**[Company Name] Social Media Policy Template**

**Introduction**

This social media policy presents and explains the rules governing social media use at [company name], including those applying to the marketing department and employees in general.

It follows that this policy describes how designated staff members must use the company’s social media accounts. It also explains the rules surrounding personal social media use during work hours and what employees may say about [company name] and company-related issues on their personal accounts.

**Why This Policy Exists**

This social media policy exists to ensure employees, regardless of their positions within [company name], use their social accounts in safe and effective fashions.

Although social media can benefit the company -- especially in terms of marketing, relationship building and prospect communication -- poorly-judged or -timed activity can hurt the company’s reputation.

**Policy Scope**

[Company name]’s social media policy pertains to all staff members, as well as contractors and volunteers, who log onto social media platforms during work hours or to complete work-related activities outside of standard times.

Therefore, it applies to social media activity that relies on company Internet, occurs on company premises, happens while travelling and happens while working from home.

**For the purposes of this policy, social media may refer to:**

* Popular social networks such as Twitter and Facebook
* Photo-sharing websites such as Pinterest and Instagram
* Professional social networks such as LinkedIn
* Discussion forums such as the ones found on 4chan and Reddit
* Question and answer-based networks such as Quora and Yahoo Answers
* Review systems such as Yelp and Google Reviews

**Basic Advice and General Guidelines**

Whether [company name] employees are posting from company or personal accounts, we encourage them to follow basic best practice rules.

**Adhere to these standards to avoid common social media mistakes:**

* **Understand the social network.** Different social media platforms have different purposes. For example, it’s common to see more personal status updates on Facebook than LinkedIn. Before posting, become familiar with the network by reading FAQs and quickly researching what is and is not acceptable.
* **Correct your own mistakes.** When you make a factual error in a post, create an update to correct it. Deleting or editing the original post should come at your own discretion, depending on the situation.
* **Beware potential security threats.** Hackers can use social networks to distribute spam and malware. They can also launch phishing attempts. You should report suspicious activity, including questionable comments and friend requests.
* **Be careful when sharing information about yourself or others.** Hackers can also use personal information to their advantage.
* **Don’t escalate issues.** Responding to other social media users, especially concerning a contentious subject, can result in a heated argument. To avoid such arguments, it may be best to avoid commenting if you feel you may spark conflict.
* **Think before posting.** This is the golden social media rule. Not only should you check grammar and spelling, but ensure there won’t be any negative effects of posting a status update. These include creating arguments and divulging sensitive information.

**Use of Company Social Accounts**

[Company name] social media accounts must only be used and created by authorized individuals for the purpose of meeting defined company goals.

***Goals and Purposes of Company Social Media Accounts***

As the social media landscape quickly changes and evolves, we encourage employees to think about new ways to use company accounts.

However, account activity should not stray from the company’s goals of engaging consumers and promoting products. Doing so builds stronger relationships with customers and prospects while driving traffic to other digital properties.

**Employees can typically meet these goals by:**

* Distributing original content pieces such as blog posts, infographics and product photos
* Sharing third-party content pieces relevant to company target audiences
* Promoting special offers, including contests and discount events
* Announcing and previewing new products and initiatives
* Interacting with consumers, including responding to customer and prospect questions
* Monitoring the social web for brand mentions and responding accordingly

***Approved Users***

Only approved users may access [company name] social media accounts to perform the aforementioned tasks.

The [marketing director OR social media lead] will grant authorization. He or she will do so when an employee’s role involves creating and executing social media strategies, or researching new and existing target audiences.

The company only approves certain employees to ensure its social media voice and approach stay consistent, aligning with marketing and customer service objectives.

***Creating Social Media Accounts Under the Company’s Name***

As [company name] must explore the advantages and disadvantages of expanding its social media presence into new networks, the [marketing director OR social media lead] must approve the creation of company social media accounts.

If employees see the opportunity to create a social media account that supports company goals, they should pitch their ideas to the [marketing director OR social media lead].

**Use of Personal Social Media Accounts at Work**

As personal social media use can yield clear professional benefits, such as expanding industry knowledge and connections, [company name] understands it is advantageous for employees to use personal accounts.

**Below are acceptable uses for accessing personal social media accounts during work hours:**

* Competitor research
* Monitoring company accounts
* Connecting and interacting with users who may benefit professional development
* Emergency purposes, such as contacting friends and family members who cannot be reached otherwise

**Below are unacceptable uses for accessing personal social media accounts during work hours:**

* Browsing friend photos and accounts
* Adding contacts to your networks for non-professional reasons
* Participating in conversations not pertaining to work-related topics

Note that during breaks and lunches, employees may use their personal social media accounts freely.

**However, activity should not conflict with the following section.**

**Inappropriate Uses**

**Regardless of whether the social media account is personal or under company name, employees should not:**

* Conduct illegal or criminal activities, as defined by [online communication bill/legislative document]
* Distribute material that could be interpreted as libelous or defamatory
* Share updates, images and messages that may tarnish the company’s public image
* Discuss colleagues, customers and suppliers without their expressed consent
* Harass others by sending them offensive content and messages
* Communicate with company competitors in disrespectful fashions
* Distribute spam and chain messages

**Policy Enforcement**

Employees who violate this social media policy could face disciplinary action. Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, this could include termination of employment.

[Company name] reserves the right to monitor how social networks are used and accessed through company Internet resources. These include, but are not limited to, computers and mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones that are provided for business use.

Moreover, the company maintains official records that contain certain data related to social media activity. These include, but are not limited to, messages sent and received through the company’s computer systems.

When appropriate, [company name] may involve law enforcement officials and agencies. In doing so, the company may be compelled to share stored data.