Social Media top tips

JISC project communications workshop

1. **Be where your audiences are.** Choose the social media spaces your audiences use and choose your networks carefully.
2. **Set clear aims and objectives.** What does your project want to get out of using social media? What are the benefits?
3. **Be open and honest.** Don't try to control the 'message'. Admit any mistakes and reflect on them. Don’t try to bluff people – you’ll be found out and exposed.
4. **Write about what you know.** You add value by contributing your views and opinions on topics you know something about. You risk reputational damage by posting on subjects where you’re not an expert or not aware of all the facts.
5. **Stay interesting and relevant.** Think about the interests and concerns of your audience.
6. **Be constructive.** People may disagree with what you say and express that in many ways, from the helpful to the downright rude. Rise above it and ensure your engagement is constructive and positive. Remember, some comments are not worthy of a response.
7. **Adopt an informal, conversational style.** Social media is a chance to engage with people on a personal level, as if you were talking to them at a conference.
8. **Keep it short and sweet**. Posts don't need to be long. In fact, it's sometimes better if they aren't.
9. **Be generous with links.** Consider where a link could add value to your post for the reader: think places, people, organisations, news stories, other blogs, definitions.
10. **Provide timely responses.** If you post to the social web, it is not going to be long before someone replies and expects a response in return. You may sometimes need to reflect on what others have written or look something up but try to provide a response in a timely manner. You don't need to respond individually to every comment. If you receive a lot of comments all on the same theme, you could post one response, maybe making reference to some of the comments.
11. **Publish regularly and frequently.** Social media spaces need to be updated regularly. If your social media space isn’t being kept up to date it may be better to archive it or possibly remove it. If you’re posting in a team social media space ask colleagues if they’re interested in contributing or becoming the owner of the space. Ensure there’s a secondary contact in case you’re away for any extended period.
12. **Be aware of other people's use of social media.** Don’t assume that Chatham House Rules apply - an 'off the record' remark at a meeting or event (formal or informal) may be personally attributed to you and redistributed multiple times via social networks within seconds.
13. **Monitor your social media activity**. Use Google analytics and other tracking software to gauge readership and keep track of RSS subscriptions, followers or other useful measures. Monitor posts on your site regularly to check for spam or abuse.
14. **Do not remove offensive or derogatory comments** from the social media space. Report them to the site administrators immediately.
15. **Respond to negative posts carefully**. Ask yourself... can I answer this with factual information and without an emotional response? Do I have the knowledge to respond? Does it need a response or is it a rant? Sometimes ranters just need to rant and in these cases it’s best not to respond.