

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (INTERNAL)

Engagement and Communications

Approved: 11 September 2020 by the ASA Council

Next Review: December 2021

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Context

This policy applies to all ASA Council Members, ASA Members, ASA Employees and volunteers (herein referred to as “Agents”) who are using or participating in social media activities as a representative of the ASA in official ASA communications.

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn allow Agents to promote the development and delivery of its services and is an avenue to engage with members and the wider community.

The ASA recognises that Agents can communicate online through social media, professional networking sites, blogs, online news sites and personal websites. All Agents should use good judgment about the content of any online communication and its context.

If you are at all uncertain about whether a post is suitable, please discuss it first with Communications and Engagement Officer or the Communications Portfolio Holder.

Objective

The objective of this policy is to provide clarity to Agents around conducting themselves on social media. It also provides information on their responsibilities when using social media. The ASA wishes to encourage all Agents to find a voice in social media, while protecting the interests of the ASA.

Purpose

To make informative and engaging communications with members and the wider community. All online engagement should be in line with the ASA's [Code of Ethics](#) and its [Mission, Goals and Values](#).

If you are responsible for communicating through any of the ASA social media platforms including groups, please follow these guidelines when engaging on social media.

Scope

All social media platforms and tools are defined in this policy as online media which allows user participation and interaction including (but not limited to):

- Social Networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc)
- Media sharing networks (e.g. Instagram, Snapchat, Flickr, YouTube)
- Bookmarking and content curation networks (Pinterest, Flipboard, Storify)
- Discussion Forums (e.g. Reddit, Quora, Digg)
- Blogs and publishing platforms (e.g. WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr)
- Forums and discussion boards (e.g. Archives Live, Trove Forum, Yahoo! Groups, Google Groups)
- Online Encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Any other websites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools, e.g. wikis.

The term “post” or “tweets” may be used interchangeably but relates to publishing of all content on social media platforms.

Official Use

Official use refers to communication carried out from one of the ASA's branded social media accounts or when an Agent commenting from a private account has identified themselves as an ASA representative. An example could be sending a tweet from the ASA account, or posting a factual answer to a forum comment incorrectly describing an ASA initiative. A full list of the ASA's branded social media accounts can be found in the Social Media Register which is available [here](#).

Responsibility

The Communications Portfolio Holder, together with the Engagement and Communications Officer, oversees the social media and develops the social media strategy in line with the organisation's aims and can provide assistance and advice to Agents as required.

Social Media Guidelines

Content Guidelines

Creating Content

Agents may be requested by the Engagement and Communication Officer or other ASA Council members to share ASA news, events and other official communications. If copy is not provided by the Engagement and Communications Officer, Agents are expected to post the information in a professional tone that matches the platform they are using.

If you wish to share external events or information from official ASA accounts, please retweet or share as opposed to cutting and pasting as a new post. Cutting and pasting content can lead to misinformation and prompt readers to ask questions of an individual, group or committee administrator who may not have all the information, rather than the original organisers. It also creates a risk where incorrect information is distributed should the original post content be changed or amended after it was initially published.

Ensure you tailor your content to suit each network and appeal to its audience. While it will take a little longer, quality content is the aim.

Please ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is the information in the post, or contained in any associated link:
 - of interest to ASA Members, stakeholders and the wider community?
 - relevant to the audience?
 - in line with the interests and aims of the ASA?
 - from an appropriate source?
 - in line with the organisation's overall voice?
2. Could the information be interpreted as unfairly biased towards or against an individual, minority group, marginalised community, organisation or project?

Before posting please check the following:

- **Links:** is the link working?
- **Reposted information:** is the original poster (individual or organisation) a source the ASA would be happy to associate itself with.
- **Hashtags:** check whether it has been used before and any other meanings it may have outside of this function. Reread the hashtag to ensure it cannot be read or construed as inappropriate. Capital letters can be important (see [Susan Boyle's Album Party Hashtag](#)).

Agents should take note of any copyright/Creative Commons notices attached to content they wish to use/repurpose. Additionally, Agents should cite or otherwise acknowledge content sources when they are known.

Social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Agents should refer these inquiries to authorised ASA spokespersons.

If Agents encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, they should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and advise both the Communications Portfolio holder and the Engagement and Communications Officer.

Agents must refer to the President for crisis communications.

Pinned Tweets and Posts

Any Pinned Tweets or Posts should be updated regularly. If you determine a post to be appropriate to be pinned, ensure you unpin the post once its relevance has expired.

Scheduling Guidelines

Posting **consistently** is more important than post frequency and the quality of the content is more important than the quantity. The goal is to post regular quality content that is relevant to followers.

A general guide for when to post content across Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn is:

- **Facebook:** 4-7pm Mon-Thu
- **Twitter:** 8am-3pm Mon-Thu
- **LinkedIn:** 12 pm and/or 5-6Pm Tue-Thu

This is not a hard and fast rule and is intended as a guideline for when a post may receive more engagement.

A printable graphic for scheduling guidelines can be found in the [Appendix](#).

Inappropriate Use

Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of inappropriate social media conduct include posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, vulgar, offensive, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, threatening, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment.

- Agents must avoid any statement that might bring the ASA into disrepute.
- Agents must not commit the ASA to any action or initiative without appropriate authority.
- Agents should be aware of laws covering libel, defamation, privacy and the protection of intellectual property.
- Agents must ensure all activities are in line with the ASA and its policies. These include:
 - behaving with respect and courtesy, and without harassment
 - dealing appropriately with information, recognising that some information needs to remain confidential. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, Agents should check with the Communications Portfolio Holder or the President.
 - delivering services fairly, effectively, impartially and courteously to the community
 - being sensitive to the diversity of the community
 - taking reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest
 - upholding ASA Values and the integrity and good reputation of the ASA
- Agents must protect personal information entrusted to the ASA from distribution into the public domain.

References

Internal documents

- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Mission, Goals and Values](#)
- [Social Media Register](#)

Appendix A



Based on analysing when our fans are online (reviewed on a monthly basis)



Based on review of various best practice reports from social media organisations.



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