

1

Handouts & Exercises

Social Media Guidelines

#defyhatenow | 1 HANDOUTS & EXERCISES

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



#DEFYHATENOW SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT

These guidelines are based on material from the “Journal of Mass Media Ethics” by Shannon A. Bowen (School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of South Carolina, USA). While it is neither possible – nor desirable – to ‘police’ social media usage, awareness and strict application of these guidelines is in your own personal and professional best interest!

In applying these guidelines, please be aware that in most cases what you write, link and refer to online is public information and shared with everyone else. Distinctions are generally not made between ‘private’ and ‘professional’ opinions. **Statements, tagging or other actions, including ‘Liking’ comments etc. on Facebook can be interpreted as a direct reflection of your opinion regardless of the context.** These actions, even if not your intention, can be taken out of context and be used against you, your colleagues, your work etc.

Agreeing on, and adhering to a common set of guidelines will strengthen your own work in mitigating hate speech and online incitement by helping to identify irregularities, hoaxes or the ways in which rumours spread!

BE TRANSPARENT.

Acting in a transparent manner can prevent audiences from being misled about your organisation’s intentions or meanings when it contributes on social media. Communication should be identified as individual speech or speech on behalf of an organisation. All individuals that contribute social media content for your organisation should be required to identify any personal social media interactions as such. Be upfront if the views being expressed are personal. If you have your own blog or other public website, it’s wise to use a disclaimer like this: “The views expressed on this website/blog are my own and do not reflect those of my institution or its clients.”

BE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT.

Post clear messages. Take responsibility for the content you post. Be consistent in how and when you post, because this allows to build trust and understanding with the audience that is a key component of strong relationships.

VERIFY SOURCES AND DATA.

Be consistently credible; do NOT use misinformation, share or forward rumours or repeat speculation.

CHECK YOUR FACTS.

Check facts on the information you post. You should first verify information and rumours, then consider the content of your posts rationally before posting. Try to examine messages from all possible perspectives to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

BE ACCURATE.

Posts should be accurate and fact-checked and capable of substantiation. If you make a mistake, ensure you correct it promptly. It is important to reference the earlier comment because even if the erroneous comment has been deleted, someone may have saved it as an image.

BE FAIR AND RESPECTFUL.

Never post malicious, misleading or unfair content about your organisation, colleagues, competitors or other stakeholders. Do not post content that is obscene, defamatory, threatening or discriminatory to any person, individual, brand or tribe. Do not post comments that you would not say directly to another person and consider how other people might react before you post. If you do respond to published comments that you may consider unfair always be accurate and professional. Remember to be authentic, constructive and respectful.

BE PROFESSIONAL.

Always act in a professional and constructive manner and use sound judgement before posting. Stay polite in tone and respectful of individuals' opinions, especially when discussions become heated. Show proper consideration for other people's privacy.

BE GOOD.

Encourage the good, helping to build connectedness, engagement, and community. Following this logic, with every post, consider your intention, which should reflect the organisation's philosophy and social media goals as well as simple consistent peaceful & good intentions.

BE SMART.

Respect other people's intellectual property, including trademarked names, slogans and copyrighted material. Assume that all content online is protected by copyright. Make sure you have permission to post copyright items, properly attribute the work to the copyright owner where required, and never use someone else's work as if it were your own. Respect all laws and regulations re: copyright, IP, privacy and spam when publishing on social media.



HOW TO MAKE GOOD FACEBOOK CONTENT?

6 tips that will help you create awesome facebook posts!

Facebook is a great way to reach out to people, tell them about your work and get them involved. But even though facebook is free to use and easy to understand, there are issues you need to know in order to make the best use of the platform. If you want to communicate on Facebook, one thing that you might want to understand is the Facebook algorithm. The Facebook algorithm helps make sense of the huge number of posts that people and businesses share every day and chooses the posts to show in our News Feed based on a variety of factors. Since everyday so many facebook posts are created and shared, Facebook wants to make sure, the user will see only facebook posts that appeal to your fans.

What is good facebook content?

