Abstract

When we talk on the subject of economic development, we generally refer to the ongoing
Some Social media channels enable account holders to set and manage privacy settings
allowing them limited access to selected friends and contacts.

a) Why do you think it is appropriate to treat communication on a platform such as
Facebook as a form of public rather than private communication.

As more and more people are commenting, sharing, liking and tweeting every little nugget of
their life, it is becoming increasingly evident that social media use has moved from a form of
private communication to public communication. Despite privacy settings, social media
channels like Facebook use data in myriad ways to be able to monetize these businesses.
Facebook uses our data to provide us with services and features which may be useful to us.
However, Facebook allows access to public information to companies and service providers
who design these products (Facebook, 2014). Hence, whatever information we put out there,
is actually open to the public to access. This information may be mined further for analysis,
which puts any communication we make on Facebook out in the public domain. Even during
personal use, we may speak of events regarding our work life, and this today forms a part of
the communication mix which goes out to consumers. Hence, a negative feedback on the
company by an employee could contribute towards an unfavourable sentiment on social
media. This could have implications for the organizations we work for, and most importantly,
our work itself.
# Table of Contents

Answers .................................................................................................................. 3
Question 1 .............................................................................................................. 3
Question 2 .............................................................................................................. 5
Question 3 .............................................................................................................. 6
Question 4 .............................................................................................................. 7
Question 5 .............................................................................................................. 8
Bibliography ......................................................................................................... 10
Answers

Question 1

Some social media channels enable account holders to set and manage privacy settings allowing them limited access to selected friends and contacts.

a) Why do you think it is appropriate to treat communication on a platform such as Facebook as a form of public rather than private communication?

As more and more people are commenting, sharing, liking and tweeting every little nugget of their life, it is becoming increasingly evident that social media use has moved from a form of private communication to public communication. Despite privacy settings, social media channels like Facebook use data in myriad ways to be able to monetize these businesses. Facebook uses our data to provide us with services and features which may be useful to us. However, Facebook allows access to public information to companies and service providers who design these products (Facebook, 2014). Hence, whatever information we put out there, is actually open to the public to access. This information may be mined further for analysis, which puts any communication we make on Facebook out in the public domain. Even during personal use, we may speak of events regarding our work life, and this today forms a part of the communication mix which goes out to consumers. Hence, a negative feedback on the company by an employee could contribute towards an unfavorable sentiment on social media. This could have implications for the organizations we work for, and most importantly, our work itself.
b) Why shouldn’t you post anything you wouldn’t want your boss/future employer to read

The terms of use explicitly state

“When you publish content or information using the Public setting, it means that you are allowing everyone, including people off of Facebook, to access and use that information, and to associate it with you (i.e., your name and profile picture).” (Facebook, 2013)

This essentially means that our regular updates on Facebook are open for search and analysis to people who are not even on Facebook. It has been increasingly found that employers are using social networking sites like Facebook and Myspace for conducting background checks on employees, so much so, that employers are rejecting potential employees or firing current employees’ basis such a check (Lenard, 2012). Therefore, anything we post on a social networking site goes a long way in constructing our online persona. In the absence of any face to face communication, a negative online persona could have an adverse impact on your future employer’s perception of you. A consistent tendency to post drunken party pictures or rants could put one in a negative light, even though one may be a thorough professional in real life. Negative posts / comments provided in a slanderous or defamatory manner may cause the future employer to red flag one as a potential ‘problem’ employee, thus considerably affecting one’s chances of seeking gainful employment.
Question 2

Although Telstra’s social engagement policy is designed primarily to protect the company and the brand, how do you think their policy also provides protection to employees?

