

Social Media Policy

Introduction

Social media forms a large part of many people's lives, including the partners, clients and members of Teesdale Record Society.

It can be used as an extremely effective means of communication and promotion of the organisation. However, its use can also present a number of problems and liabilities.

What Teesdale Record Society uses social media for

Teesdale Record Society are keen to use innovative methods to communicate with our members and potential members. Social media provides a quick and effective method of disseminating information and promoting key events and messages. However, Teesdale Record Society is keen to maintain a professional corporate image, any activity within social media should reflect this and therefore its use should be limited to communicating relevant information and should avoid triviality.

What is Social Media?

Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein in their book *Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media* define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content". For the purposes of this document the phrase 'social media' is taken to mean popular social networking and user generated content sites including but not limited to Twitter, Facebook and Youtube.

The Scope of this Policy

The scope of this policy is limited to social media accounts and feeds owned and operated by or on behalf of Teesdale Record Society and any associated projects. It aims to provide guidelines that, when followed by members responsible for updating and maintaining social media content, should minimise the possibility of any negative impact on the organisation. The policy does not seek to moderate personal social media accounts operated by individual staff members, however should a member of staff have a personal social media account they are encouraged to be mindful of the content they upload. Any activity on social media that has a negative impact on the organisation could leave the member of staff responsible liable to disciplinary or legal action.

General Principles

1. Be honest about who you are. Always make sure you are clear about your position and affiliation with Teesdale Record Society and its partners.
2. Clarify that your opinions are your own. Unless you have express permission from committee, you do not speak on behalf of the organisation.
3. Ensure all your communication is carried out with respect and humility.
4. Only share information you are completely certain is not confidential or sensitive.
5. Be aware that anything you say is permanent.

Be Honest

If a conversation you are having via social media involves your work or Teesdale Record Society in any way, you should ensure that your contribution makes clear that you represent Teesdale Record Society and your position within the organisation. This ensures everyone is aware of your position and what your interest in the subject under discussion is.

Clarify your opinions are your own

If you do use social media to express your opinions, ensure you make it clear that they are your opinions and not those of Teesdale Record Society. If you will be expressing opinions on a social media feed or account you should include the following somewhere within your profile 'I am a member of Teesdale Record Society, however my opinions are my own and do not represent those of the society'.

Respect and Humility

Ensure anything you post on social media sites or feeds avoids criticism, offence, insulting, demeaning or inappropriate language. Always acknowledge differences of opinion with respect. If a conversation becomes inappropriate and/or profane or goes off topic, politely and respectfully withdraw.

Confidentiality

Be sure when posting any information to social media sites or feeds that you have the permission to disclose the information. The internet is a public space and therefore partners, clients, service users and your line manager may see your contribution. When drafting your contribution assume they all will, no matter how unlikely you think this may be.

The Internet is Permanent

Search engines and other similar technologies make it virtually impossible to rescind your comments or posts. Ensure everything you say is exactly what you mean.

Key Guidelines

- Maintain your professionalism. Be respectful, polite and humble in all your social media activity.
- Use official Teesdale Record Society accounts and feeds to disseminate information. Our feeds are not intended to provide a platform for opinion or for daily commentaries.
- Respect confidentiality. If you are even slightly unsure about whether you should post something, don't.
- It is very difficult to take things back. So be sure what you post is clear and conveys what you intended it to.
- If in doubt, ask a committee member before you post.

These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate in the interim periods.