Good Facebook content is:

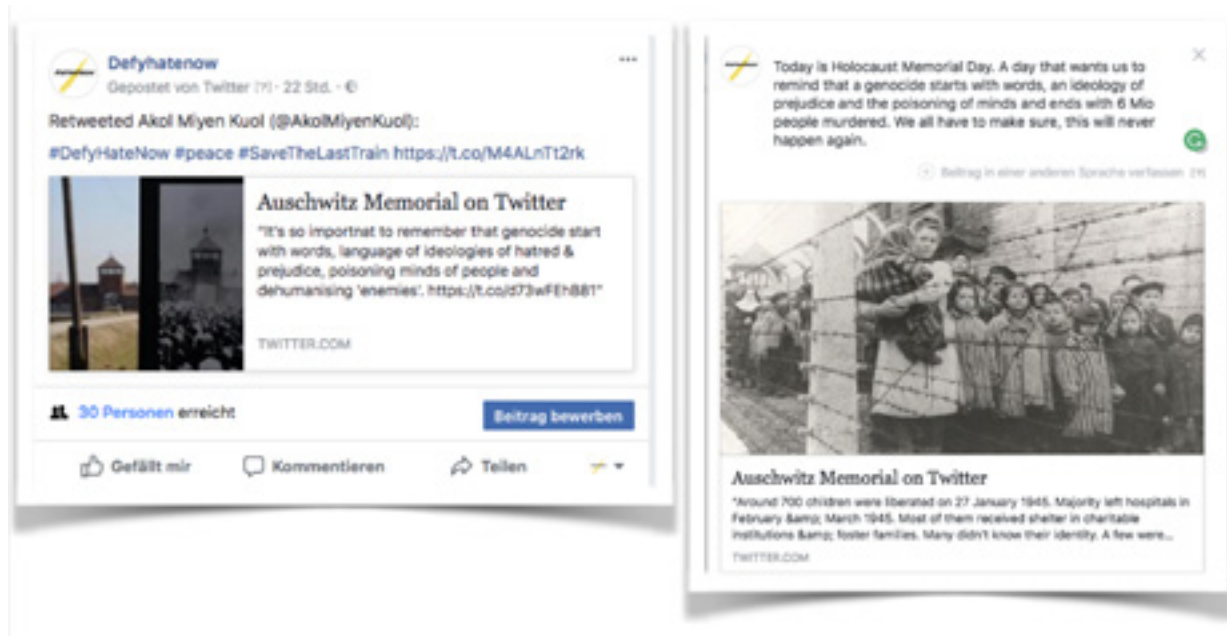
- When people share it
- When people like it or react on it
- When people discuss it and comment on it

How can I create good facebook posts?

1. Context: First of all, your content needs to be understood. If no-one understands the context of your post, how will they interact with it? What do you think, which one is more appealing and easier to understand?

Example: Holocaust Memorial Day

You can easily add context to your post by following basic journalistic rules and try to answer these question in your post: What happened, when, where, why and how?



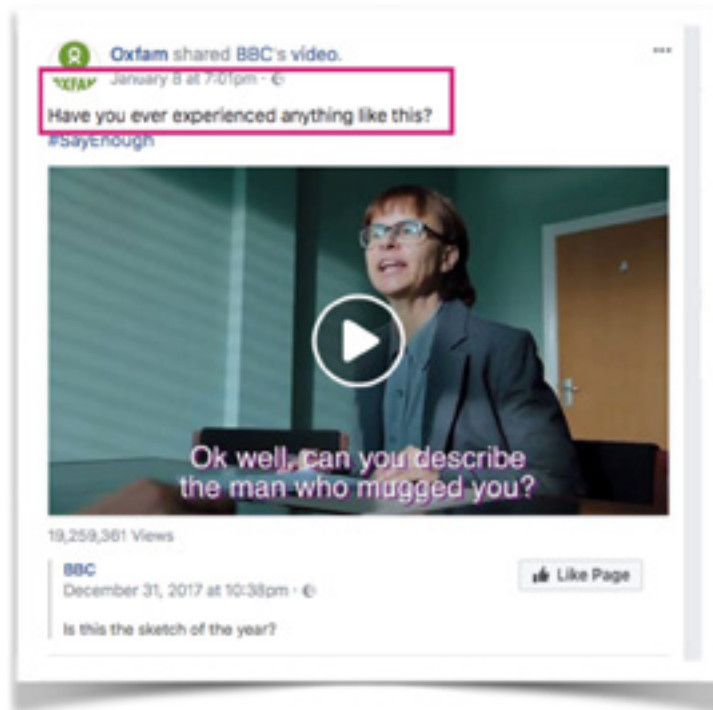
Example: "Join us on the 21st of September (**when**) for our peacejam event (**what**) in Juba (where). Together we can take action, spread the message of peace (**how**) so violence doesn't have the change to divide us (**why**)."

2. Add an image: Picture and videos will draw attention to your post and increase your outreach. You can find free and easy to use tools such as canva.com that will help you design eye-catching facebook-pictures and infographics.



