



itSMF Australia

Social Media Policy

March 2010

Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

Members, Council of Members, and Office Holders of the ITSMF Australia are practitioners, thinkers and leaders in the Service Management community in Australia, and internationally. It is vital to the growth and standing of our community that our members participate actively in conversations that educate, inform and advance the state-of-the-art of itSMFA practices. This policy sets a standard of professional behaviour in these public forums. It is specific to guidance for online forums and it acts in conjunction with the ITMSFA Code of Conduct for Members.

2. Responsibility

Participants in itSMFA discussions are responsible for all communications posted online. In this context, participants are responsible to ensure that:

- Any information posted is factual and accurate;
- All comments are truthful;
- Mistakes are quickly and publicly corrected;
- If Opinion is expressed, that any affiliation with the ITSMFA is disclosed, and it is made clear that the opinion is personal (see the disclaimer below);
- The information posted is already publicly available, unless the participant is an authorised representative of the ITSMF Australia;
- The participant does not knowingly use another person's identity;
- If using a shared/generic identity, the participant is identified as the speaker;
- The participant must refer to and adhere to the Terms of Reference of the service utilised. Violations of the Terms of Reference for the service used will be considered a breach of this policy; and
- Do not breach Copyright, Privacy or other laws in posts.

3. Respect

Participants must always express ideas and opinions in a respectful manner. The guiding principal is to treat others one would like to be treated, and ensure that:

- Any information posted does not cause damage to the ITSMF Australia;
- Sources are attributed and referenced (ideas/opinions not passed as one's own);
- Comments are in good taste;
- Participants are aware that linking to another site may imply that you endorse it's content;
- Participants do not denigrate or insult others, including competitors or those who do not agree with personal opinions;
- Approaches are fair to all political, religious, economic or racial differences and opinions;
- Apologies are quickly given if opinions offend; and
- Postings are not obscene, defamatory, threatening, discriminatory or hateful of any person or organisation.

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Remember that all postings reflect on the perception of the ITSMF Australia as well as the participant.

4. Be Honest and Transparent; Clarity, Commitment and Cooperation

It is difficult to draw a distinction between professional personal lives online. Facebook, LinkedIn, Naymez etc. profiles will probably reference membership of the itSMFA. It should be expected that if the ITSMFA is referenced anywhere online that readers will correlate personal thoughts and opinions with the itSMFA.

When commenting, it is important to be transparent about any affiliation with the itSMFA, and to explain the context and position of the commentator; as a member, Official Spokesperson, etc. If not an authorised as an itSMFA spokesperson, this fact must be added as a disclaimer to all comments where a conflict of interest or difference of views arises:

“The opinions and positions expressed are my own and don’t necessarily reflect those of the ITSMF Australia.”

If a Staff Member, Office Holder or Member of the Council of Members comments regularly, then a permanent and prominent disclaimer on a personal blog or profile is the best way to address this requirement.

5. Protect Confidentiality

Online comments are not private. Expect that posts will be around for a long time and could be shared with many others. Many embarrassing media files, e-mails comments and opinions have “gone viral”. Be aware that comments or posts could be shared with the whole world. With this in mind:

- Avoid identifying and discussing others without written permission, including customers, suppliers, friends and co-workers;
- Obtain written permission before posting pictures of others, or before posting copyrighted information; and
- Never discuss proprietary ITSMF Australia information, including finances, strategies, unannounced services or anything considered “confidential”.

6. Personal Blogs

Personal blog comments must be monitored by the owner to ensure all comments are true, respectful, and legally owned. However, comments should not be deleted or filtered for personal reasons or when they do not agree with the owner’s views. The blog owner is responsible for all personal blog content.

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If the participant is an authorised Spokesperson or using an official ITSMF Australia account, the participant must primarily talk about issues relevant to the ITSMFA membership, culture, or wider IT industry.

7. Scope

This policy applies to Staff, Members, Members of the Council of Members and Office Holders who engage in Social Media and affiliate with the ITSMFA in personal public profiles whether explicitly in a communication or through profile statements.

The policy also applies to Staff, Members, Members of the Council of Members and Office Holders who are authorised to communicate on behalf of the ITSMFA using officially approved ITSMFA accounts on Linked In, Twitter and other sites.

8. Breaches

Breaches of this Social Media Policy are a serious matter that will be considered in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary method depending on whether the person in breach is paid Staff or Member of the ITSMFA.

8.1. Staff

Breach of conduct by a Staff Member will be handled in accordance with the Employee manual of the ITSMF Australia.

8.2. Members

Breach of Discipline by a Member will be handled in accordance with Section 7 of the *ITSMFA Constitution and Rules*, and should be reported in accordance with Section 7.3.

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9. General Guidance

This section does not form part of the ITSMF Australia Social Media Policy.

This section provides useful advice and guidance gleaned from a number of industry sources to help successfully engage in social media. Some references that have been particularly useful can be found here:

- <http://123socialmedia.com/2009/01/23/social-media-policy-examples/>
 - The Eastman Kodak Social Media Policy
 - The IBM Social Media Policy
 - The Telstra Social Medial Policy

9.1. Listen

Listening is a key skill for any professional. Learn how to listen to what is being said in the chosen channel before jumping in to start commenting. Read relevant blogs, learn how to search and subscribe to content, find out the conversation history before joining in.

As comments are contributed, remember to keep listening for feedback and to hear the opinions of others. Follow the people who follow you to determine what they are saying about you and the itSMFA organisation.

9.2. Add to the Conversation

Add to the conversation by contributing new perspectives, bringing new/challenging ideas or by strengthening the arguments others put forward, not just to be heard.

Share tips, tricks, and insights. Time is precious for most professionals and they need to gain benefits from time donated to industry conversation. Make listening worth it!

9.3. How to Comment using Social Media

- Have fun and enjoy the conversation, process and interaction with others;
- Appeal to a varied audience while providing interesting information;
- Offer advice and guidance only if it falls within areas of expertise and experience;
- Remember to make it clear whether expressing opinion or quoting fact;
- Be down-to-earth and speak with an individual voice - people will quickly detect a marketing pitch;
- Be passionate about the topic and let it show;
- Post frequently to retain followers;

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- Keep posts professional, conversational and on-topic;
- Respond to questions in a timely manner; and
- Share and link to interesting professional sites (remember not to appear to be endorsing the links).

The itSMFA appreciates the time and effort of its members in contributing to ITSM industry conversation to ignite and further the interest of potential members, conference delegates and the IT community in general.