries and complaints. Also refer to managers' responsibilities for ensuring the policy is understood and for enforcing it. Lastly, don't let staff off the hook. They need to read the policy and seek clarification where necessary.

8. REVIEW: WHEN IS THE POLICY UPDATED?

- 8.1. The [RELEVANT DEPARTMENT] will review the policy every [X] months and otherwise as required.

9. RELATED LINKS: WHAT ARE THE KEY REFERENCE POINTS?

In this section spell out other relevant internal policies and documents.

Refer to relevant legislation.

Provide links to current best-practice social media resources

A FINAL WORD: THIS TEMPLATE IS INTENDED ONLY AS A GUIDE FOR YOU.

IF YOU WANT A CUSTOMISED SOLUTION TO BULLET-PROOF YOUR ORGANISATION, CONTACT **FLAME TREE MEDIA**.

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