



# Social Media Policy Checklist for Nonprofits

A recent Hubspot survey of more than 9,000 small-to-medium-sized nonprofits in the U.S. and Canada revealed that:

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**98%** of nonprofits are on **Facebook**.

.....

**48%** of nonprofits believe social media is **very valuable**.

Despite this, many nonprofits do not have an official social media policy.

## It's time to get serious, folks!

It's not a question of if, but when and how your staff and volunteers are using social media. In addition to your process for posting to your official organization social media accounts, it's important to think about what type of guidelines you want to provide employees and representatives of your organization for posting to their personal accounts. With everything being publicly available online, if people are posting about your organization, it should be done responsibly and respectfully.

While you don't want to be overly restrictive, your organization and its staff/volunteers need to take responsibility for what they write, and exercise good judgment and common sense when it comes to social media content. An official social media policy will effectively communicate your organization's expectations regarding staff and volunteer use of social media.

To help you get started, we've designed this checklist of 10 things to consider when drafting your organization's social media policy.



1

**Clearly define your audience and channels.**

Does the policy pertain to staff only? What about volunteers?  
On what social media channels does your organization have a presence?



2

**Prohibit sharing of confidential information.**

Set clear expectations for what organizational information, such as donor data or fundraising goals, can or cannot be shared online.



3

**Encourage staff to ID themselves as representatives of your organization.**

Staff members should always assume that their social media updates can be traced back to their work bio or affiliation with your organization so transparency is always best practice.



4

**Comply with to copyright laws.**

Social media content is increasingly visual, but only use images you have permission to use through fair use, creative commons licensing, or via the owner. With regard to written content, always link to the original source.



5

**Set boundaries to protect volunteers or other constituents.**

When working with minors, especially, be sure staff members have permission to take and publish photos. Consider keeping a standard release form on file that is easily accessible during events and programs.



6

**Use social media to educate, inform and inspire.**

Social media is an effective way to share your organization's story and is extremely powerful. Use your influence to lift up your staff, volunteers, donors, and mission.



7

**Adhere to proper social etiquette.**

Be kind, considerate and compassionate online. Don't use social media to start or fuel arguments or debates. Do not engage in arguments or post inflammatory comments or statements in response to any negative or derogatory comments about your organization.



8

**Remember the permanence of the Internet.**

Your digital footprint is permanent. Before you comment on a post, Tweet, or publish a selfie, remember that you can't take it back and even if you hit "delete", your content can be saved and shared within seconds.



9

**Establish a list of approved social media managers.**

Include a list of all staff members who have access to your organization's social media accounts (oh and change passwords regularly.)



10

**Set comment guidelines.**

Your organization has the right to delete comments that are inappropriate due to foul language, attacking of a single person or group, unsupported accusations, or spam.

Here's a list of helpful resources to aid you as you draft your social media policy and remember, courtesy and common sense go a long way as you create and share content via social media.

**The Ultimate List of Social Media Policies for Churches & Ministries**

<http://justinwise.net/social-media-policies-churches-ministries>

**Social Media Policy Database**

<http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies/>

**Policy Tool for Social Media**

<http://socialmedia.policytool.net/>



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