



SCOTTISH MOTOR SPORTS

**SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICE
GUIDELINES**

Introduction

Social networking sites are a great way of communicating and socialising with Club Members and the general public. However, members must not forget that the information they post on these platforms may be seen by a wider audience out with their Club.

New forms of Social Media provide increased opportunities for communication and information sharing in a way that is interactive, relaxed and conversational. As it exists in the public domain, if utilised effectively, it can be used as a powerful engagement and marketing tool. As Social Networking continues to grow, it makes absolute sense that clubs embrace and utilise its benefits whilst maintaining awareness of potential risks associated with the use of social media.

Purpose

In a society where Social Media is at the forefront of modern communication, these Guidelines are intended to provide clubs and their members with helpful advice on how to apply best practice and make appropriate decisions across Social Media platforms including (but not limited to) Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Internet Forums, Chat Rooms and commenting on web articles. The Guidelines also aim to assist Clubs in building and engaging with communities of like-minded people.

General Guidelines

1. Be aware of the difference between Public and Private Platforms

If you wish to carry out private discussions intended only for members, check the privacy settings on your Social Media accounts and adjust appropriately. However, it is important to note that despite the presence of privacy options, it can be difficult to ensure that sites are completely private. Be aware that members can 'screen shot' online content if accessed from their mobile phones. This information can then be uploaded and shared. When posting a message on Social Media, always assume that anyone can access it.

2. Take responsibility for your content and be mindful as to how it may be perceived

Be aware that anything posted to a public domain may attract the attention of the wider Media. Negative attention from the Media can have a huge impact on both the Club and the Sport in general. Therefore, when discussing Club business online, act in a professional, constructive manner and use sound judgement before posting content. If a member's personal profile identifies them as part of the Club, they should be mindful towards the comments they post and how these contribute towards the Club's brand identity. Posts referencing the Club directly or those which can be traced back to the Club should be consistent with how the Club wishes to be perceived in the public domain.

3. Be courteous and act with integrity

Generally speaking, if you would not say it to someone's face, you should not write it! Whenever you are participating in conversation on an official capacity or when associated directly with the club in the public eye, consider whether or not your opinions are appropriate in the context of conversation. Remember that anyone associated with the club and speaking on its behalf represents the brand image of the Club as a whole. Never use Social Media to insult, discriminate, troll or harass any individual, group or Club in any form. It would also be beneficial to note that even when comments have been deleted, they could already have been copied or shared on other sites. Always assume that what you post is available online indefinitely.

4. Be aware of copyrighted material and comply with legislation

Only use third party logos, materials or trademarks if you have been granted the permission to do so. Be mindful when copying and pasting a third party's photo or text without their permission that you may be infringing on their property rights. Please be aware that UK laws apply online; safeguarding, libel, slander and data protection laws apply alongside the Privacy Act (1988) and the Spam Act (2003). Therefore be careful with the messages you deliver.

5. Be safe!

You should never share your own, or anyone else's personal details (home address, phone number, bank details etc.) online. If it is necessary to share private information, it should be done via direct private message whilst maintaining extreme caution. If new online members are showing interest in signing up to the Club, be sensible with organising meetings. You should not arrange one-to-one meetings with people you have only spoken to online.

Club Responsibility

It is the Club's responsibility to ensure that their members are made aware of the Best Practice Guidelines if they wish to protect the integrity of their Club's brand identity and image. Members should then be expected to take responsibility for their own actions whilst participating in Social Media and apply appropriate discretion in line with these guidelines.

Club Monitoring

When in the reasonable opinion of the Club Committee that a member has posted content which has breached these Guidelines or is deemed to be unacceptable beyond reasonable doubt, the Club may permanently remove all content. Clubs also withhold the right to remove and block offending participants from their Social Media platforms.



Social Media Policy

It is advisable that clubs have their own social media policy in place to ensure the club is represented appropriately on social media. If you do not have a policy in place and would like some assistance developing a social media policy for your club, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Links

MSA – Best Practice Guidelines on the use of Social Media for MSA Members:

<https://www.msauk.org/assets/msasocialmediaguidelines-6.pdf>

Sportscotland – Social Media Guidelines:

<http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/media/719843/Social-Media-Guidelines-for-Athletes.pdf>