The social engagement policy for Telstra consists of 3R’s: Representation, Responsibility and Respect. Firstly, it recognizes that the employees have a right to practice their protected speech through the use of social media. However, it clearly states that in such personal expressions of speech, the employee does not represent Telstra in any official capacity. This provides a clear distinction to the employee as to what communication falls in the professional domain and what falls in the public domain. Even if the employee is talking about the company in his personal exchanges on social media, he must clearly identify himself as a Telstra employee or contractor and state that he is not authorized to speak officially on Telstra’s behalf. It also prohibits an employee to identify another employee or contractor publicly, which ensures that no breach or invasion to privacy takes place. Any data he/she posts should be publicly available and factually accurate and informed. The policy also educates the employees about being polite and courteous to people online, even during heated arguments and edgy discussions. It also asks them to conform to cultural and behavioural norms. While this policy ensures that the Telstra’s reputation remains unaffected, it is also an excellent set of guidelines for employees to follow to ensure a hassle free and enjoyable social media experience. These steps ensure that the employee is safe from potentially damaging circumstances such as defamatory lawsuits etc. It ensures that employees do not leave themselves exposed to abuse, public embarrassment and potential liability (Gevertz & Greenwood, 2009).
For many employees, the boundaries between personal and business use of social media may be unclear. Such blurring of boundaries may cause significant lapses on the part of employees. A clearly laid out policy such as that of Telstra goes by the principle of erring on the side of caution, and by being conservative, saves the employee from any inadvertent mistakes that he/she might commit.

Question 3
Your manager is developing a new social media policy. He believes it should simply be a list of dos and don’ts. Explain to him why this policy should be grounded in ethics.

Developing a social media policy which consists of a list of dos and don’ts has potential pitfalls. First of all, no matter how comprehensively the policy is written, it cannot actually cover all the possible scenarios which an employee / contractor may face. An objective list of do’s and don’ts will not be a useful guideline to follow. Also, an objective list lacks context. Most scenarios which an employee may face will be heavily embedded in the context of the situation, and simple Yes/No ways to deal with them would be largely ineffective. Such a policy could bring about a feeling that the company is also infringing on their freedom of speech and expression, which can cause employee discontent and disengagement.

Hence, a social media policy should have its bedrock in ethics. An ethical grounding will ensure that with rights come responsibility. It will assign levels of responsibility to individuals about their personal use of social media. This in no way infringes on their freedom of expression and at the same time provides them with a handy rubric to consult when in doubt. In the event that the company chooses to monitor the employees’ social
media usage, a policy which is grounded in ethics will be better placed to explain the company’s behavior and help employees understand the reasons behind such monitoring. This will allow for building of trust between the employees and the company. It will allow for clear guidance and set the boundaries to avoid potential abuses (Institute of Business Ethics, 2011). Overall, a broad based strategy grounded in ethics and values and not merely compliance will allow employees to tackle hitherto unseen situations in an ever changing environment. A value based approach will also ensure that the rules are actually in line with today’s realities. This will ensure that the employees are more willing to abide by them (Ethical Advocate, 2013). An ethically grounded policy can reinforce company values and reduces instances of policy violations.

Question 4
Telstra’s social media engagement policy requires all employees to adhere to terms of use, and seek to conform to the cultural and behavioural norms, of the social media platforms being used. From a marketing communication perspective, why does this provision make sense?

In the marketing communications industry, especially with brands which are going increasingly global, the issue of homogenization of the brand communication comes to the forefront. In the past leading brands like Coke, Ford, P & G etc, have faced the wrath of the consumer for not respecting local sensibilities (Shiv, 2014). Hence, while it may not always be entirely possible for the employees to thoroughly research the local cultural and practices, it is always advisable to be prudent and err on the side of caution. A lapse of judgment on the part of the employee can cause significant damage to the brand. Some of this damage may be

Commented [A6]: The statement shows that the recommendation stated is correct and applicable.

Commented [A7]: Examples have been rightly used
monetary, owing to lawsuits and legal complications and can be controlled and alleviated over a short period of time. In times of crisis or customer service, a few errors may have more long term implications for the brand. They may cause public embarrassment to the company and bring it into disrepute. Such an adverse impact of the repute and public standing of the company is often difficult to recover from, and could involve large spends on PR and advertising to undo the damage.

Even for internal communication amongst Telstra employees, such norms should be respected. Telstra is a global company with operation across regions. It interacts with employees and vendors from across the globe. It is important to be cognizant of local norms, acceptable use of language, understanding boundaries between personal and professional life (The private domain gap) to be able to communicate effectively with internal stakeholders (Taepke, 2012).

