

10 Social Media Policy Questions to Consider

Social media usage is becoming more and more mainstream and part of many company's marketing efforts. Having a social media policy is something all business leaders should consider. Not only does it help identify who manages the social media strategy and how to address any challenges, but it also offers a road map for employees and staff that may want to participate in the marketing of your company's services, community efforts, benefits, and brand.



Keep in mind, employees can be strong brand ambassadors, and in some cases, threats. Even if you think they may not be using social media to discuss the brand, the company's services, and environment, you could be wrong. Creating a policy around what may be and should be shared on social media helps everyone to understand the boundaries and "rules".

To help mitigate risk, consider the following questions to help identify acceptable and unacceptable behavior for your company's social media policy. Be sure to include guidelines about confidentiality and proprietary messaging, and how each should be treated.

10 Social Media Policy Questions

1. What are the social media policy goals, e.g., setting regulation, identifying crisis communication teams, providing sharing guidelines for staff, leaders, and people of influence, etc.?
2. How will the policy be enforced across the organization, e.g., who will be monitoring activity and determining when to step in if something goes wrong or highlight it when something goes right?
3. How may employees be leveraged as brand ambassadors? This must be clearly stated so they know what they can and cannot say/do. One of the best ways to do this is to provide messages they may share via a monthly content calendar posted in a company-wide Intranet.
4. Who will oversee the social media policy updates and distribution, as well as determine the social networks your company should be using?
5. Who defines and establishes the tone of the messages and brand consistency? What is that tone/message?
6. How will employees know what information may be shared, e.g., confidential and proprietary content must be defined. In some cases you may want to share information. Consider how Facebook's CEO decided to announce the retracted work-

10 Social Media Policy Questions to Consider

from-home policy. It was no mistake that it was “leaked” so quickly with such a controlled message. Apple® and other big brands have also released “proprietary” news in a controlled manner.

7. How and who will monitor conversations about the brand on social channels? Some of this may be addressed with Google Alerts™ and with social media monitoring tools, such as [HootSuite®](#), [SalesForce Marketing Cloud®](#), and others.
8. How and who will respond to consumers reaching out to the brand via social media channels? Having a clearly defined workflow is key to help ensure a structure is in place if and when a crisis comes up, or better yet, when something positive happens. Remember a viral, positive response may be as overwhelming and time consuming as a crisis.
9. Who is authorized—staff, teams, geography, regions, etc.—to actively post on the company’s behalf?
10. What determines a social media crisis? Having a clearly defined workflow for this process is key. No one wants to try to think of it when the crisis is actually happening. Also consider conducting “mock crisis” scenarios so everyone involved knows what his/her roles and responsibilities are, including key leadership, human resources, legal, marketing, public relations, sales, and staff.

Tip: Setting the tone and message is important when considering social media postings and engaging with customers via interactive, social platforms. It helps to set authenticity and to validate the brand.

Additional Social Media Policy Resources

When establishing a social media policy, there is a great deal to consider. It’s a “living” document that should be revisited and modified like any other policy or procedure within an organization. Below are some additional resources to help you get started.

- [Best Practice Example: Gap](#)
- [Disclose Best Practices Toolkit: SocialMedia.org](#)
- [5 Noteworthy Examples of Corporate Social Media Policies: HubSpot](#)

Your Turn

Tell us about your social media policy success and tips you would share with those just starting out.