Succeed with Social Media

An Essential Guide for Businesses

Provided by: RS Risk Solutions Ltd

RS RISK SOLUTIONS

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Introduction: Social Media for Businesses

With social media's exploding popularity, it is increasingly risky for businesses to ignore this medium. Whether promoting a new service or gauging consumer reactions, companies today are behind the times if they lack social media.

This article shares the advantages of integrating social media with your business.

Why is social media so important?

Here are some of the general advantages of social media for any business:

- The possibilities for spreading content or ideas on social media are endless—word of mouth knows no barriers with social networks.

- Social media creates influence and scale in a way traditional media simply cannot, for a fraction of the cost.

- People are likely already talking about your brand or company on social media. If you aren't involved, you're missing an opportunity to engage and address both positive and negative feedback.

- Competitors are likely on social media. If your company is not, you are missing a crucial opportunity to monitor the competition. Plus, they may be reaching an audience you are missing.

Strengthen and Protect Your Brand

People are likely already talking about your company on social media. If you're not involved or listening, you're taking the following risks:

- Missing opportunities to highlight and take advantage of positive comments

- Missing negative feedback that could help your company improve, and hurting your reputation by essentially "ignoring" negative comments out there

- Missing opportunities to connect with customers or prospects

Marketing has changed. It is no longer about pushing information to people; instead, it is about conversation. People want to participate, have a voice and make their opinion heard. To market effectively today, two-way communication through social media should be a part of your strategy.

People have always shared positive and negative business interactions with friends and family. The difference with social media is reach. A story that might have reached

a dozen people 20 years ago now can reach thousands or even millions, in minutes. Use this to your advantage! Social media is a great way to draw attention to your competitive advantages and encourage customers to talk about your brand.

Monitor Your Competition

Your competitors, or at least some of them, are likely on social media. If you're not, you're missing a crucial opportunity to see what they're up to. Though companies can choose what is public in their social profiles, you can still learn a lot from keeping an eye on competitors' online presence.

Also, consider this: if your competition is on social media but you're not, they are reaching a market/audience that you are not.

RS Risk Solutions Ltd is equipped to support your social media initiatives and can provide informative articles, resources and programmes to assist you every step of the way.

Chapter 1: Corporate Communication and Social Media

Social media can be advantageous for many purposes, and external corporate communication is one of them. Why should you expand your corporate communication strategy to social media?

Here are some of the benefits:

- Reach a broader audience faster. For instance, posting media coverage of your company on social networks can help it spread much further.

- Target audiences for certain types of communications. For example, if you don't want to send an email for every corporate announcement, and if many customers follow you on Twitter, tweet your news instead.

- Communicate news in a personal way. This helps you develop your brand and strengthen customer relationships. Rather than simply seeing a press release or news story, your audience can hear the news straight from you, in your own words.

- Monitor response to news and events, good and bad. If you're not on social media, then you're likely not privy to what is being said about your company—and this is valuable information.

Get employees involved

You will, of course, use your company social media accounts to share corporate news, but it can also be strategic to get employees involved. This is because:

- Employees at all levels can give a unique perspective of the company.

- Employees are often the biggest advocates of the company.

- Hearing positive feedback from employees makes your company seem more human and relatable, strengthening your brand and reputation.

How to execute

An ideal avenue for corporate communication is blogging. Having a company blog is a great way to start sharing corporate news, but you should also consider getting employees involved. Ask different employees who are experts in their department or product to start blogging; this adds more personality and voice to your company and products, and additional expertise for your audience. These employee blogs can be especially valuable if your company has multiple product lines or branches—each blog can speak to a specific audience.

Remember to position these blogs as subject-matter experts sharing valuable information, not just employees pushing products or following the company line. Employee blogs should share company or product information as a subset of your larger purpose.

Twitter and Facebook® are also viable corporate communication platforms. But, as with any social media strategy, make sure you aren't simply promoting the company. It's fine to share company news and information, but only as a portion of your content. Here it may also make sense to have various employees representing the company with separate accounts, speaking about their areas of expertise.

Encourage your employee experts to find and share information relevant and meaningful to their unique audiences—beyond company news and product-related information. The goal is for the employee to become a trusted expert in his or her niche and to build a following relating to that specific arena. This can help develop closer relationships with current customers and attract more qualified leads for your various products.

Protect your company

As with any social media business initiative, it's important to protect your company. This is even more vital if you have employees blogging, tweeting and posting on behalf of your company. Before you implement your new social media strategy, create a comprehensive policy for employees so that all expectations are clear.

For instance, will employees use work or personal accounts for their blogging or tweeting? There are implications for use of either account. If personal, then any followers the employees gain while with the company will likely leave with the employee if he or she leaves the company. However, personal accounts can be more relatable and personable. This is a decision your company will have to consider.

Be sure to establish other guidelines, too, such as what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable social media behaviour. For instance, if you allow employees to use personal accounts to also post work information, consider setting some guidelines about the type of personal things that can be shared—once this person represents your company, anything he or she says can be reflective of your brand.

After you have a policy developed, distribute it to all employees and have them sign a form stating they have read and understand the policy. This helps protect your company from potential legal liabilities in the future.

Sample Tweets or Facebook Posts

- #RS Risk Solutions Ltd is proud to announce the #acquisition of XYZ Company! Read all about it at RS Risk Solutions Ltd.blogspot.com

- Jane Smith, VP of #Marketing at RS Risk Solutions Ltd, will speak at the 2013 Small Business Marketing #conference. Come check it out!

- Congrats to Joe Johnson who recently won the Excellency #Award for his outstanding work on RS Risk Solutions Ltd's #community #outreach project!

Chapter 2: Developing a Social Media Plan

Are you thinking about getting your business involved with social media? It can be a very strategic business initiative, but only if executed well. It's important to construct a plan before diving in, or you could just end up wasting time on social networking sites.

Objectives, strategies and tactics

When developing a social media plan, start by thinking about business objectives. For instance, you may want to increase sales, improve retention, strengthen your reputation, learn more about your industry and competitors—perhaps all of the above. Then think about the strategies and tactics you can develop to meet those objectives.

- A social media strategy is a plan of action, designed to achieve a specific objective. Strategies can be very complex and include many components. Your business objectives will dictate your strategy, and you may have more than one strategy to meet all the business objectives you associate with social media.

- Tactics are the approaches you use to carry out your strategy. You will likely have multiple tactics associated with each strategy.

For example, if your business objective is to learn more about your client base to help influence your product development and marketing decisions, a strategy might be to reach out to customers and prospects through social media to open meaningful conversations.