Question 5

**Explain what the Telstra employee did wrong by maintaining the fake Stephen Conroy Twitter Site**

By maintaining the fake Stephen Conroy Twitter account, the employee’s behavior was a clear breach of policy. His behavior was unacceptable on the following accounts.

**Representation:** The policy clearly states that one must clearly represent who they are. By impersonating himself as Stephen Conroy (albeit fake), he made it appear that he was speaking on the behalf of the minister. He knowingly used the identity of a public figure, clearly misrepresenting him.
Responsibility: The employee is personally responsible for the content of the posts online. He must ensure that the information he shares is informed and factually accurate. In this case, he was concocting events and opinions which were without any shade of doubt, incorrect. He did not explicitly state that he was offering a personal perspective on a matter. The material he has posted was obscene, defamatory and hateful to Stephen Conroy. The account was created with the explicit intention to slander the minister. It was not a lapse of judgment, but a clear case of willful deception on part of the employee (Telstra, 2012).

Respect: The policy explicitly states that the person should be respectful of all individuals and communities with which you interact online. It places emphasis on being polite and respectful to others opinions. In this case, the employee was downright rude and caustic towards the minister. Even if an employee is in a heated discussion or debate, he must remain courteous to the people he interacts with. The employee constantly mocked the minister on various occasions, which is a clear violation of policy.

At a macro level, such behavior from a Telstra employee exacerbated an already existing problem for the company. Since Stephen Conroy was the communication minister in the Labor government, such behavior brought about negative media coverage to the company. Telstra already had tense relations with the ministry owing to strained negotiations over the National Broadband Network. Such behavior coming from an employee could have been potentially damaging to the company in tune of millions of dollars. Not only did the employee violate a policy which was grounded in ethics, his actions could have direct negative implications for business, with his employer poised to lose significant amount of money.
Bibliography


Facebook. (2014, March 30). Information we recieve and how it is used. Retrieved from Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/about/privacy/your-info


