

Creating a Social Media Policy For Your Club or Team

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In our digital world, any club, team, or group, should have a Social Media policy.

I spend a lot of time teaching people about how to protect and craft *their own* online identities. Since we are each responsible for managing our personal online reputation, we each get to decide on the rules about what we want to post.

So what happens when you run a club or team? Suddenly you have multiple people who can affect, or be affected by, the social media posts about the club. These posts can be from the club's executive or from its own members. This is where a Social Media Policy comes in to play. Its purpose is to protect both the club from having its reputation tarnished by other people's posts, as well as protecting members from having their own information shared.

Use the guide below to help get you started on creating your club's policy, or [download our free template](#) for an example that you can edit to suit your needs.

4 Easy Steps to Create Your Policy

1. Introduce the Policy

All the members of your club should be expected to sign-off on the policy. Start by explaining why you have it, what expectations you have of the members, and what consequences there may be (if any) if the policy is not obeyed.

2. Establish the Purpose of Social Media Use

This is where you discuss the purpose of the club's social media accounts. Explaining the 'how' and the 'why' you will use social media will determine what information members can expect you to share about them, and with them.

You will want to answer these questions:

- Which social networks do you use? Examples: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google+, Periscope etc
- Why do you use social media? Examples: To promote events, share news with members, advertise to the public, or communicate via private groups.

3. Set Guidelines

This is where you educate your members on how they can protect themselves and the reputation of the club. You can create guidelines on what can/should be posted and what should not.

Members that post about the club, or other members, should always should be in a positive light. Additionally, members should be cautioned against saying anything negative about opposing teams or clubs. A "we beat you, you guys suck!" reflects poorly on both the member that posted it AND the club as a whole.

Mitigate risks by making rules for photo posts. Your club should have a separate waiver or policy pertaining to photos. Children under 18 require guardian sign off to have their pictures taken a published wether it be online or in print. Unfortunately social media allows anyone to post anything. As a club however, you can ask that members be selective in their posted photos of other members.

4. Customize

Consider special details about your club and include them as additional guidelines.

Some questions you will want to answer:

- Can your events be live streamed or is there a copyright?
- Are there addition rules from a national association to which you belong?
- Is there proprietary information that should never be broadcast online?

A policy is not a law and therefore should be in plain language that is clear and easy to follow. You may edit [our template](#) or use it as an example on language and guidelines. For more complex policies or for business policies, please do not hesitate to [reach out](#).