One tactic in that strategy might be offering a 20 per cent discount to all individuals who complete a survey through Facebook® or Twitter™.

Questions to consider

Consider the following questions when crafting your social media plan:

- Why are you interested in social media? What are your primary business objectives? You may want to recruit more talent, gain insight into customers, become a thought leader in your industry or niche, attract more customers, connect to other industry people, etc.

- Who is your target audience?

- What does each site/platform offer, and how can you benefit from those resources? Decide which sites to take on, based on what makes the most sense for your business.

- Who will manage your social media initiatives? Will it be a current employee or team, or a new hire?

- Who will have access to your company social media profiles—all employees, or a select few? Consider the implications of who will have log in information; it is often best to limit that to a smaller group of individuals.

- Do you already have someone who handles speeches or other press needs? Consider including that person in your social media initiative to retain the same "voice" and personality of the company.

- What makes your company unique or different from competitors? What elements make up your brand? What is your competitive advantage? Discuss how to integrate your brand into your social media efforts so that your online presence is differentiated.

- As you're developing your plan, include concrete goals and guidelines, such as what type of content is and isn't acceptable, how often you want to post on each platform, etc.

Dos

Consider these ideas and suggestions for success:

- Remember to be genuine—not a generic robot or a pushy salesperson.

- Instead of focusing on your products, focus on being an expert in your field or a resource for your client base. Once you develop a reputation in your industry, you'll earn new business without having to beg for it.

- Think of social media not only as a place to share insights and communicate, but also to listen to your client base, employees, competitors and others in the industry. You can learn a lot about what your clients want, what your employees think, what your competitors offer, trends in the industry and more through listening and observation.

- Ask questions—customers love to have their voice heard and know their opinion is valued. Ask about specific products or services, suggestions for improvement, or how they are handling industry issues or challenges. When someone responds, dig deeper! Look for opportunities to start conversation.

- Use contests, polls and questions to engage your audience, showcase your personality and share value.

- Put a system in place at your company to pass suggestions and feedback to appropriate decision-makers. And make sure to monitor all your social media accounts frequently so that interactions, questions and comments don't slip through the cracks. Otherwise, customers will feel ignored.

- Integrate your social media presence with your website. Include links to your Facebook page, Twitter page, blog, and other channels, so that clients can easily find you. Be sure to also link back to your company website within your social media profiles to drive traffic to your site.

Don'ts

Avoid these social media miscues:

- Don't focus too much on promoting your own company. Social media should not be about selling your products—it's about engaging your followers, becoming a voice in your industry and building your brand. As you put together your plan, think about your social media approach.

- Don't get too personal. Though you want to have a unique personality and voice, sharing personal details isn't appropriate.

- Don't start off strong with social media only to neglect it after a few months. Social media is only valuable if you are willing and able to commit to it.

Chapter 3: Creating Social Media Content

While creating a social media presence doesn't require an initial monetary investment, generating content that current and potential clients find interesting does require dedication. If you are not constantly posting information across your organisation's social media platforms, your fans and followers are likely to ignore or forget about you. The best way to maintain an active following is to be active in the social media community yourself. Consider the following tips when generating content for your organisation's social media presence.

Become a Content Curator

A content curator collects the best informational, interesting and insightful content from around the Web and delivers it to an audience. Gather and share your finds by posting links on all of your organisation's social media platforms.

- **Find content that interests you.** When you read or watch something on the Internet that excites you, share it. Your followers will respond to your enthusiasm, so let your excitement and personality shine when posting a link.

- **Vary the types of media you suggest.** Be sure to share something for everyone—links to articles, videos, pictures and podcasts offer your followers a variety of ways to engage with you.

- **Make unusual connections.** If you find something that loosely relates to your business, don't be afraid to share it. Just make sure to spell out the connection for your audience and explain how it can help them.

- **Distil Information.** As a content curator, your goal should not be to add more noise about a topic, but to funnel all the information down to the most important elements and provide a few links to the best resources available.

Appeal to Your Audience

Whether you're creating or curating content, keep your fans and followers in mind.

- **Know your target demographic**. The quickest way to lose followers is to bore them. You should know what will interest your audience. When you broadcast content that aligns with your followers' interests, they will likely interact with your content, maximising your organisation's exposure.

- **Make it easy to understand**. Package content in an easily digestible format with attention-grabbing headlines. For blogs and Facebook®, consider using lists, short sentences and bullet points. For Twitter™, limit yourself to three understandable hashtags per tweet.

Follow Your Social Media Strategy

Developing content your followers enjoy is great, but when it doesn't further your business it's a waste of time. Each post or tweet should directly or indirectly put your organisation a step closer to achieving the business objectives laid out in your social media plan.

Be Curious and Have Fun

If you enjoy the content you generate, your followers will, too. By continually creating, linking to and posting about content you find interesting, you become an important and reliable source of information to your followers.

Constantly digging for content that you enjoy and that appeals to your fans will help you generate an active following for your organisation. An energetic fan base maximises your exposure and is a crucial element for any social media initiative.

Chapter 4: Facebook

If your business isn't on Facebook yet, you're missing out on a hugely valuable tool, partially because there are so many people on Facebook—more than 1 billion active users. Business Facebook pages have become so prominent that today you're apt to see companies advertise their Facebook page rather than their website on a TV commercial, and company Facebook pages consistently appear in the early results of search engine inquiries for a company name.

Ready to get started on Facebook? As with any social media venture, you shouldn't jump in without a plan. This article offers tips and strategies to make the most of Facebook's functionality and potential for your business.

Identify your objectives

At this point you have likely identified overall goals for your social media initiative; each social media tool may be conducive to different objectives. Think about specific goals for Facebook. Do you want to drive people to your website? Are you trying to connect with your client base? Are you trying to influence your brand's reputation? How you develop your page and your strategy should relate back to specific goals.

Create your page

Create your company Facebook page here. This is different from a personal profile or a group. Pages will appear in Facebook search results, and users can also display pages they like in their "Like & Dislikes" section on their personal profile. When users "like" your page, then your status updates will display on their home page, called a "news feed," along with their other Facebook friends.

When setting up your page, consider these suggestions:

- Use a title that reflects your company name—you can't change it later.

- After you have 25 fans, you can create a username and personalised URL to easily direct people to your page.

- Be sure to customise your page. Add an image, details about your business, company history, contact information, etc.

  o Select and crop your main image carefully, so that it displays well as your thumbnail image throughout the site.

  o Also choose a cover photo. Be creative with this space, but be sure to follow Facebook guidelines, found here.

  o You also have the ability to further customise your page, integrate with your website and more—find more details here.

