

### **UNIT III SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES AND MEASUREMENTS**

Social Media Policies-Etiquette, Privacy- ethical problems posed by emerging social media technologies - The road ahead in social media- The Basics of Tracking Social Media - social media analytics- Insights Gained From Social Media- Customized Campaign Performance Reports - Observations of social media use.

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## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES**

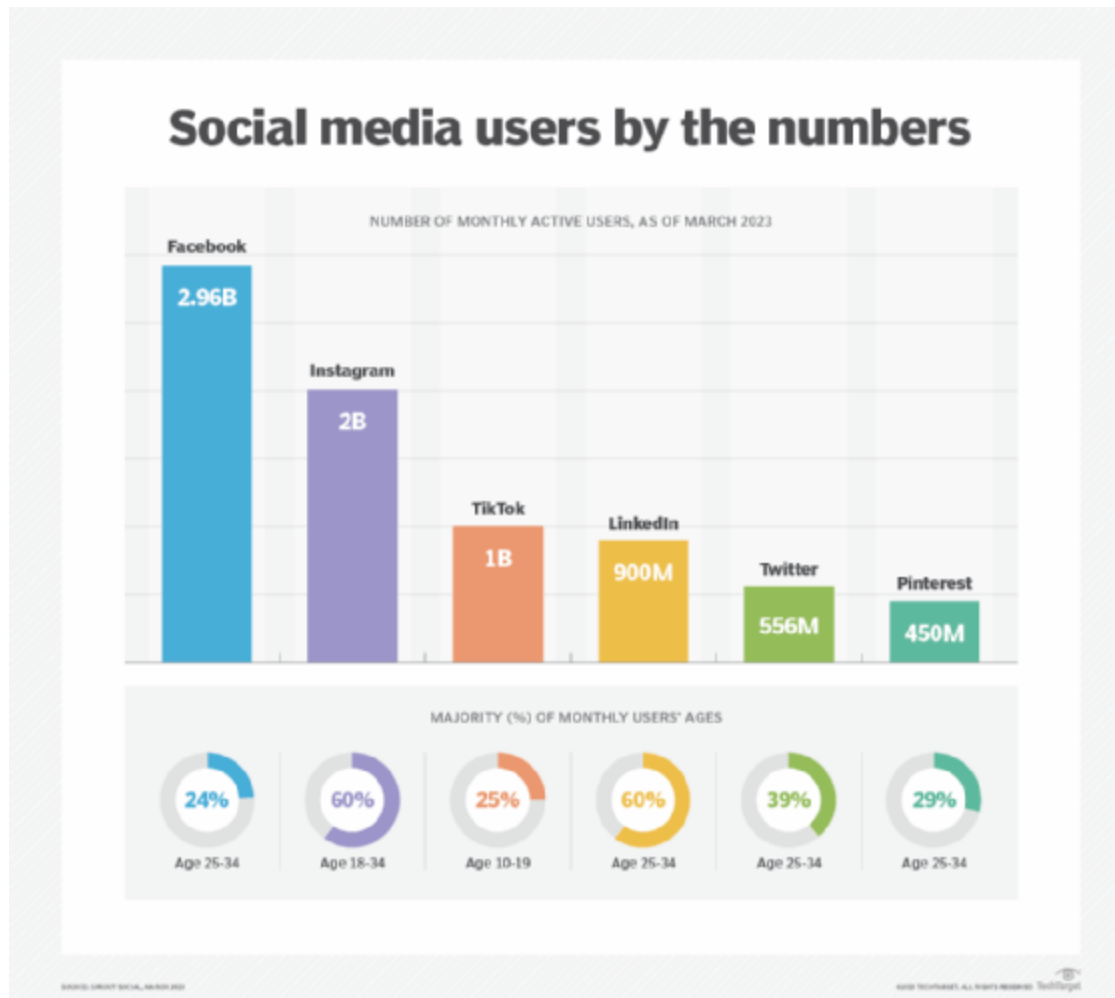
### **What is a social media policy?**

A social media policy is a corporate code of conduct that provides guidelines for employees who post content on the internet either as part of their job or as a private person. Social media policies are also called social networking policies. The goal of a social media policy is to set expectations for appropriate behavior and ensure that an employee's social media posts will not expose the company to legal problems or public embarrassment.

