



Association for Information Science and Technology

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & GUIDELINES**

### **Introduction**

This policy governs the publication of and commentary via social media by staff, volunteers and members of the Association for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T) when they are speaking as/for ASIS&T. For the purposes of this policy, social media means any tool for online publication and commentary, including, but not limited to blogs, wikis, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube.

Our policy could be summarized in one sentence: “Be prudent and use common sense.” Remember everything you contribute online stays forever and that everything you do, often on a personal basis, reflects on [ORGANIZATION] as an organization. Failure to follow these policies may result in disciplinary action.

This policy is designed to offer practical guidance for responsible, constructive communications via social media channels for employees and volunteers.

### **Guidelines**

The mission of ASIS&T Social Media (SM) is to promulgate ASIS&T activities and value to the public at large and to engage members and prospective members in topical ideas and activities.

Social Media is a conduit for informing the ASIS&T community about projects and initiatives of the association and work of the Board. All communications need to occur in a professional and ethical manner.

All SM communication must meet ASIS&T branding guidelines.

ASIS&T staff is the main disseminators for SM messaging for National. In this capacity, they will adhere to the following guidelines when utilizing any type of public communication vehicle. If staff is unsure about content being appropriate or wording of messaging they should seek approval by the Communications Officer. If the Communications Officer is unsure, they will seek a decision from the Executive Director.

Ask yourself, “Would this public expression impair my ability to work with my colleagues on a friendly basis? Would it give a leg up to our competition? Would it make my

colleagues, partners or customers uncomfortable? Could it damage the reputation of the organization?"

While we encourage open communication both internally and externally in all forms, we expect and insist that such communication does not substantively demean our environment. This means that constructive criticism — both privately and publicly — is welcome, but harsh or continuous disparagement is frowned upon.

Externally communicating confidential information or other aspects of the organization information that is not intended for public consumption (partnership deals, product roadmaps, deal sizes, un-reference-able customers, earnings, etc.) is ALWAYS forbidden and may be grounds for immediate termination and legal action.

**Confidential Information:** You may not disclose any sensitive, proprietary, confidential, or financial information about the organization. This includes revenues, profits, forecasts, and other financial information, any confidential information related to specific products, product lines, customers, partners, etc. Posts should not speculate on [ORGANIZATION'S] future plans, results, or business prospects.

**Defamatory Speech:** Posting of defamatory and/or offensive material is strictly prohibited, including but not limited to hate-speech, name-calling and personal insults, obscene, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, or embarrassing to another person or entity. This includes, but is not limited to, comments regarding ASIS&T, our employees, partners and competitors. You may not personally attack fellow employees, authors, customers, vendors, or shareholders. Staff is required to use a respectful tone.

**Copyrights and Trademarks:** All postings must be free of copyright restrictions that limit distribution. For example, posting a significant amount of a copyrighted work verbatim requires the permission of the copyright holder. To verify that such permission was obtained, all postings of this nature must include a statement that this is the case. Respect copyright and fair use laws. When citing the work of another person or organization, professional bloggers, like journalists, will use proper attribution as well as a link (if applicable). Trademarks such as logos, slogans and various digital content (art, music, photos, etc.) may require permission from the copyright owner. It is the posters responsibility to seek that permission if you intend to use any such trademarked content.

You may post about the organization, products and services, employees, partners and industry trends but we require that you limit personal opinions.

**Authenticity** Posts should be factual. Posts should not make comparative statements concerning competitors without prior approval of legal and verification of accuracy from marketing. You should always disclose your employment or association with ASIS&T.

Tone of communications should be Confident - Not pretentious; Authentic - Not ultra-trendy; Confidently cool - Not status quo; About informing and generating engagement. It's about the ASIS&T community.

Federal Law Compliance: In order to protect the 501c3 status of ASIS&T, there are topics that are not permitted to publish via any official ASIS&T communication tool, including social media. When posting on any association resource, individuals cannot call for a boycott of a product or company. In addition, individuals posting via an official association communication tool may not endorse or oppose any federal, state or local candidate running for political office.