Tips and techniques

- Facebook allows you to import an email list and invite contacts to become a fan of your page.

- Give exclusive deals to your Facebook fans, to bring extra value to your Facebook relationship.

- Engage with Facebook fans; don't just spit out information. Post interesting updates and questions, and give them a reason to communicate with your brand.

  o In your page settings, you have the option to let fans post directly on your "wall"—this can be a great strategy, as fans can get more engaged, but it takes more hands-on moderation. It is important that you tend to it regularly. Respond to questions or comments so people know that someone is actively participating on behalf of the company.

  o When others post on your wall or respond to you, comment on their posts to build relationships and encourage their interaction.

  o Post photos or videos of your products, services, employees and/or company—and encourage fans to do the same!

- o Ask engaging questions to get people talking, even if they're not directly related to your business. For example, if you're a mechanic, try asking about people's favourite road trip or the lowest price they remember paying for petrol.

- o An easy way to encourage response is simply to ask fans to "like" a statement if they agree with it. If you choose an interesting statement that people connect with, you're more likely to get "likes."

- o Ask for company or product reviews from your fans, and display them. If you get a negative review, it offers an opportunity to reach out to the customer and try to remedy the problem or repair the relationship.

- Promote relevant events you are hosting or attending, such as conferences, volunteer events, or other community or industry functions. This can show how active your company is in the community or industry.

- You have the ability to post milestones on your page, even ones that happened in the past. Use this feature to highlight company events or news.

- To highlight a post on your page, click the star icon on the post (this will expand the post to widescreen).

- If your audience includes specific segments, you can create groups to target your messages. For instance, if you sell multiple products, you could create groups of customers for each one, and target messages specific to each audience. This is particularly strategic because Facebook users are overwhelmed with images, status updates and distractions—so anything not highly relevant will be ignored.

- Post subscription information for your newsletters on your page, and occasionally post teaser content to encourage your fans to subscribe.

- If you want to display a post at the top of your timeline, you can "pin" it there for seven days. Click on the pencil icon and select "Pin to Top."

- Use Facebook to integrate with other social media channels. For instance, if a client asks a question on Twitter™, you can repeat it (with the answer) on Facebook to reach more people. If it makes sense, you could also create a detailed response in a blog post and link to the blog on both Twitter and Facebook.

- People will inevitably reach out to you with issues, questions or concerns. Always respond, even if it just means referring them to the right person. Or, contact the person in your company who will have the information, and then let the customer know the resolution.

Common mishaps

- Don't post too often. Yes, it's good to have exposure to your audience, but over-posting is a top reason people will "unlike" you. Along the same lines, don't sync your account with Twitter. Posting multiple times each day to Twitter is expected, but your Facebook fans will just get annoyed if they see all your linked tweets.

- Don't use a third-party tool to schedule Facebook updates—Facebook penalises you with how your updates are displayed (users will only see the most recent one of all the updates posted from the outside platform).

- Be sure to vary your content so readers don't get bored with the same thing.

- Never delete fans' wall posts! More likely than not, they'll notice and call you out, drawing more negative attention. Instead, talk to unhappy fans to resolve their issues or at least make your best attempt.

- As with other social media platforms, avoid selling too much. More of your posts should be questions, relevant information and news, and other content.

Facebook advertising

Another beneficial way to use Facebook is to post ads. Facebook ads appear throughout the site, and you have several options when creating your advert, including your target audience and your call to action (what the advert will link to). Details about Facebook ads can be found here. These tips can help get you started using Facebook ads.

- Be sure to choose the right target audience. This may take some market research and/or some trial and error to determine the ideal audience.

- Test your advert! For instance, try different targets (E.g. one gender rather than both) to see which performs best, and then use that going forward. Try testing different variables to create the best advert for your money.

- Decide what action you want the viewer to take: become a fan of your page, sign up for a newsletter or visit your site. Your advert can link to your page or external website, or can include a "like" button for fans to like your page without leaving the page they're on.

- Make sure your advert stands out. You're competing not only with other ads, but also with photos and messages from the user's Facebook friends. Speak to your target audience and be direct to make sure you get noticed.

Chapter 5: Twitter

Twitter can be extremely advantageous to help grow your business. Essentially, Twitter is a communication tool that allows businesses to connect with customers, prospective clients, industry experts, competitors and more.

The Twitter website explains: "As a business, you can use Twitter to quickly share information, gather market intelligence and insights, and build relationships with people who care about your company. Often, there is already a conversation about your business happening on Twitter."

Twitter may seem intimidating to some, but that's no reason to avoid it— this document will give you the knowledge to get started using this social media tool.

Definitions and examples

The first step to understanding Twitter is learning the language. Here are some of the basics:

- Follow: On Twitter, you follow someone to see the messages he or she posts. For others to get view your posts, they must follow you. This is not a reciprocal relationship like some other social media sites—each party can choose whether or not to follow the other.

- Tweet: A tweet is post or status update, with a maximum of 140 characters.

- @Username: This is the Twitter naming convention.

  o For example, your company Twitter name could be @XYZcompany.

  o This is also how people communicate with each other on Twitter. If a customer wanted to reach out to you, she might tweet "@XYZcompany, please tell me more about your services."

- Retweet (RT): Repurposed information that someone else posted.

  o For instance, if @JonSmith posted "Check out this interesting study" you could repost it by tweeting "RT @JonSmith: Check out this interesting study."

  o Tip: To add additional value when retweeting, include your own opinion, insight or comment. An example might be "These stats are surprising. RT @JonSmith: Check out this interesting study."

- Reply: Another way to communicate with someone (besides a tweet using their @username or retweeting) is to reply to their tweet.

- Direct Message (DM): Use a direct message to send a private message to someone who is following you. This can come in handy when exchanging contact or other personal information, since all other Twitter communication is public.

- Hashtag (#): Using a hashtag (#) helps categorise your post based on keywords you designate. Users can find all posts with a particular hashtag in it, to help filter results on a specific topic.

  o For example, if you specialise in selling energy-efficient products, you may want to use the hashtag #energyefficient in some of your tweets, to attract people searching for that term.

  o Or, let's say you are a mattress store and are looking to find others who are talking about or selling mattresses. If you type #mattress into the Search bar, you can view all recent tweets with that hashtag.

