

Social and Digital Media Use in Your Organisation

Guiding principles for developing a Social Media Use Policy

- Establish the organisation's purpose in using social and digital media. For example this might include communication, outreach, provision of discussion forums, and / or to provide information, updates and invitations to events.
- Only those designated to use social and digital media on behalf of the organisation should be permitted to post statuses and updates on your organisation's social media page.
- At all times the privacy, dignity, and safety of all individuals and groups should be respected and copyright and anti-discrimination laws respected and followed.
- A social and digital media manager may need to be appointed. If so, it would be his/her responsibility to be involved in the development of social media policies and strategies, monitor online conversations, establish online privacy settings and rules, and train and supervise staff and volunteers for various tasks as required.
- Policy documents should be read and signed by all the staff involved, and congregants made aware of the terms of use for all social media platforms run by the organisation.

A rules-of-use document follows on the next page, which you can alter and adapt for your individual church or organisation as required. You should consider requesting that employees and volunteers sign an agreement to abide by the rules once they have been established.

Social and Digital Media Rules-of-Use Document

Organisation.....

1. Consider that any post or comment made online is public and permanent. Even if it gets deleted it may have been saved as an image by someone, so it is vital to always consider carefully what you are about to say before posting online.
2. Discussion of confidential matters is prohibited. 'Confidential matters' refers to any information that is not available to the public. If pressed for information by anyone on such issues, refer them to the person in the organisation who can speak to them privately about the matter.
3. Always use respect when addressing individuals, groups or organisations online as in real life. Avoid using language that could be conceived as rude or obscene, and do not engage in any discussion which could harm the organisation or anyone within it.
4. Respond politely to complaints and refer the complainant to the person in the organisation who can help him or her resolve the matter.
5. Consider the privacy of co-workers, volunteers and others. Photos or images of any person should not be published without their permission.
6. If commenting or expressing an personal viewpoint on a post as an identified member of the organisation, you should make sure to state that your view may not reflect that of the organisation.
7. Be mindful of copyright laws when posting. Always obtain the permission of others if you wish to repost any material they have created.
8. When communicating with minors always do so transparently and visibly. No private messages should take place and no private personal relationships established with minors.
9. The framework of Australia's anti-discrimination laws is that of equality of all persons, no matter their age, gender, beliefs, disability, political persuasions, nationality or social origins. As such language that is defamatory or discriminatory against any person or group should not be used at any time.
10. Bullying or harassment of any individual, group or organisation will not be tolerated.
11. Disciplinary action or dismissal may take place if the above rules-of-use are breached.