

Social Media Policy for Townsville Basketball Association

Please Note: the language used in this policy targets people 18-34 years of age

The Volunteering Qld research shows that:

“Social networking sites are important to users because they allow them to interact and network, through the 24/7 world of the internet. In 2008, 79% of Australians used the internet; **93-94% of these users were 18-34 years of age**. With increasingly active internet generations, the use of these sites is vital in expanding the world of volunteering to the future generations.”

(Ref.:

<http://www.volunteeringqld.org.au/home/resources/Utilising%20Technology%20to%20Enhance%20your%20Volunteer%20Program.pdf>).

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees, volunteers of Townsville Basketball Inc. (TBI), as well as employees and volunteers of all affiliated Basketball Clubs (BC), and their related commercial entities.

For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Foursquare, Google+ or YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

TBI and BCs employees and volunteers are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. TBI and BCs employees and volunteers are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as TBI and BCs employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to TBI and BCs) and volunteer.

Notwithstanding the previous section, this policy applies to all uses of social media, including personal, by TBI and BCs employees and volunteers, as their position with TBI and BCs would be well known within the community.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that TBI and BCs employees and volunteers must otherwise follow.

Don't Tell Secrets

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it's not acceptable to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our software, details of current projects, financial information, research, and trade secrets. We must respect the wishes of our corporate customers regarding the confidentiality of current projects. We must also be mindful of the competitiveness of our industry.

Protect your own privacy

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the TBI website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see.

Be Honest

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you work for TBI or BC. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also be mindful of the need to protect yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

Respect copyright laws

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others, including TBI and BC's own copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Respect your audience, TBI, your BC, and your co-workers

The public in general, TBI and BC's employees, volunteers and customers, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with the TBI and BC website. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Use your best judgment and be sure to

make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of TBI and BC.

Protect OUR NONPROFIT customers, business partners and suppliers

Customers, partners or suppliers should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify a customer, partner or supplier by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a customer engagement. It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for a customer (e.g., Customer 123) so long as the information provided does not violate any non-disclosure agreements that may be in place with the customer or make it easy for someone to identify the customer. Your blog is not the place to "conduct business" with a customer.

Controversial Issues

If you see misrepresentations made about TBI and BC in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. Brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Don't try to settle scores or goad competitors or others into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.

Be the first to respond to your own mistakes

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

Think About Consequences

For example, consider what might happen if a TBI/BC employee is in a meeting with a customer or prospect, and someone on the customer's side pulls out a print-out of your blog and says "This person at TBI/BC says that product sucks."

Saying "Product X needs to have an easier learning curve for the first-time user" is fine; saying "Product X sucks" is risky, unsubtle and amateurish.

Once again, it's all about judgment: using your blog to trash or embarrass TBI/BC, our customers, or your co-workers, is dangerous and ill-advised.

Disclaimers

Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for, but that they're not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble - it may not have much legal effect.

The TBI General Manager can provide you with applicable disclaimer language and assist with determining where and how to use that.

Don't forget your day job.

Make sure that blogging does not interfere with your job or commitments to customers.

Social Media Tips

The following tips are not mandatory, but will contribute to successful use of social media.

The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about.

Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. If you're not design-oriented, ask someone who is whether your blog looks decent, and take their advice on how to improve it.

The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it, or ask someone else to look at it first.

Enforcement

Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.