- Link shortening: With only 280 characters, space is limited in a tweet—so you don't have room for a long URL. However, there are many link shortening services out there that can quickly convert any URL into a compact link for Twitter, such as ow.ly and bit.ly. In addition, many of these services also track your click-through rate.

Suggestions and best practices

Once you've mastered the lingo and created your Twitter account, consider the following tips and best practices to get off to a strong start.

- Actively search for clients, competitors and people in your industry to follow.

  o If you have a database of client email addresses, you can import them into Twitter to find any matching Twitter accounts.

  o Use the search feature to find people. Try various keywords related to your industry, niche or related topics to find companies, prospects, customers or others to follow.

- Make your content easy to retweet by keeping it shorter than the 280-character maximum, so people have room to retweet and add a short comment of their own—a good guideline is to keep your tweet under 200 characters. When you want extra visibility for a tweet, ask your followers to retweet ("please RT").

- You can also use Twitter to look for leads, using the search function. Search targeted phrases that match your location and product/service, and then reach out to people who have tweeted about your topic (for instance, send a DM about your offerings). Some third-party Twitter applications can automatically scan for search terms and notify you of matches.

- Remember to use meaningful hashtags to reach a broader audience that just those who follow you, particularly when tweeting useful insight, information and expertise—this can attract people interested in your topic to your company, which can lead to later sales. You can also add hashtags when you retweet someone, to share helpful information but bring the value back to your company.

- Engage your followers. Don't just throw out information—post interesting questions, provocative statements, fun facts, contests, etc. Find new ways to keep your tweets interesting. For instance, ask customers to submit pictures of them using your product or share success stories.

- If someone mentions your brand, whether talking directly to you or not, respond. Answer a question, address a concern or find another way to continue the conversation. And always be timely in your reply! In today's digital world, people expect quick responses; you should ideally write back within an hour or two of their tweet.

- Don't hesitate from responding to negative comments. Also, you may be tempted to respond via DM, but it may actually be in your best interest to respond publicly. Your client base and others will see your company as responsive and willing to listen to clients and resolve issues.

- Have a system in place to pass comments, questions and criticism along to relevant people in your company, so that you can gather the feedback you need to respond to a customer, or even just let someone know that their input was given to the appropriate person in your company.

- Try to post (or retweet) several times each day to stay in front of your audience. Aim for every two to three hours during the business day to reach the most people without overwhelming them.

- Offer something of value in your tweets. Whether it is discounts, samples, promotions, advice or expertise, provide something that is worthwhile for your followers. One example would be offering exclusive deals to your Twitter followers, to bring value to your Twitter relationship and make them feel special—and encourage them to share the deal.

Common mistakes

- Avoid broadcasting any private grievances or annoyances. Whether about a competitor, the government or your mother-in-law, Twitter is not the place for venting or complaints.

- Be careful not to offend your customers. This sounds like a no-brainer, but you could do so unintentionally. When sharing advice, for instance, take care not to make followers sound unintelligent.

- Don't use a company Twitter account to talk about your personal life.

- Don't over-promote your products or services. Instead, focus on your customers. Offer solutions, information and advice they will find valuable, rather than simply trying to sell.

Chapter 6: LinkedIn

Unlike social networking sites such as Facebook® and Twitter™, LinkedIn is exclusively intended for professional networking. The online social tool is used by a variety of people in different ways. For example, individuals create profiles in hopes of career development, recruiters post jobs in search of top-notch talent and business owners expand their online reach.

According to LinkedIn, more than 2.7 million companies have LinkedIn Company Pages, and LinkedIn members conducted over 5.7 billion professionally oriented searches on the site in the past year. With so many businesses and users out there, you can't afford not to use LinkedIn.

While it may seem overwhelming at first, building and maintaining a LinkedIn profile can take your business to the next level and play an important role in its success. This article offers tips and strategies for doing just that.

Creating and maintaining your LinkedIn presence

Before you do anything else, you have to create your LinkedIn page. Visit here for step-by-step instructions on how to create a company profile, add a "Products and Services" tab, put a spotlight on customer recommendations and add a "Career" page to direct talent your way.

When building your profile, consider the following:

- Feature a cover photo. Cover photos are the first thing people see when searching for your company or viewing your profile. Even if it's just your logo, you'll get more traffic on your page with a photo than without.

- Add connections to build your network. Don't assume others will add you. When you create your page, connect with everyone you can think of (not only clients and employees, but also friends, family and other colleagues). As you meet new people or do business with new companies, connect with them to continue to build your network.

- Share updates and post articles and job openings to increase your visibility. Carefully choose the content you post—once you've posted multiple times, you can use the activity of those posts (comments, shares, likes, etc) to determine what types of content are received well and which types draw little activity.

- Make it easy for users to interact with you. Consider adding plugins, which allow users to follow your page or share your posts simply by clicking a button.

- Interact with others. Use LinkedIn to explore other people's pages, view business pages and join groups. Be aware that interacting involves more than just updating your own page and sharing your own updates. Pay attention to what others are posting and get involved.

- Pay attention to your follower statistics. These can help you track the changes in your followers over time, and show you how well your updates and posts are being received. This information can help you keep an eye on your page and track what you are doing well and what could stand for improvement.

Put your business out there

Even if business is booming and you think you don't need social media, don't rule it out. Any business can benefit from using LinkedIn. Not only can LinkedIn increase your company's visibility and help attract new clients, it can also help you find new talent and connect with other companies within your industry.

Chapter 7: Blogging

Blogging can be useful for almost any type of business. Like other social media venues, blogging is a commitment but can produce powerful business results. A blog is an ongoing collection of posts, which could be multiple paragraphs long. Unlike other social media sites, a blog is something you create on your own, not a broader site that you post to. Blogs can help a company gain exposure and become a thought leader in an industry. Similar to other marketing and social media strategies, blogs can support goals such as building your brand, generating leads or sales, or generating advertising revenue. The first step to starting a blog is deciding which goals will apply to your blog, so that you can formulate a strategy based on your objective(s).