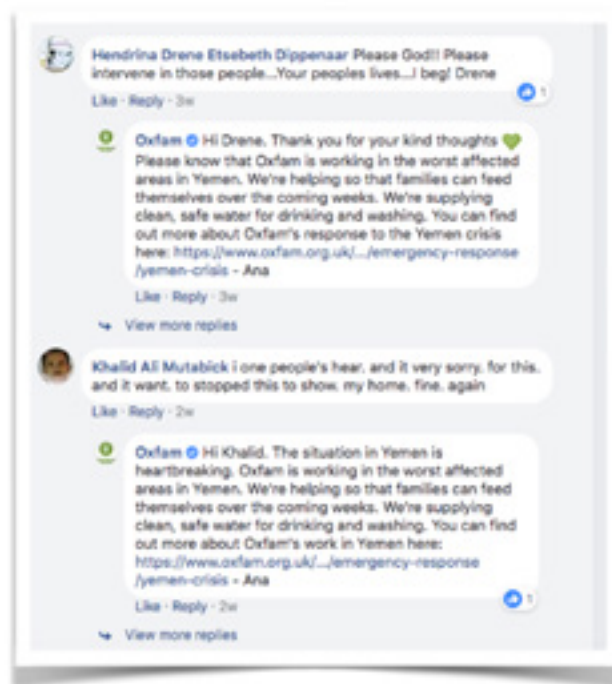
3. Ask questions:

Asking for user opinions, is a good way to spark up response and comments for your post



4. Get involved:

Be a good host to fans who interact with your page. If people leave comments, get involved, give feedback and discuss. Make them feel welcome and acknowledged on your page.



5. Simply entertain: Once in while, an entertaining video, i.e. from a cultural event, will bring a smile to your fan's face, keep them entertained and invite your audience to keep on returning and interact with your posts.



6. Quality is better than quantity:

Take your time while creating content. It is more effective to post less often and spend time on producing one good post. A good post can easily take 15 to 30 minutes, if a picture or video is included even more.



TWITTER HOW-TO GUIDE

Twitter is a free micro blogging service that allows users to send & read other users' text messages or "tweets" of up to 140 characters. While users can apply different privacy settings, by default, tweets are on a public "timeline"; displayed on users' profiles; & on the profiles of their subscribers or "followers." Users can tweet from their desktop computers, smartphones or other devices, third party applications that access users' Twitter accounts, & by text message or SMS. Twitter is a platform to share information, news, media & commentary.

Why Tweet?

A Twitter strategy can be essential to any organisation or campaign. Twitter can help build your credibility, establish your voice, connect to your base or potential donors (B2C), allies & partners (B2B), the media or political targets. While the number of your followers is a common indicator of impact, there are many other reasons to join the conversation. Twitter is a useful tool to take the pulse of your social network on current events & your issues, as well as take note of who is an "influencer."

HOW TO TWEET

- Sign up for an account
- Follow 12 people & organisations—peers, leaders, news outlets, journalists—who tweet consistently
- Once you're comfortable, start tweeting! Link to an article using a URL shortener like bit.ly, RT something a fellow organiser tweets, ask questions or reply to relevant tweets

- Set a schedule & try to stick to it, i.e, 10 tweets/week, 1 tweet & 1 RT/day
- Use and/or create a hashtag
- Try to incorporate a feature like lists or stories in your Twitter activities
- Remember the four C's of effective tweets (& social media in general): Creative, Current, Consistent & Concise—try to make connections between your work and current events or pop culture
- “What’s old is new again”—try to revive old content by linking it (literally & figuratively) to active Twitter conversations on Twitter
- Think of Twitter like a house party. Have a conversation, talk about your personal and political interests, experience & skills—but beware of TMI! (too much information)



HOW TO MAKE USE OF TIME OFFLINE AND ONLINE

Discussion around research and search for knowledge:

Most students admit to checking their social media profiles (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Youtube profiles for latest gossip, trending news and just to keep up with friends and family. Whatsapp also featured a lot in their daily lives.

- What kind of information do students consume online?
- How safe is the internet for them?
- Do they know what is right and what is wrong?
- Do we always read and understand what is posted, shared or what we comment on?

The definition of words and their meanings.

When interacting with people, both offline and online, selecting words carefully is important. Before you make, write, post and share statements, comments, or the jokes with others it's advisable to think about them as we might offend certain groups of people.

Ask yourself: “How would I feel if I was part of the group being offended?”

Always weigh the impact your words might have, take time to read through your own text, sentences or statements and if need be take a break (in case emotional) and come back later when sober.

Questions to Consider:

- Understanding of Hate Speech and what it means and occasions where one might be spreading it unconsciously.
- The need to contemplate the words we use when online and offline.

The importance of taking precautions and the need to ask oneself questions both online and offline. Discuss how women are portrayed online in the South Sudanese context: most female students were concerned about how some websites photoshop their photos and used them without their consent and how some post or jokes targeting women and girls. How can this be addressed?