

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

**POLICY**



# ORGANIZATION HISTORY

## LONDON LIGHTNING BASKETBALL TEAM

The London Lightning has been a proud member of the National Basketball League of Canada since its inaugural season in 2011.

The team is owned by Vito Frijia, a prosperous business owner in Southwestern Ontario and past President of the NBL of Canada.

The Lightning plays its home games at Canada Life Place in London, Ontario.



# ABOUT THE TEAM AND THE INDUSTRY

## TARGET AUDIENCE

Our target audience primarily includes basketball enthusiasts within London and the surrounding regions, as well as sports fan or people looking for entertaining events in the city.



# ABOUT THE TEAM AND THE INDUSTRY

## COMPETITORS

Our main competitors in the sports market are:

- ❖ London Knights

Junior ice hockey team in the Ontario Hockey League, that also share the same venue, Canada Life Place.

- ❖ Western Mustangs

Athletic teams of Western University, offering various sports events that attract local fans.

- ❖ Downtown Entertainment

Bars, restaurants, and clubs in downtown London also available as an entertainment source for surrounding areas.



# ABOUT THE TEAM AND THE INDUSTRY

## UNIQUE CHALLENGES

We know that fan engagement is the biggest challenge that we have been facing in recent seasons.

Factors that contribute to it is pricing of tickets, insufficient parking options downtown, and ineffective marketing strategies.



# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF THE BUSINESS'S SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Engage with audience sharing content about the team's performance in the current season and giving incentive to the target audience to engage in our games as an alternative of social events.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO HELP WITH UNIQUE CHALLENGES

***#GetStruck Campaign:***encouraging fans to interact on social media during each game, including giving tickets for next game.

***Shine the Light on Women's Abuse:*** encouraging fans to wear purple during a game to spread awareness on women's abuse, thereby strengthening ties with local residents.





# OBJECTIVES

## PURPOSE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Maintain brand reputation guaranteeing that all social media interactions reflect the professionalism and positive image of the team.

Ensure that we are following legal and ethical compliance without sharing any content that violates intellectual property rights, player contracts and privacy regulations.

Provide consistent messaging through all different platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) with the same tone, language and visual branding.



# CONTENT GUIDELINES

## WE WILL USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO

Post game highlights with game clips and photos, player spotlights and preparation for each game.

Post community involvement highlighting our connection with the community and the fans.

Posting promotions and actions to intensify fan engagement, such as contests, giveaways, ticket deals, and interactive posts.

## WE WILL NOT USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO

Post about political opinions and controversial topics since we want our social media to be a positive space for all fans. The “safe line” for public opinion is to narrow and we shall avoid any possibility of changing our focus from our basketball performance.





# tone and voice

## voice

Energetic and positive bringing the same intensity to social media that our players bring to the court, whether we win or lose.

## tone

Cheerful and motivational with interactivity with fans and showing our hard work and perseverance.



# SAMPLE POSTS

It's showtime, London! We are ready to bring our energy to Canada Life Place tonight at 7PM! We'll be waiting for you!

#GetStruck #LightningBasketball

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Basketball is more than the game. Tonight, we encourage you to wear purple to Shine the Light on Women's Abuse. We're proud to be part of London!

#ShineTheLight #LightningBasketball

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WE DID IT! Your Lightning team struck Pontiac Pharaohs with a final score of 127-116! Corey Boyd shined with his performance!

#GetStruck #LightningBasketball



# EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

## WHO CAN POST ON THE OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS

Only our social media coordinator and his team can post on our official accounts and all post must align with our brand voice, policy, and marketing strategy.

It is mandatory that the content is review by the social media manager before being posted.

## WHAT EMPLOYEES CAN POST ON PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

Share positive content from official accounts; engage in accounts by liking and commenting; express opinions about basketball and sports in general that doesn't negatively impact the team.

