

# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



Adopted by District Board 15/12/2015

## Introduction

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube and blogging represent a growing form of communication for not-for-profit organisations, allowing them to engage their members and the wider public more easily than ever before.

However, it is also an area in which rules and boundaries are constantly being tested. District 9820 wishes to maximise our social media reach while protecting our public reputation.

## Purpose

Rotary District 9820 may choose to engage in social media such as:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Google+
- WordPress/Blogger
- YouTube/Vimeo
- iTunes/Podcasting

Rotary District 9820 seeks to encourage information and link-sharing amongst its membership and seeks to utilise the expertise of the members in generating appropriate social media content.

At the same time, social media posts that Clubs present to the public, and posts made through its social media channels should not damage District 9820's reputation in any way.

Due to the fast-moving nature of social media and the constant development of new social media programs, it is important that this policy and its procedures be reviewed at regular intervals.

## Core Policy

District 9820 social media use shall be consistent with the following core values:

- *Integrity*: Members will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about its own work, the work of other organisations, or individuals. In addition, it will post in accordance with the Rotary International policies.
- *Professionalism*: District 9820 social media represents Rotary as a whole and should seek to maintain a professional and uniform tone. Members may, from time to time and as appropriate, post on behalf of Rotary District 9820 using its online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organisation rather than a group of individuals.
- *Information Sharing*: District 9820 encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant, appropriate to its aims, and of interest to its members.

District 9820 should seek to grow its social media base and use this to engage with existing and potential members, supporters and sponsors.

## **Responsibilities**

Members may, from time to time and where appropriate, post on behalf of District 9820 using their own online social media profiles. This is to be done only with the express knowledge and authorisation of the designated administrator of the social media site at that time.

The Administrator has ultimate responsibility for:

- Ensuring that all posts are in keeping with core District 9820 Social Media Policy.
- Ensuring appropriate and timely action is taken to correct or remove inappropriate posts (including defamatory and/or illegal content) and in minimising the risk of a repeat incident.
- Ensuring that appropriate and timely action is taken in repairing relations with any person/s or organisation offended by an inappropriate post.
- Moderating and monitoring public response to social media, such as blog comments and Facebook replies, to ensure that trolling and spamming does not occur, to remove offensive or inappropriate replies, or caution offensive posters, and to reply to any further requests for information generated by the post topic.

It is important to maintain the balance between encouraging discussion and information sharing, and maintaining a professional and appropriate online presence.

## **Delegation**

Social media is often a 24/7 occupation; as such, such responsibilities as outlined above may be delegated by the Administrator to another appropriate member/s.

## **Processes**

Posting to social media. Before social media posts are made, members should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to the members, supporters and sponsors?
- Is the information in keeping with the interests of District 9820 and its aims?
- Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organisation or project?
- Would District 9820's supporters be happy to read the post?
- If there is a link attached to the post, does the link work, and have I read the information it links to and judged it to be an appropriate source?
- If reposting information, is the original poster an individual or organisation that District 9820 would be happy to associate itself with?
- Are the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by District 9820? Does it maintain District 9820's overall tone?

If you are at all uncertain about whether the post is suitable, do not post it until you have discussed it with the Administrator. A few moments spent checking can save District 9820 big problems in the future.

## **Damage limitation**

In the event of a damaging or misleading post being made, the Administrator should be notified as soon as possible, and the following actions should occur:

- The offending post should be removed.
- Where necessary an apology should be issued, either publicly or to the individual or organisation involved.
- The origin of the offending post should be explored and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.
- If the mistake seems set to grow, or to cause significant damage to District 9820's reputation, you will need to seek the advice of an expert.

## **Moderating social media**

The reputation of District 9820 is first and foremost, and this involves maintaining a safe and friendly environment for its members. From time to time social media forums may be hijacked by trolls or spammers, or attract people who attack other posters or Rotary aggressively. In order to maintain a pleasant environment for everybody, these posts need to be moderated.

Freedom of speech is to be encouraged, but if posts contain one or more of the following, it is time to act:

- Excessive or inappropriate use of swearing, comments of an inappropriate sexual nature
- Defamatory, slanderous or aggressive attacks on Rotary and/or District 9820, other individuals, organisations, projects or public figures
- Breach of copyrighted material not within reasonable use, in the public domain, or available under Creative Commons license
- Breach of data protection or privacy laws
- Repetitive advertisements

Topics which fall outside the realms of interest to members, supporter and sponsors, and which do not appear to be within the context of a legitimate discussion or enquiry. If a post appears only once:

- Remove the post as soon as possible
- If possible/appropriate, contact the poster privately to explain why you have removed the post and highlighting District 9820's posting guidelines.
- If a poster continues to post inappropriate content, or if the post can be considered spam:
  - Remove the post as soon as possible
  - Ban or block the poster to prevent them from posting again.
  - Banning and blocking should be used as a last resort only, and only when it is clear that the poster intends to continue to contribute inappropriate content. However, if that is the case, action must be taken swiftly to maintain the welfare of other social media users.

The decision to block, ban and remove posts ultimately lies with the Administrator and District Governor, but may, at their discretion, be delegated to responsible staff and volunteers.