Telstra. (2012). Telstra’s 3 Rs of Social Media Engagement. Retrieved from Telstra:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing style and presentation are clear</td>
<td>Introductory statement clearly indicates the main purpose of the contribution and suggests the plan of organization, so the reader can anticipate the text that will follow.</td>
<td>Introductory statement indicates the main purpose of the contribution in general terms, so the reader has some idea of what will follow.</td>
<td>The introduction does not give an overview of the contribution so the readers are not sure what to expect as they read the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Main body of contribution makes connected points that clearly build the argument so the text flows from introduction to conclusion in a logical manner, thereby helping the reader to follow the thinking behind the text.</td>
<td>The main body presents a number of points that allow the reader to understand the argument, but lapses in the writing may force the reader to make some connections between the parts.</td>
<td>The text is not well structured so the reader must stop reading at times to try to make sense of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Body</td>
<td>The main point of the contribution is clearly indicated and reinforced so the reader can clearly remember it.</td>
<td>The main point of the contribution is indicated, but may be stated in an unconvincing manner.</td>
<td>The concluding section does not reinforce or revisit the main point so the reader is unsure about it and likely to misinterpret or forget it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Sentences and paragraphs are well structured and clear so the reader can focus on what is written. Each paragraph has a topic sentence that indicates the subject matter.</td>
<td>Minor lapses in sentence structure, such as run-on sentences and unnecessarily complex sentence structures, force the reader to pause and reflect on the meaning of the text. Paragraphs present a complete argument, but may not flow so well.</td>
<td>Many sentences are poorly structured so the reader must stop often to reflect on the meaning of the text. Many paragraphs lack topic sentences or have poor flow so the main points and linkages among explanatory text are not clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written expression</td>
<td>Grammar, spelling and punctuation are flawless which allows the reader to focus on the message.</td>
<td>Some minor errors in grammar, spelling and/or punctuation detract from the quality of the text, but do not impair the communication.</td>
<td>Many errors in grammar, spelling and/or punctuation make reading the text difficult and communication is impaired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts and arguments are well developed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>All information is accurately reported using appropriate terminology so the information is reliable.</td>
<td>The information is largely accurate but imprecise language could lead a reader to misinterpret aspects of the text.</td>
<td>Although the gist of the information is correct, there are problems with the interpretation of it. A reader can be misled by the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
<td>Connections between the contribution and the main topic of the discussion are clearly indicated.</td>
<td>Connections between the contribution and the main topic of the discussion are indicated or implied, but the reader needs to piece together these connections.</td>
<td>Although the text is relevant, this is not clearly indicated, so the reader must guess how the text relates to the main topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Significance</strong></td>
<td>The reason why the contribution is important to the overall discussion is clearly described and discussed so the reader takes the contribution seriously.</td>
<td>The reason why the contribution is important is touched on but not elucidated, so the reader must make some interpretations about the author's view of the contribution's significance.</td>
<td>The contribution may include significant material but this is not indicated, so the reader must guess it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clarity</strong></td>
<td>The main points and new technical terms are clearly described and explained so the reader is left with no ambiguity about what was written.</td>
<td>The text is clear to informed audiences, unexplained points may leave room for alternative interpretations of the text.</td>
<td>Key points and new technical terms are not explained so the reader is confused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independence</strong></td>
<td>The contribution is completely self-contained so the reader does not have to read other contributions or published materials to understand what was written about.</td>
<td>The text is sufficiently clear that the reader can understand the main point without further reading, but some parts of the text are not clear without consulting earlier contributions or other sources of information.</td>
<td>The text is written in a manner that presumes considerable prior knowledge, so the reader must have a thorough knowledge of what has been written about the subject in order to understand the main point of the contribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contribution is responsive to another contribution</strong></td>
<td>The writer's ideas submitted by others to their own contribution in a manner that substantially strengthens the group's efforts to resolve the main problem. This linkage can include elaboration of what was previously written, a critique or questioning of it, demonstration of linkage among two or more earlier contributions, and/or utilization of an earlier contribution as a foundation to build your own.</td>
<td>The writer makes references to earlier works that are a starting point for new ideas but, apart from the reference to the earlier work, not much information is incorporated.</td>
<td>The text mentions other contributions but neither explains the reference nor substantially adds to it, so there is no clear benefit to the resolution of the main problem from citing the earlier contribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text is supported by references</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources indicated</td>
<td>All information and ideas that are not commonly known are supported with references to sources, so the reader has confidence that the information is not based on hearsay or the writer’s opinion or assumptions alone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most sources are indicated, but in some few cases, the sources are not given or are ambiguous, so the reader has to check some of the sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources are cited for some specific parts of the contribution, but no references are supplied for information and ideas that are clearly not the author’s, so the reader has no idea of the validity and authority of the information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant references</td>
<td>Information, concepts and opinions are supported with references to published literature, especially primary (original) sources of information, rather than review articles or textbooks. This allows the reader to independently review the cited sources. More than one reference is used to support key points, which adds strength and authority to the argument.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or a few references are used to support the text. Thus, the contribution is supported but this may be an idiosyncratic source. Some general references to textbooks are made that could have been replaced by primary references, which are more thorough and authoritative.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information comes from Web sites or other sources that have no recognized authority, so the validity or strength of the source is unknown.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citation style</td>
<td>References cited appropriately in the text, and the correct format is used in the text when citing information, so the reader clearly knows which information is attributable to which source.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor lapses in citation format do not prevent the reader from finding the sources in the reference list at the end of the contribution.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citation format incorrect or poorly placed in the text, so citations distract from reading.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliographic information</td>
<td>The reference list contains complete bibliographic information (author’s name(s), publication date, title, source, database web page accessed), so a reader can easily find the references for their own research. The authority of sources can be evaluated by checking them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliographic information largely complete but some information missing so the reader may have difficulty finding some references. Most sources can still be easily checked.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not all references are listed, information in the reference list is incorrect, or important information is missing from the reference list, so the reader is unable to find the same sources of information and the authority of sources is almost entirely unknown.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** The assignment is well written and good English has been used throughout the work. Good practical examples have been used.