Company policies pertaining to social media often include directives for when employees should identify themselves as representatives of the company on a social networking platform, as well as rules for what types of information can be shared. Almost all social media policies include restrictions on disclosing confidential company information, proprietary business secrets and intellectual property, and, for public companies, anything that could influence stock prices.

Social media is an increasingly common way employees communicate and build professional networks. For example, Twitter is a popular social networking site that had 237.8 million registered, daily active users, according to its earnings report for the second quarter of 2022.

Companies often define social media as including forums, wikis, blogs and professional networking services, such as LinkedIn. These platforms usually have their own policies and rules for how users should behave on their sites. However, these policies often change. For instance, Twitter's rules for disciplinary action were changed after Elon Musk bought the platform for \$44 billion in 2022.



Social media is used by a large percentage of the global population.

### Why you need a social media policy

The use of social media has changed the way professionals communicate in many positive ways. However, it has also increased companies' exposure to security and data breaches, regulatory penalties and public relations (PR) backlashes. Consequently, it's important that companies provide clear guidance on appropriate use of these platforms.

The key reasons a company needs a social media policy include the following:

#### 1. Confidentiality

A clear social media policy can prevent employees from sharing confidential information, such as personnel changes, internal communications, financial data, company plans and clients' personally identifiable information. Sharing this information could harm a company's interests and competitive edge, as well as even lead to legal sanctions or penalties.

## **2. Brand reputation.**

While companies have their own social media accounts, many of their employees have personal and business ones as well. Those accounts can increase the reach of a company's brand. A social media policy encourages employees to promote their company's brand on social platforms in appropriate ways, setting guidelines for what type of language employees can use and content they can post while representing their company. This can prevent employees from engaging in inappropriate behavior and minimize the risk of negative publicity.

## **3. Compliance**

There are many state, national and financial reporting regulations that companies must comply with to avoid fines and other legal action. A good social media policy directs employees on what type of content and behavior to stay clear of so as not to violate those regulations.

## **4. Security**

Security breaches, such as phishing, are common on social media, and a clear social media policy lays out strong security protocols to prevent such attacks. However, if a security breach does occur, a social media policy can also dictate how a company should respond.

## **5. Diversity and inclusion**

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is a growing set of policies and programs that promote diversity in the workplace. Social media policies are often responsible for assuring employees comply with DEI protocols, such as bans on cyberbullying and using appropriate language.

## **Social media policy applications**

A social media policy may have different applications depending on the company or organization implementing it. A policy for an enterprise often applies to all employees, including executives in the C-suite, but not to partners and clients. Similarly, a university's social media policy often applies to staff and faculty but not to students.

In general, a social media policy applies to the following:

- what company information an employee can share online;
- how an employee can behave online as a representative of a company;
- how to respond to a PR crisis or other issue on social media, such as a supply chain crisis
- security protocols to protect and respond to security breaches.



Effective social media policies contain steps for addressing problems such as supply chain crises.

### What to include in a social media policy

There are several important areas to include in an effective social media policy, including the following:

- **Social media definition.** Companies should state the types of social media platforms their policy covers, including forums, blogs, social networking sites, wikis and communication apps, such as Facebook Messenger.
- **Roles and responsibilities.** Many companies have official social media accounts; different groups or employees handle different aspects of running these accounts. This section of the social media policy should explain what departments are responsible for social media strategy, security, monitoring and training. It should specify who is responsible for posting on the official social media accounts, conducting social media marketing and advertising campaigns, and dealing with customer service. It should also address whether employees not affiliated with the social media team are allowed to post and interact on social media.
- **Security.** This section of the social media policy should cover security best practices, such as what company information can and can't be shared and what should be done in case of a security breach. Other security protocols should include how often social media account passwords should be changed, what devices can use official company accounts and whether personal use of social media accounts is allowed on the company network.
- **Crisis management plan.** This part of the policy includes emergency resources and a proactive plan in case a company must respond to a social

media PR crisis, such as responding to customer complaints during supply chain crises, which were particularly prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic. This often includes a list of emergency contacts, protocols for addressing the crisis and an approval process for crafting and posting a response.