E.g. "What a great experience volunteering with the Lightning at today's community event! Proud to be part of this amazing organization!" or "'Excited for game night! Let's bring home another win"



# EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

## WHAT EMPLOYEES CANNOT POST ON PERSONAL ACCOUNTS.

Share confidential information; posting or engaging in negative, offensive, or disrespectful comments about the team, staff, players or fans; discuss controversial topics that could be linked to the team.

E.g. "This is a joke. How are we supposed to win with bs like that? Absolute robbery tonight." or "If you support this awful government, you're not a real fan of the Lightning. We don't need that kind of energy in our community."



# AI USAGE AND TRANSPARENCY

## HOW WE WILL USE AI

We are authorized to use AI to help scheduling posts, suggest trending topics, analyze fan engagement, and provide insights on what type of content resonates most. In addition, we can use its drafts as a starting point for captions or articles.

All content shall be reviewed and edited by a human to maintain our brand's personality and authenticity!

## HOW WE WILL NOT USE AI

We are not authorized to use AI to replace human creativity and storytelling, and for direct fan interactions, such as comments replies and DMs.

The communication with our audience will always be handled by a real person to maintain authenticity and build real connections.



# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

1. Identify the crisis



2. Assess and decide on response strategy



3. Craft response within 6 hours for minor issues and 24 hours for major issues



4. Coordinate with the PR and Management Team to ensure messaging alignment, policy and law compliance

7. Update crisis management plans and templates for future incidents



6. Identify areas for improvement



5. Review how the crisis was handled





# MONITORING

## MONITORING SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

The social media team will monitor all official accounts daily for comments, posts, and interactions that may affect the team's reputation or violate policy guidelines.

We will use social media management tools to track mentions, engagement, and sentiment. This will help identify potential issues before they escalate and ensure our responses are timely and appropriate.

All public interactions on official accounts will be observed for tone, language, and engagement. Any fan or follower violating community standards will be flagged for review.



# ENFORCEMENT

## ENSURING POLICY COMPLIANCE

Employees and volunteers will receive training and guidelines on acceptable behaviour and content to ensure everyone is on the same page about our expectations for social media activity.

Managers and designated social media team members will regularly review social media posts, comments, and direct messages to ensure compliance with the social media policy.

Any policy violations or emerging issues will be addressed in real-time, with clear communication to those involved and prompt corrective actions taken as needed.



# ENFORCEMENT

## CONSEQUENCES FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

In minor violations we will issue a verbal or written warning outlining the violation, and the behaviour will be expected to improve immediately. If the violation is repeated or significant, the employee or volunteer may face a temporary suspension from social media activities or engagement.

In serious violations (e.g., offensive language, breach of confidentiality, or behavior that harms the team's reputation) will result in a formal meeting with the social media manager to discuss the consequences, which could include a written reprimand or suspension.

In extreme cases (e.g., sharing confidential information, hate speech, or significantly damaging the team's reputation), the violation may lead to termination of employment or volunteer status.



# REFLECTION

To develop the social media policy for the London Lightning, I focused on creating clear and practical guidelines that reflect the team's values while promoting a positive and engaging online presence. I wanted the policy to be easy to follow, with clear sections following the template provided on Week 3 and the assignment instructions. The goal was to find a balance between professionalism, transparency, and inclusivity while making sure the team could respond quickly and appropriately to any social media issues.

I started by brainstorming and researching best practices in social media management and reading the social media policies of companies like Nike and Budweiser. I used my understanding of the team's culture to shape the policy. I attended two of the team's games to gain deeper insight into the organization and analyzed their Instagram account and website.

I then used AI to help refine the language and develop fresh ideas. For example, I prompted the AI with requests like, "Create 10 sample social media posts that reflect a positive, community-focused tone for a sports team" and "Provide a crisis management process for a sports team's social media." This allowed me to generate realistic examples that aligned with the team's voice and values, which I then adapted to fit the structure of the policy.

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