Getting started

Consider the following issues and questions when getting started with a blog:

- What will the topic or niche of your blog be? Who is your intended audience? It is better to focus on a more specific topic than leave it too broad, as you will appeal to a specific group of people. Determining these factors is very important. Think about your content:
  - How often will you write? This will depend on your resources. The more often you post, the more traffic you'll get, but don't commit to a frequency you can't maintain or readers might lose interest.
  - Based on the niche or theme of your blog, think about what specific topics you will write about. What kinds of posts will you write?
  - Decide how to organise your blog posts within your blog site. It may make sense to do so chronologically, or by topic categories.
  - Plan to integrate important calls to action into both the content and design of your blog. For example, you may want your readers to join your email list, buy your product, email you for a consultation, connect with you on another social site, etc. Emphasise your desired calls to action (with links) within the design of your blog, and also incorporate such links in the content of your blog when relevant.
- Determine your blogging process. Who will scope ideas and write each blog? Will blogs be reviewed by an editor or manager?
- Choose a design and software. If your company doesn't have the resources to design a blog yourself, you can find free or paid pre-designed templates online.
  - Decide whether you will host your blog on your existing website or a different one. Keeping it under the same domain name as your public site can enhance SEO (search engine optimisation) value, but may be complicated depending on the software your site is built on.
  - When choosing blog software, think about the features that are important. For instance, the ability for users to comment, share links and subscribe to something are all potential features of blog software.

Launching your blog

Once you're ready to launch, be sure to promote your blog to attract readers.

- Consider an email campaign to inform customers and prospects of the new blog and the value it can offer them.
- Take advantage of other social sites you're on. Promote the blog there initially, and continue to highlight new blog posts periodically.
- If you have an e-newsletter, include blog posts there.
- Promote your blog on your company website home page. Even if you host the blog under the same domain, it can be hidden for people just visiting your general site. Promote the latest blog on the home page with a link to the full blog site.
- Consider adding your blog's URL to your email signature, business cards, sales collateral and other visible locations.

Also, be sure to establish a process to monitor your blog traffic, analyse goals and make changes as needed. Simple analytics software often comes free with your blog hosting account, or Google Analytics is another option. If certain topics are not popular, consider changing your focus. If you're getting a lot of traffic from Facebook®, for instance, expand your reach there. When assessing your blog, think about your audience, content, frequency and readability, and make changes to improve.

Blogging best practices

You don't have to be a great writer to be a great blogger. Consider these suggestions:

- Read other blogs. You'll learn from others' successes (and mistakes) and sharpen your own skills. Better yet, find blogs about blogging, such as copyblogger.com.

- Always keep your audience in mind and write content for them, not for you.

- Try to offer a unique point of view. No one will have a reason to read if you don't stand out.

- Don't overtly plug your products or services. Instead, discuss trends, offer expertise, provide your insight on recent news or talk about clients' pain points.

- Include statistics and link to other resources or blogs (assigning appropriate credit) to give more credibility to your blog.

- Make your content readable and easy to scan. Online, people don't spend much time on a page, so it is vital that you make your content easy to digest. Don't write in big blocks of text. Instead, use bullets, numbered lists, subheadings, bold and italics, short paragraphs and spacing.

- Spend time on each headline. People will read your headline and decide in a second whether to read your post. Make headlines worthy of the great content you write. Also, keep your headlines searchable by including relevant keywords about the blog post topic.

- Always proofread your blogs. If possible, have someone else review them as well, to double-check for typos or writing that doesn't flow.

Common mistakes and roadblocks

- Don't treat your blog as your press centre. Blogs are not about promoting your business or products. If you do mention a business or product announcement, do it casually and sparingly—it should not be the main topic of your post.

- Make sure your blog allows people to leave comments, so that others can start conversations and leave feedback. Participate in this conversation yourself when people leave comments.

- Don't expect overnight success (and make sure upper management doesn't have those expectations). Establishing a readership takes time and hard work; you should see results if you continue regularly putting out valuable content targeted to your audience. Give your blogging efforts at least a year before considering if it might not be the right choice for your business.

- Not blogging regularly can hurt readership, so strive to maintain the frequency goal you established (or change the goal if it's not feasible). One strategy to improve is to plan and write posts in advance, so you're never scrambling at the last minute.

- Some companies find it simple to start generating content, but run out of ideas after a couple months. Here are some ways to help keep good content flowing:
  o Always be on the lookout for potential blog ideas. Keep a file on your computer to save links and ideas as you come across them.
  o Increase the number of people blogging for your company to expand content.
  o Explore the idea of guest bloggers, with people relevant in your industry.
  o Ask others in the company to submit blog ideas as well.
  o Build a content calendar to scope out content in advance. This could also generate ideas based on timely topics or seasonal events.

Chapter 8: Measuring ROI

As with any business initiative, upper management will want to know the return on investment (ROI) for social media. After all, it is a considerable time commitment, but it can also reap significant, measurable benefits for your business.

What to measure

Your ROI for social media can be monetary, but it doesn't have to be. Think about what is valuable to you—your followers, your visibility, your reputation.

Some nonfinancial outcomes you can measure include:

- Increase in unique website visitors

- Change in positive or negative mentions

- Net new Facebook® fans or Twitter™ followers

- Net new requests for information

- An increase in RSS subscriptions

- An increase in visits to your store or location

- Increased time spent on a website

- Increase in YouTube® video downloads

- The number of times an article was liked or shared

- The number of comments on a blog post

Although these measurements don't relate to a concrete financial outcome, you can attribute them to other value, such as increasing your brand's exposure, strengthening customer relationships, increasing interest in your company, expanding your online presence within your industry or widening your pool of potential prospects.

Of course, you can also measure monetary factors, such as increase in sales or retention rates attributable to a particular social media campaign or strategy.

Choose your tools

There are countless social media measurement tools available. Some are free, while others can be costly. What works for one company may not work for you.

Start by **reviewing your social media plan** and the business objectives you identified.

- What did you want social media to accomplish or help you accomplish? What social media strategies did you put into place? You want to measure the results of those strategies to tie your social media efforts and outcomes back to your overarching business goals.

- For instance, if one of your business objectives was to increase your brand awareness using various social media channels, then you should focus initially on measuring that. While there is no one tool to measure brand awareness, factors such as website traffic, followers and subscribers can be indicators of increased brand awareness.

Decide what specifically you want to measure and choose a programme that is really good at measuring those metrics or factors, rather than a programme that measures a little bit of many metrics. Using the example of brand awareness, let's say you decide you want to measure visits to your website, searches for brand-specific terms, content or video views, and number of followers and/or subscribers. Look for software that measure these specific factors, rather than being seduced by a tool that is a jack-of-all-trades.

Remember, just because you can measure something doesn't mean it's important to your company. Measure what matters—and work to find the tools that do that particularly well (within your budget).

Do your research—don't just choose the latest trend or big-name software. You may need to explore several software options before you find the right fit that work for you. Many companies offer demos or free trials, so take advantage of these options. Explore tools that fit your needs, test them out, read customer reviews and be open-minded. Rather than one "premium" tool that measures 10 different factors, you might settle on several specific systems that measure exactly what matters to your company.

