

TEMPLATE

Guidelines for the use of social media by [COMPANY] employees **Updated: [DATE]**

A strong company is a connected company. Employees are ambassadors of the [COMPANY] brand and co-responsible for [COMPANY]'s reputation. Engaging via social media offers possibilities to interact with influencers and expand our company's reach. But it also comes with responsibilities. These guidelines advise on the use of social media for personal and business channels and are part of our code of ethics. All employees are expected to **know and follow** these guidelines.

Social media: what is it?

Online platforms and other means of online communication that are used by large groups of people. Users continuously share information in word, photo, video, gifs etc. People use multiple devices. Each person has their own personal online communities. Also platforms like Whatsapp and Facebook messenger are forms of social media.

Possibilities of using social media for [COMPANY]

Social media helps [COMPANY] to gain visibility, expand our reach, drive web traffic and sales, and to build a strong online community. [COMPANY]'s goal is to be transparent to our stakeholders and to share the latest developments. It helps us find and connect with current and future clients. We use [INTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM] for internal comms.

Official [COMPANY] accounts

[COMPANY] is active on the following social media channels, so please follow us here:

- ✓ [LinkedIn](#)
- ✓ [Facebook page](#)
- ✓ [Twitter](#)
- ✓ [Instagram](#)
- ✓ [Youtube](#)
- ✓ [News items/blog](#)

Please consult with [COMPANY] HQ social media team before creating new channels. As you are representing our company, we want to make sure all efforts are connected and our brand identity is secured.

A connected band is a strong brand

[COMPANY] acknowledges the possibilities and has a positive attitude towards the use of social media by employees. The media helps us to listen to conversations that pertain to us and to gain and share knowledge. Online media make it easy to stay connected with society. Being connected contributes to the quality of our services and products.

Social media organization:

- Internal social media team leader: [NAME AND FUNCTION]
- Social team posts content on various social media channels and website of [COMPANY]
- [X LOCATIONS] are responsible for their own social media content.
-etc.

Private vs professional

It's not always easy to tell the difference between private and professional use. When friends and followers know you work at [COMPANY], they might see you as a spokesperson for our company. Everything you do on social media can impact your professional reputation. Try to keep that in mind and take responsibility for what you post.

Basic guidelines

For using social media [COMPANY] offers you the following basic guidelines:

- Compare being active on social media to being **present at a party with colleagues, friends, your manager and your clients.**
- **Be careful** in what you say and post. Everything that happens on the internet is visible worldwide and even if you erase it, people can take screenshots and your message might live have a longer lifespan than you want it to have
- **Social** media is meant for **interaction**. Use it as a two-way conversational tool. **It's not a sales channel!** People connect with people. Show who we are and what we stand for.
- **Customer service:** try to help people by answering questions or directing people to the right department.
- Make sure you know how to **keep your accounts safe** by understanding per platform privacy settings. Ask for help if you are unsure.
- **Participate in groups and discussions** on the latest developments in your area of expertise.

DO	DON'T
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a personal account name and a clear picture to put a face to your profile. 2. Post updates in your own name and use the I-form. In your biography, you can mention that you work at [COMPANY] and what your interests are. 3. When using the [COMPANY] logo, follow the brand guidelines. Don't use the logo for inappropriate content. 4. Use common sense; be honest and thoughtful. 5. Respect copyrights; don't use materials you do not own without permission. Mention sources. 6. Admit it when you made a mistake, it's only human. Apologize. 7. Be respectful of different cultural, political and religious views. 8. Check posts for comments; make sure they are as cordial as your own. You can keep others to your own standards. 9. Think before you post. Check for grammar and spelling errors. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don't use the [COMPANY] name or logo in your personal profiles. 2. Don't make [COMPANY] accounts without permission of the communications department at HQ. 3. Refrain from spreading sensitive information. 4. Don't mention sensitive customer information or share news before it is shared via our official channels. 5. Don't speak 'oh behalf of [COMPANY].' 6. Don't cite any colleagues or use [COMPANY] material without permission. 7. Leave legal affairs and communications during crisis situations (like accidents or fire) up to the communications department. But let [COMPANY]'s MarCom team know immediately. 8. Don't speak badly on (or make fun of) partners, employees or competitors, be respectful. 9. Don't post if you are under the influence of alcohol.