- **Legal compliance.** This part of the policy is often unique to the field or industry a company is in or other factors, such as location. For instance, companies face different regulations based on the state or country they're in. Regulations many companies must comply with include the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation and the United States' Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, both of which restrict how companies handle customers' personal information. The social media policy should outline how to comply with these regulations, as well as copyright law and marketing restrictions, such as disclaimers for testimonials.
- **Rules for employees' personal use of social media.** Most employees are responsible for representing the standards of their company even when they are using their personal social media accounts. Companies must be clear about what standards they expect employees to adhere to and whether it's OK to post content that shows the workplace, a company uniform or other affiliation, and whether posts require a disclaimer explaining the content doesn't represent the company.
- **Consequences for violating.** A social media policy should be transparent as to what the consequences are for employees violating the rules.

### How to implement social media policy

To implement a social media policy, follow these five steps:

- **Establish the guidelines.** An organization must decide what its social media policy is, provide guidelines and set expectations. This involves getting input from stakeholders such as users, human resources (HR) personnel, IT staff, social media team members, other managers, union reps and the legal department.
- **Assign roles.** Roles should be assigned, specifying who does what. This might include charging HR with addressing DEI protocols, IT with handling security and team managers with overseeing implementation and discipline. Once assigned, a resource list should be made of these employees and their roles.

- **Distribute it.** A social media policy should be easily accessible to all employees, included in the employee handbook and on shared drives, and posted online if the public needs to access it.
- **Update it regularly.** Companies should commit to regularly updating their social media policy, whether it be annually or quarterly. This is useful because social media constantly changes, and often, new social media apps, such as TikTok, become popular with new aspects that old social media policies don't address.
- **Enforce it.** Specific managers must be designated to enforce the social media policy. This process often involves sending employees policy reminders, conducting social listening and social media audits that examine all accounts that represent the company, and watching out for imposter accounts or noncompliance with security and policy measures.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ETIQUETTE

Social media etiquette refers to the guidelines that companies and individuals use to preserve their reputation online.

As social media channels have evolved to become one of the primary ways people communicate in the modern world on a daily basis, typical social rules are finding their way into digital environments.

Just as social etiquette dictates how people behave around others in the real world, social media etiquette revolves around online guidelines to follow.

### The basics of social media etiquette

The demands of social media etiquette differ from one platform to the next. For example, reposting someone's content on Instagram requires much more care than retweeting someone on Twitter.

On the flip side, there are some basic dos and don'ts that essentially apply to all platforms:

- **Don't be overly promotional.** Try not to message all your customers asking them to buy your products and avoid sharing constant advertisements on your page. Make your social profiles a blend of promotional and valuable content.
- **Avoid over-automation.** While scheduling your posts in advance and automating analytics is helpful, don't automate everything. Some things still need a human touch.
- **Handle your hashtags carefully.** Avoid using too many hashtags at once. Even on Instagram, where you can use 30 hashtags in a single caption, it's important not to overdo it.

- **Don't bad-mouth your competition.** Don't be petty. Saying negative things about your competitors online will harm your reputation more than it hurts theirs.
- **Be authentic and genuine.** Don't try to be something you're not. Remember that your customers can learn whatever they need to know about your brand online today and things like authenticity can definitely go a long way.

### **Why is social media etiquette important?**

Organizations can't just delete messages that generate poor reactions anymore. A single mistake can make or break a business.

Social media etiquette is often baked into the rules of a social media policy for modern brands. This policy usually shares a complete code of conduct for anyone who interacts with a social channel:

- Protect against legal and security issues. If you exist in an industry with stringent privacy and compliance laws, your system will keep you on the right side of the regulations.
- Empower staff. When your employees know how to share content safely online, they can represent and advocate for your organization, without harming your reputation.
- Defend your brand. Social etiquette ensures that everyone who interacts with your brand on social media will see a respectable, professional business.

### **Why is Social Media Etiquette important for business?**

- Etiquette helps with online interaction
- Etiquette aids in remediation after a blunder
- Etiquette can help you appear empathetic
- Etiquette assists you focus on the result
- Etiquette protects you from legal implications.
- Etiquette protects your brand respectability

### **Social Media Etiquette for professionals**

- Keep your audience in mind
- Make sure you don't post any personal information
- Share valuable content
- Share consistently but don't overdo it
- Beware of social media norms
- Uphold business values
- Maintain a schedule
- Identify platforms that work for you
- Provide a complete bio for your brand/business

- Address follower queries

### **Social Media Etiquette for Employees**

- Use social media during working hours
- Keep personal and professional accounts separate
- Avoid sharing personal information
- Consult with coworkers
- Make use of disclaimers