Sometimes, you can collect the best data yourself. For instance, if you ran an educational Facebook and Twitter campaign about the importance of proper lawn care, and your landscaping business saw a jump in recent business, you will wonder if the two are connected. Ask your customers!

- Have your employees ask new clients how they heard about you. If you make this a required activity for your employees, word of mouth can be a simple but accurate way to solicit data from clients.

- Or, create a simple survey asking clients how they heard about you. Here you could also ask a few more questions about their experience with your company or if they would be interested in receiving more information from you. Offer a small participation incentive or a contest, and promote it on all your client invoices (and train employees to draw clients' attention to the survey).

Chapter 9: Legal Considerations with Social Media

The Internet is full of legal concerns, and social media is no exception. Even if your company does not participate in social media, your employees undoubtedly use it on their own time, creating potential liabilities. For companies that do engage in social media, various risks should be considered—from who owns a Twitter handle and followers (company or employee) to privacy breeches (and violations of the GDPR) to what happens when an employee bad-mouths a superior on Facebook.

The law is still developing, so companies should proactively protect themselves. One option is additional insurance cover. There are various types of cyber risk policies available, and some include social media liabilities. The best way to protect your company is to have a clear, comprehensive policy addressing all relevant social media concerns for employees.

Drafting a social media policy

When you start thinking about your social media policy, don't think of it as a punitive document that outlines a framework for disciplining various infractions. Instead, think of it as a set of guidelines to help employees understand the issues and risks, and stay out of trouble (thereby keeping the company out of trouble). Consider including the following components in your policy:

- **Employee rights.** This is a good way to start, so that employees feel their personal rights are valued by the company.
  - Emphasise that all employees have the right to use social media for self-expression on their own time.
  - Include a right to digital privacy—that the company will not bypass the security or privacy settings of a social site to see employee content that is not available publicly.
  - Explain what online harassment and bullying is, and that it is not considered acceptable by the company.

- **Internal usage guidelines.** This clearly defines use rights during work hours.
  - Specify whether social media is allowed during work hours, and/or using company equipment. A compromise may be allowing employees to use social media during lunch and break times.
  - If personal use is not allowed during work hours, specify what constitutes acceptable use for business purposes only.
  - Include security rules and protocols for downloading files, videos, third-party software, etc.

- **External usage guidelines.** This can be a complicated issue, as is any issue regarding employee conduct outside of work hours. The law is still developing, but there have already been several high-profile legal actions about whether a company can punish an employee for what is posted online. Consider including the following guidelines in your policy:
  - For employees with a social media role in the company, the line between business and personal use can easily be blurred if they use the same account for both. Remind these employees how their social media activity will always affect the company's reputation.
  - For employees with personal social media accounts, urge caution. Tell them to think twice about anything they post about the company on a social network, because there is a chance a colleague, manager or client could see. Encourage employees to use good judgement to avoid risking their reputation—or their job. Because this area is especially problematic, be sure to get competent legal advice or legal opinion on the language.

- **Social media confidentiality and nondisclosure guidelines**
  - Revealing any confidential company or client information online should be prohibited, even in a "private" forum or message, as the security of the site could be compromised.
  - Emphasise that your company policies related to confidentiality and nondisclosure apply to social media as well.

- **Official communication guidelines**

  o Have a policy in place regarding ownership of accounts and followers for all employees using social media for business purposes. Legal actions have sprung from this issue, as employees leaving companies tried to take their account and followers with, and the companies sued. Develop a policy now so it is easier to enforce later.

  o Discuss what is expected of employers when they represent the company on social networks—and be specific. Include policies, procedures, dos and don'ts, so that employees know their expectations and responsibilities in their social media role.

After your policy is developed, make sure it is distributed to all employees, and have employees sign a form verifying that they received and understand the policy. You may also consider requiring social media employee training to supplement this policy.

As with all employee policies, be sure to get competent legal advice or legal opinion on your social media policy before finalising.

If you're still not quite sure what your social media policy should look like, refer to Appendix A for a customisable sample social media policy.

Chapter 10: Protecting Your Reputation in Social Media

Today, hearing about a large company in hot water over a social media mishap isn't uncommon, and those examples demonstrate the importance of protecting your own company's online reputation. However, it isn't feasible to attempt to control your entire message—in today's highly digital environment, there's no way you could harness everything said about your company.

Don't let that deter you from joining social media. In fact, it's a compelling reason to get involved: you can contribute a positive voice on your company's behalf and play an active role in handling problems. People will talk about your company regardless of whether you have a presence online—but if there's no way for you to hear what is said, you risk much bigger reputation problems.

Manage your reputation

Instead of avoiding social media, manage your online reputation by taking proactive steps when something negative is said.

- Keep open communications. If someone is complaining publicly about your brand, company or product, respond publicly as well. It can be tempting to move the conversation to a private channel (or ignore it), but publicly addressing the issue will earn your company points for responsiveness and credibility.

- Don't delete negative posts or comments from your social media platforms (unless they violate the site's policies or are extremely inappropriate). Deleting posts will only cause more backlash—address the problem head-on.

- When one or more of your customers is having an issue and voicing it online, don't wait to respond. The sooner you can address the issue, even just with an apology and a promise that you're working towards a resolution, the more trust you may be able to restore.

- Don't be afraid to admit you made a mistake and even backtrack if necessary. People will appreciate that much more than trying to cover a mistake or shift blame.

- Work proactively to establish a good reputation and be influential in your industry through your social media channels, speaking engagements, etc.

- Don't bring problems on yourself. The smallest joke or comment taken the wrong way can spark a firestorm of criticism. Think about everything you write (and everything you encourage your followers to share in return) to evaluate if it could be damaging to you or backfire.

- Don't be caught unprepared when a crisis takes place. Establish a social media crisis response plan now so that you are ready to handle situations that may occur.

Your social media crisis response plan

1. Monitor your online presence—there are a variety of free and paid tools and resources to "listen" online. Start with these suggestions:

   a) Set up Google® Alerts for your company and product names (www.google.com/alerts). You'll get an email whenever your specified terms are found online, helping you find positive and negative mentions you may have missed.

   b) If you are on Twitter®, regularly conduct a search for your company name to find tweets that mention you, even if they don't use your @username or a hashtag.

   c) Explore other tracking options as you form your monitoring strategy.