Using social media sites means that you (and the content you exchange) are subject to their terms of service. This can have legal implications, including the possibility that your interactions could be subject to a third-party subpoena. The social media network has access to and control over everything you have disclosed to or on that site. For instance, any information might be turned over to law enforcement without your consent or even your knowledge.

If there is a disparaging comment made on SM about the organization or about one of its posts, an official response must be made to address the situation as soon as possible. Any known disparaging comment must be brought to the attention of the Communications Officer and the Executive Director immediately. The Communications Officer will then make the official response.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers include the Board of Directors, Committee chairs and members, SIG Chairs and members and Chapter Chairs and members.

We encourage volunteers to utilize SM to expand our reach and increase its impact by: helping to raise awareness about the mission and work of the Board and the association, building a sense of community among members and potential members, helping to improve the knowledge or skills of our members and their work, providing a virtual means to engage members and potential members, and more.

Social media is an effective communication tool but sometimes it can be challenging for volunteers to reconcile their public and private social media activities in terms of their role with ASIS&T. Social media is designed for self-expression and encourages conversations. This policy provides a framework for Board members to engage in these activities effectively and ethically.

While serving as an ASIS&T volunteer you are granted permission to and are encouraged to use social media as a conduit for informing the ASIS&T community about projects and initiatives of the association and work of the Board. This needs to occur in a professional and ethical manner.

Publication and commentary via social media channels carries similar obligations and you are required to acknowledge and accept the above Guidelines of the organization.

In order to protect the 501c3 status, there are topics that association members are not permitted to write about in any format, including social media. Speaking as an ASIS&T member, individuals cannot endorse or oppose a product or company or call for a boycott of a product or company. In addition, individuals speaking as an ASIS&T member may not endorse or oppose any federal, state or local candidate running for political office.

It is best to err on the side of caution. If you are unsure whether or not something is appropriate to post on social media, he or she should contact the Communications Officer before making the post live. If Communications Officer is unsure, they will seek a decision from the Executive Director. If a volunteer, for whatever reason, takes an action that is in conflict with this policy, he or she will be contacted by the President to resolve the situation and may be asked to withdraw, correct, or revise postings.

In order to help distinguish when you're speaking as an individual and when you're speaking as an ASIS&T member, you may want to consider setting up two accounts for each of the social media tools on which you post. One account would be used for your role as an ASIS&T member the other account would be used for your personal postings.

ASIS&T believes in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify what capacity you serve in the organization and do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names.

Use tags when posting ASIS&T content (e.g. #ASIS&T or @ASIS&T) to help ensure your message reaches its targeted audience.

Post frequently and respond to comments and replies from others quickly and accurately.

Know and respect your audience, including ASIS&T and its members.

Be smart and protect your privacy by taking simple steps such as avoiding posting personal details, like phone numbers; reading web sites' privacy policies, making use of privacy settings on social media sites, etc.

Avoid social media arguments and debates and alert the Communications Officer and Executive Director if you see a misrepresentation made about ASIS&T in social media. If you yourself are accused by anyone of posting something improperly, inform the Communications Officer and Executive Director of the situation immediately in order to determine best next steps and to quickly resolve the situation.

Before posting, ask yourself if the post will improve knowledge or skills of ASIS&T members, if it contributes directly or indirectly to the improvement of ASIS&T, if it builds a sense of community or it helps to promote ASIS&T's mission.

What you publish will be around for a long time so consider the content carefully. Strive to make sure it is accurate and professional.

It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it. Adhere to the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others, including ASIS&T's own trademarks, copyrights and brands.

Always ask for permission from the President and Executive Director before identifying a member, partner, or sponsor and never discuss confidential details of any individual's or organization's engagement in ASIS&T.

Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that any views expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of ASIS&T.

Bring out your own personality and say what's on your mind (in a respectful and professional tone).

*Approved by the ASIS&T Board, February 2017*