

## RISK INFORMATION – CHURCHES

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media provides opportunities for churches and other organisations to extend the reach of their messages beyond their local congregation to a much wider audience. It also provides avenues for interaction with the local congregation that might not have previously been available.

The information provided in this paper is intended to assist churches to understand some of the key issues associated with the availability and use of social media.

Social media is online media that allows and promotes discussion and sharing of information and opinions; it typically includes user generated content. The availability and types of social media will change over time. The following are examples of types of social media:

- Wikis (Wikipedia)
- Blogs (Wordpress, blogger)
- Social networking (Facebook, My Space, Ning, LinkedIn)
- Social book marking and news (Reddit)
- Online photo and video sharing (YouTube, Flickr, Vimeo)
- RSS (Rich Site Summary)
- Presence and microblogging (Twitter, FriendFeed, Google Buzz, Posterous)

Develop a business plan for the use of social media by an organisation. This will include the reasons for using the media (goals), expressed in terms of measurable targets like: traffic volumes to particular web pages, number of new donors, number of new correspondents, satisfaction rating (negative vs. positive comments), new partnerships etc.

Evaluate actual results of using social media against targeted or planned results.

Develop policy guidelines, including:

- Roles and responsibilities for content including conversations and moderation of posted comments (including whether moderation occurs before or after material is posted to you social media site). Restate the organisation's policy in relation to who has the right to speak on behalf on the organisation.
- Staff "fair personal use" guidelines of social media at work, including trust, exercise of good judgement, time and tool guidance (games??)
- Any tools or sites not to be used
- Guidelines related to home use of media and links to employment
- Guidelines about what content is not acceptable, including:
  - Copyright material, both internal material and copyright owned externally; will include guidelines on what to do with obviously copyright material posted by others to your site.

The information provided is of a general nature only and may not identify all matters that need to be included in the design of effective controls for the subject area. Professional advice should be obtained on individual circumstances.

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- Use of language
- Posting of offensive or obscene material
- Harassment, bullying and discrimination (also alter HR policies to include references to social media)
- Publishing of sensitive internal material
- Defamatory material (false accusations)
- Image use without consent (particularly of minors)
- Infraction process including due process and consequences
- Complaint and complaint resolution processes
- The right of the organisation monitor usage

Communicate policy often; make sure that policy infractions are consistently enforced.

Clearly communicate on the social media your policies in support of moderation, e.g. “posts containing offensive language are deleted as they breach the terms and conditions of this service. View the terms and conditions at ...”

Develop tools and techniques to understand what is being said about the organisation in social media.

Develop risk assessments and proposed control measures. Potential risks include:

- Use of media by staff or volunteers to carry out bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour
- Unauthorised use of copyright material, including re-posted material
- Negative impacts on organisation reputation
- Use of resources in an unplanned and unproductive manner
- Breach of privacy of individuals
- Unauthorised use of confidential and/or sensitive material
- Unauthorised staff comments on the organisation (particularly those that might be at variance with organisational values)
- Increased exposure to computer crime and/or attack
- Staff members’ use of personal media sites – in work time and in their own time
- Loss of control over media content
- Misrepresentation – false information given by one party to another with the intent of influencing decisions
- Loss of control over what personal data is stored and who may access it; will it be stored off-shore?

A selection of references is provided below which provide fuller explanations of some of the opportunities and risks associated with the use of social media.

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### References

“Official use of social media guideline”, December 21010, Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture, <http://www.qld.gov.au/web/social-media/policy-guidelines/guidelines/documents/social-media-guideline.pdf>

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Lindey Dreyer, Maddie Grant and Leslie White, “Social Media, Risk and Policies for Associations”, January 2010, SocialFish & Croydon Consulting, <http://www.socialfish.org/wp-content/downloads/socialfish-policies-whitepaper.pdf>

Robert Shullich, “Risk Assessment of Social Media”, December 2011, SANS Institute InfoSec Reading Room, <http://www.sans.org/reading-room/whitepapers/privacy/risk-assessment-social-media-33940?show=risk-assessment-social-media-33940&cat=privacy>

Mirna Bard, “The Social Web Diagram”, <http://www.mirnabard.com/>