Explanation of social media sites

Each channel serves a purpose, has a specific audience, tone of voice and way of using it. Social media is constantly developing and changing and so is the way [COMPANY] is using the new media. We want to stimulate [COMPANY] employees to become active online, follow [COMPANY]'s channels, share our messages and engage in conversations. Our company uses the following social media channels:

LinkedIn

The largest professional online network. We have a LinkedIn Group Page and actively engage with our audience. We encourage our employees to have a LinkedIn profile. Do share messages with your professional network if those messages are relevant to them. By using LinkedIn, we build our brand's reputation, and expand our reach. Together we can connect with many relevant professionals and decision makers worldwide.

Tone of voice: approachable but a bit more formal.

Average number of posts: [NUMBER]

Best time to posts: during the workweek and office hours.

Facebook

The biggest social media platform worldwide. We have a Facebook page where we share news, respond to questions and follow and engage with customers, influencers and businesses. Updates are less formal and must be of interest to our audience. Active sales is not appreciated. Our targets are active in many Facebook groups. It's good to listen to their conversations and offer help.

Facebook has effective paid options to reach and expand our target audience.

Tone of voice: approachable and friendly, less formal.

Average number of posts: [NUMBER]

Best time to post: evening and weekends

YouTube

Biggest video platform. Users can follow your channel and leave comments. But it's less interactive than other platforms. We have a [COMPANY] Group channel with optimized video content. Videos are posted occasionally and then shared on our other channels. YouTube video's can be embedded into blog posts.

Instagram

Instagram is a platform where people share photos accompanied by a short text and hashtags that help filter content topics. Y

Twitter

Twitter is still a very valuable platform for [COMPANY] as a lot of our targets are still using it. Use it for research and news. By posting tweets with # we make it easy for our targets to find us and vice versa. Every tweet includes a short link with clear CTA (call to action) to drive traffic to our sites and other channels. We can make lists of our influencers and follow them. Retweeting content of others makes us visible for a large audience.

Internal social media channel: [NAME]

For internal conversations we use [NAME] Find the groups that pertain to your area of expertise or interest. [Expand based on what platform, or platforms you are using internally]

Need help? In doubt?








In case of doubt, ask our social media team for advice.

Contact: [E-MAIL ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER]

TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDELINES

How to respond to messages that mention [COMPANY]

There are various ways to respond to messages that pertain to [COMPANY] on social media. If you react, have a peek at the do's and don'ts first. In case of doubt or when things get worse, contact [CONTACT] immediately. Possible responses:

I see a neutral or positive message on [COMPANY].		<i>React</i> Respond with a short reaction, give positive feedback using the same platform. It shows that you are connected. You can opt for a more active approach by sharing the conversations with your network.
I see a message of which I'm not sure whether it fits our online goals/standards		<i>Consult</i> Ask our social media team for advice.
I see a message of which I know it has faulty information		<i>React</i> Double check your facts (you can consult a colleague) and straighten them out. Respond cordially and factually. Make sure the message is shared publicly. Let the social media team know.
I see a message from an unhappy customer, employee or other party.		<i>Recover/consult</i> Consult with the social team, then respond. You can offer apologies and ask if you can help. Ask them to send you an email with all details. Refer them to the right place within [COMPANY]. Keep the social team in the loop.
I notice a message on legal affairs or encounter a crisis situation.		<i>Follow and rapport</i> Don't respond. Notify [COMPANY] social team and let them draft a response.
I encounter a message from someone that is out to provoke a reaction		<i>Follow and rapport</i> Don't respond, but keep an eye on the situation and let the social team know. If things get worse, contact your direct manager.
Someone is making fun of [COMPANY].		<i>Follow</i> Don't respond, but keep an eye on the situation. Satire is very common on social media. If things get worse, contact the social media team.

These guidelines were drafted by [COMPANY]'s Social Media Team.
If you need additional training, or have questions, feel free to contact us.

[COMPANY]
[NAME of Responsible director]