

Whether you are a small business, professional practice, or industrial/B2B organization just putting your toe into the realm of social media — our experience advising clients *and* no shortage of 3rd party research demonstrate that leveraging social media does indeed have valid and demonstrable benefits, among them: increasing brand visibility, engaging key audiences, demonstrating value to customers/prospective customers, generating leads and web traffic, and helping to position your company as an active, thought-leading, and vibrant force in your industry.



That said, the original social media content you generate and re-post should be guided by some basic ground-rules as to what constitutes 'suitable' material for posts... Not only to help ensure you are focusing on genuine marketing or business objectives, but also to help protect your organization from PR mishaps that can occur in this new territory.

At SMS, we've developed these basic — and, by design, generic — guidelines for companies new to the social media landscape. Without question, every corporation will have its own take on what constitutes a worthwhile and trustworthy set of best practices, but we hope this provides a starting framework or springboard for that process.

Enjoy and give a shout if we can help in any way.

John Hoeschele  
VP/Creative Director — [john@onlinesms.com](mailto:john@onlinesms.com)



## PART A: Broadly speaking, social posts must help further one or more of the following top-level objectives

- Position your company as an active and positive force in the industry
- Establish your brand as a leading participant in the industry — as well an organization committed to innovation, quality, customer service, and passionate people
- Establish employees as knowledgeable, experienced, energetic, and high-value *individuals*
- Promote both existing and new products and services
- Promote your organization's attendance or participation in industry and/or local events
- And otherwise convey positive messaging to a wide range of target audiences, including but not limited to:
  - employees (HQ, remote) & prospective employees
  - existing & prospective customers
  - suppliers
  - professional peers
  - trade associations
  - regulators, agencies, government
  - trade press & broader new organizations
  - other industry influencers

**TIP** Just generated a new page on your company website? Or an item for an internal newsletter? Or a new piece of marketing material? Re-purpose it on social.



## **PART B: Specifically, the following ‘types/subjects’ of social posts are suitable for distribution**

### **ORIGINAL, COMPANY-GENERATED CONTENT**

#### **Product-oriented posts**

- New product releases and/or enhancements
- Re-promotion of existing products and/or features
- Availability of new or existing product videos, literature, webpages, white papers, training, demos, or tech docs
- Inclusion of products or product presentations at upcoming trade events

#### **Event-related posts**

- Announcements related to upcoming trade show participation, locations, timelines, speakers, etc. (Such announcements can be pre, mid, or post-event posts.)
- Announcements of community event participation (i.e.: corporate citizenship) such as support of charitable causes, fundraisers, etc.
- Announcements of important internal events (provided they are suitable for public awareness), such as ribbon cuttings on new facilities, etc.

#### **Other “goodwill” / brand-furthering announcements**

- New or recent patent, award, or other company wins
- Hiring of key positions or promotions of key employees
- Recognition of employee achievements, including involvement in industry organizations, committees, etc.
- Support of your industry’s trade associations or other notable/relevant ‘causes’
- Growth or expansion announcements (if approved for public release)

Continues next page >>>

**TIP** Some valuable social content may come from documenting your work-life: Attending an event? Presenting at a conference? Take a pic and share it on social.



## PART B (continued)

### RE-POSTED / SHARED CONTENT

- **Recognition of your company**, sub-brands, products, or employees by trade publications, general-media, or social media. Some examples might include:
  - positive mention of your company's technology/product in a trade article or blog
  - favorable mention in a national, State-wide, local news outlet
  - a congratulatory, 3rd party social post about a key employee's professional achievement
- **3rd Party announcements related to upcoming events** wherein your company or key employees will be participants
- **Favorable (but general) industry news**, statistics, or trend analysis — posted by trade publications, trade groups, government entities, or academic institutions

## PART C: The following content should not be distributed via your company's social platforms unless specifically initiated by management

**By contrast, each of these categories can pose risks** (re: appearances of favoritism, conflicts of interest, confidentiality, inaccuracies, opinions, undue negativity, and so on).

- Industry 'bad news' — such as accidents, litigation, legal judgements, regulatory fines/penalties, etc.
- Customer contracts your company has won — as re-promoting may be seen as favoritism relative to other/competing customers
- Governmental policy statements and stories
- News related to related to your company's financial performance (e.g.: stock prices, speculations on M&A activity, etc.)

**TIP** Not sure your post is suitable? Think 360 degrees around the subject: Is there any chance a customer might take offence? Is the post chiefly an expression of opinion vs. an objective fact? Does it just 'feel' wrong? If so, hold that post and discuss the merits and suitability of your proposed post with top management.



Thanks for your time! | [Smith Marketing Services](#)

Comments or feedback regarding this document may be emailed to [info@onlinesms.com](mailto:info@onlinesms.com) — attention Doug Smith (President) or John Hoeschele (Vice President). Similarly, we welcome the opportunity to discuss *your* company's marketing goals and social media strategies/tactics: Just email us at the address above or call us at 607.257.7000 to initiate a free, confidential, and no-pressure consultation.

**Smith Marketing Services, LLC**

95 Brown Road | Ithaca, NY 14850 - USA | 607.257.7000 | fax 607.257.2389 | [www.onlinesms.com](http://www.onlinesms.com)



SMITH MARKETING SERVICES, LLC