2. Create policies and plans for the possibility of a crisis, so that you can take action immediately. Have a team assembled (which may include management, marketing, communications, IT and/or legal), and make sure everyone is trained on how to respond to a social media crisis. Have procedures mapped out in advance, including:

   a) How you'll decide your response (who will craft it and who must approve)

b) How you'll communicate your response (you may have a number of options depending on the scenario)

c) Who will be responsible for various tasks

d) Which shareholders or departments internally will need information about the issue

e) How you'll manage any additional press

3. When a crisis occurs, you'll need to decide your response and execute quickly. Who do you need to share information with, internally and externally? Should your response target one audience or span all your social outlets? What is the message? As you roll out your message, analyse if it is reaching the appropriate people and/or having the desired results. Don't be afraid to tweak your strategy during your response, if prudent.

4. After a crisis, evaluate your response and the entire process. Identify any weaknesses and discuss how to improve and modify your social media crisis plan as necessary. You may also want to discuss a new marketing or PR campaign to bring positive attention to your company following a negative situation.

Chapter 11: Social Media Security

While the advantages of allowing access to social media sites outweigh the potential hazards for most organisations, social media use does pose a number of security risks for your company.

Read on for a list of the most common risks associated with social media use and how to prevent compromising your organisation's security.

Mobile Applications

- **Risk:** As smartphones and other mobile devices become more prevalent, the number of people who access social media on their mobile devices is expected to grow greatly. This brings unique challenges to organisations that issue company phones or allow employee phones to connect to their wireless networks.

- Mobile devices are susceptible to attacks from malicious downloaded applications (apps) and if the phone has access to your network, your company's security could be at risk.

- **How to prevent it:** Instituting a policy that bans employees from downloading any third-party apps on company phones may lower your exposure, but it may also negate most of the advantages of supplying your employees with smartphones. Alternatively, you could provide a list of pre-approved apps that employees are allowed to download to their employer-supplied smartphones and to approve more upon request.

- You may also wish to implement a policy that prohibits employees from accessing your company's wireless network with their personal smartphones, as it could cause a breach in security. Another option is to create a separate wireless network that is intended specifically for employee smartphone use. This will allow employees to use their smartphones as they choose without placing your organisation's other networks at risk.

Social Engineering

- **Risk**: Email has long been a favoured medium for scam artists to steal people's identity or money. Now many of these con artists are setting up false social media accounts and targeting individuals they think will give them the personal or corporate information required to exploit employees or employers.

- New research suggests that individuals are far more likely to trust a person who contacts them on a social networking site rather than through email. This poses a threat for many organisations as there have been incidents where employees are tricked into offering up propriety information, trade secrets or access to company networks.

- **How to prevent it**: Employee education is essential for thwarting any social engineering attempt. Do not assume that all employees know better than to give up the username or password to their accounts until the requestor provides sufficient credentials. Offer in-depth IT training and keep employees informed of the latest scams and phishing attempts.

Social Networking Sites

- **Risk:** While social networking sites such as Facebook®, Twitter™ and LinkedIn are all secure sites, any third-party content contained on those sites has the potential to contain malicious software. Every link, application or advertisement could breach your security if accessed on a computer connected to your organisation's network.

- Due to link-shortening services, which are especially popular on Twitter, it is not always clear where a link is taking you. These condensed links can direct employees to malicious Internet sites that extract personal and corporate data.

- **How to prevent it:** Employee education is the best defence against these types of attacks. During IT training, be sure to teach employees not to use applications, such as games, on any social media site or to click on advertisements while on a work computer.

Also consider introducing your employees to a URL decoder that can expand shortened links. This will allow them to see where the link will take them before they click on it.

Other Preventive Steps

- Here are a few other tips to prevent a security breach:

- If you don't have one already, develop a social media policy.

- Tell employees to utilise the security functions of social networking sites to their fullest extent. This may prevent their accounts from getting hacked and protect the organisation by extension.

- Protecting your office's digital security is a priority, but make sure this protection extends to those employees outside the office. Those working from home need to be informed about digital threats and to take similar steps to protect their home networks.

Chapter 12: Crisis Response Plan

Social media is the way of the world. Well over one billion people worldwide use at least one form of social media on a daily basis, and that number keeps increasing. Most businesses have followed suit, realising that social media is a useful way to build a brand and reach customers where they are—online.

It's easy to interact with customers via social media if your company has a positive image. But what if one of your employees posts a customer's private information on Twitter or uploads a video to YouTube of another employee behaving inappropriately in the break room? You could be dealing with a social media nightmare. Without a proper crisis response plan in place, your countless hours spent increasing brand awareness and goodwill could evaporate. Use the following tips to help create a crisis response plan for your business.

Be prepared

The key to proper crisis management is being ready before it happens. Form a social media crisis response team comprised of employees from all departments. Discuss threats to your social media presence, such as a rogue employee posting negative content or a customer having a negative experience with one of your employees or with your product in general. Have procedures mapped out in advance, including:

- How you'll decide your response (who will craft it and who must approve)

- How you'll communicate your response (you may have a number of options depending on the scenario)

- Who will be responsible for various tasks

- Which internal departments will need information about the issue

- How you'll manage any additional press

With potential threats identified, a crisis response flowchart can help everyone on the team stay on the same page when dealing with a specific type of crisis. The flowchart lets employees know what they can respond to themselves and how they should respond, what might need to be run up the ladder for a more formal corporate response and what can be left for a non-employee to respond to. A sample flow chart is provided at the end of this document.

The flowchart asks basic YES or NO questions to determine the proper action to take. Benefits of the flowchart include:

- **Ease of implementation.** The flowchart should indicate exactly who is in charge of what if a crisis arises in order to get a response out as soon as possible.

- **Consistency**. If employees are following the same plan, your message will have a clear voice.

- **Speed.** Instead of losing time discussing how to respond, the flowchart offers a clear way to handle the issue quickly. In addition, set up Google® Alerts or a similar service to keep track of what people are saying about your brand in real-time. You can receive an email whenever your specified terms are found online, helping you find positive and negative mentions you may have missed. If you are on Twitter®, regularly conduct a search for your company name to find tweets that mention you, even if they don't use your @username or a hashtag. This way, you can be on top of a crisis before it turns unpleasant.

Act quickly

Twenty-four hours in social media time is an eternity. Time is of the essence, and your customers will expect a quick response should you face a social media crisis.

Realise that social media never sleeps—it lives on well after normal business hours. Several members of your crisis response team should keep their eyes on your social media outlets after business hours in case something comes up. Taking too long to respond shows your customers that you're either not listening or you don't care, which can lead to more incidents. The longer you wait to respond to issues, the more time people have to tell their friends and spread negative sentiment towards your company. You may also want to discuss a new marketing or PR campaign to bring positive attention to your company following a negative situation.

Using the right medium to respond to a crisis can be a useful line of defence. If the crisis begins as a negative video posted on YouTube, post a video in response. If it begins with a negative comment on your Facebook page, respond there first. If you can contain the problem to one media source, you have a much better chance of limiting the damage.

Tone matters

Perhaps a useful way to engage your customers is to incorporate a little humour into your social media messages. However, this might not be the best course of action when dealing with a crisis. If done correctly, your tone can ease customers' minds and help boost the company back into a positive light.

No matter how angry a customer is with your company or its products, do not reply with anger. If a person is intentionally attacking your company, invite him or her to contact you directly to deal with the issue. If the comment is full of derogatory language or attacks specific employees, delete the comment. However, if the comment is vague and doesn't attack anyone in particular (for instance, 'your company stinks'), deleting it may encourage others to post similar things.

Other tone-related tips include the following:

- Always be polite and thank customers for their input.

- Politely correct customers posting inaccurate information, even if it is on another site that you don't directly control.

- Be authentic. If you are making an apology, don't copy and paste the same bland jargon to every comment—customers will see that as being lazy and careless.

- Humour isn't always warranted, but it can have a powerful impact to turn your image around. Your customers will realise that people sometimes make mistakes, and a humorous message about how you plan to fix the problem can go a long way.

Follow through

As you roll out your message, determine whether it is reaching the appropriate people and/or having the desired results. Don't be afraid to tweak your strategy during your response, if prudent.

Just because you have a crisis response plan in place doesn't mean you'll be experts when the time comes to execute it. Have quarterly "fire drills" to keep the plan fresh in employees' minds. The better your employees know the plan, the more quickly you can respond. If a crisis occurs, let customers know you're taking steps to correct the issue and share your plan. They will appreciate the honesty and you should be in the good graces of your customers again in no time.

Appendix A: Sample Social Media Policy

The following is a sample policy meant to be used as a reference for developing your own social media policy, tailored to the unique needs of your organisation.

Our company is committed to maintaining a good relationship with its employees and the marketplace. The way the public views RS Risk Solutions Ltd is vital to maintaining business, gaining new business, retaining first-class employees, recruiting new employees and marketing our products and services.

While RS Risk Solutions Ltd has no intention of controlling employees' actions outside of work, employees should practise caution and use discretion when posting content on the Internet, especially on social networking sites that could affect RS Risk Solutions Ltd's business operations or reputation. Employees have the right to use social media for personal expression on their own time and RS Risk Solutions Ltd will not violate employee privacy by attempting to access content that has not been made available publicly. This policy serves as a notice on the practice of social networking for all employees to read and understand.

Purpose

The purpose of the Online Social Media Policy is:

- To guarantee a constructive relationship between the company and its employees.

- To reduce the possibility of risk to RS Risk Solutions Ltd and its reputation.

- To discourage the use of company time for personal networking.

- To ensure employees are aware of their actions while engaging in social networking, as well as the number of individuals who can access information presented on social networking sites and the consequences associated with these actions

Definitions

- *Social Networking / Social Media:* "Social networking" and "social media" refer to any activity that involves interaction in online communities of people. This interaction includes, but is not limited to, browsing other users' profiles, browsing other users' photos, reading messages sent through social networking forums and engaging in online communities' instant messaging services.

- *Social Networking Sites*: Specific online communities of users, or any website that links individuals electronically and provides a forum where users can connect and share information. These websites can be tailored to specific interests or to certain types of users. Examples of popular social networking sites include Facebook®, Twitter® and LinkedIn®. The list of social networking sites is constantly growing and changing because of the nature of the Internet.

- *Social Networking Profile*: A specific user's personalised page within a certain social networking site, usually containing personal information such as name, birthday, photo and interests.

- *Micro-blogging:* The practice of publishing your recent whereabouts, thoughts or activities on a social networking site for other users to see. While not all social networking sites use micro-blogging, this is a primary focus of sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

- *Business Purposes:* Using a social networking site for the company's gain, usually as a task or assignment given by a manager or supervisor. This can be done either through a specific company account on a given social networking site or through a personal account set up for the purposes of recruiting or marketing for RS Risk Solutions Ltd.

- **Working Hours:** Includes any time employees are being paid to conduct company business. This timeframe may vary based on job type and responsibilities.

Procedures

Prohibited Use

It is important that employees use their time at work to conduct company business. Employees are not blocked from access to social networking sites on RS Risk Solutions Ltd computers because, under some circumstances, social networking is a powerful business tool that can be channelled to gain positive publicity for the company and to connect with clients. However, access to such websites does not mean they can be used at any time. The following actions are prohibited during working hours:

- Using social networking sites to conduct personal or non-company business.

- Browsing social networking sites for non-company business on company time.

- Reading email alerts regarding personal social networking account activity or using RS Risk Solutions Ltd email to correspond with personal social networking contacts.

- Updating information, uploading photos or otherwise engaging with one's personal social networking profile for non-business purposes.

- Micro-blogging for a non-business purpose on a social networking site throughout the day, whether it is on a company-provided computer or a personal PDA or smart phone device

Prohibited Conduct

Having your own individual social networking account and using it on your own time is certainly permissible. However, keep in mind that some actions on your personal site are visible for the entire social networking community and are no longer private matters.

On social networking sites, it might be a good guideline to assume that anything posted on your personal social networking profile could potentially be seen by anyone at the company. While this section of the policy is a sensitive one, RS Risk Solutions Ltd put it in place to protect not only the company, but also you and your job. It is for your own security and defence that you follow these guidelines:

- Do not use micro-blogging features to talk about company business on your personal account, even on your own time. Do not post anything you would not want your manager or supervisor to see or that would put your job in jeopardy.

- Do not use the company name, address or other information in your personal profile. This is for your physical safety as well the safety of everyone else at the company and the protection of RS Risk Solutions Ltd's name.

- Do not post any pictures or comments involving the company or other RS Risk Solutions Ltd employees that could be construed as inappropriate.

- You are responsible for what other users post on your individual social networking profile. Do not allow inappropriate or sensitive information regarding RS Risk Solutions Ltd anywhere on your profile, even if it is generated by a different user.

- Remember to use caution if your personal profile is visible to other employees at the company, supervisors, managers or peers. You have control over yourself but not over these employees, and just one inappropriate picture or comment taken out of context could be seen by the wrong person and cost you your job.

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