

Exhibition Services & Contractors Association (ESCA) Social Media Policy

Emerging platforms for online communication are fundamentally changing the way we work, offering new ways to engage with current and potential customers, colleagues, the industry, and the world at large. Social media is a new model for interaction and we believe it can help you to build stronger, more successful business relationships. And it's a way for you to take part in conversations related to the work we are doing at ESCA and the things we care about. Therefore, it is in ESCA's interest, and in each employee's own interest, to be aware of and participate in this realm of information, interaction and idea exchange in a manner that is appropriate, professional and lawful.

These are the official policy guidelines for social media participation at ESCA. We require all who participate in social media on behalf of ESCA to understand and to follow these guidelines. Failure to do so could put your future participation and employment at risk. The choice to participate in social media is yours. If you decide to participate, you are making a commitment to following these guidelines.

Rules for Engagement

ESCA fully respects the legal rights of our employees. In general, what you do on your own time is your affair. However, activities in or outside of work that affect your job performance, the performance of others, ESCA's brand or ESCA's business interests are a proper focus for company policy. If you participate in social media, please follow these guiding principles:

- No employee may establish a company blog without the approval of ESCA.
- Company email addresses may only be used for company related social media---much like company letterhead is only used for company related correspondence in the paper world.
- Don't use any ESCA or customer logos, pictures, video or other intellectual property without written consent.
- Post meaningful, respectful comments—in other words, no SPAM and no remarks that are off-topic or offensive.
- Respect proprietary information, content, and confidentiality.
- When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.
- Know and follow all existing ESCA policies such as the Code of Conduct. This Social Media policy is intended to operate in conjunction with ESCA's existing policies.

Your Responsibility

What you write is ultimately your responsibility and requires the exercise of good judgment. Participation in social media on behalf of ESCA is not a right but an opportunity, so please treat it seriously and with respect. Anything you post is accessible to anyone with a web browser. It's appropriate to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it's not appropriate to publish confidential or proprietary information. Please also follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites.

ESCA has established accounts on several social websites. These sites include, but are not limited to, LinkedIn and Facebook. The management of these accounts, and the creation of new corporate accounts across the social web, as well as the creation of blogs is the responsibility of ESCA. While you are encouraged to create your own individual accounts, please do not create ESCA-branded accounts which could be interpreted as representing the organization.

Failure to abide by these guidelines could put your participation in social media and employment at ESCA at risk.

Be Honest, But Don't Tell Secrets

All statements must be true and not misleading, and all claims must be substantiated and approved. Please never comment on any of the following:

- Anything related to legal matters
- Financials
- Litigation
- Anything about competitors and their capabilities
- Product roadmap
- Business strategies
- IT developments

Also be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and ESCA's confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. Further, if you are using ESCA equipment to participate in social media please remember that you have no expectation of privacy. ESCA has the right to edit or delete any information you post on social media forums that are company related.

Protect ESCA's Members, Business Partners and Suppliers

Members, partners or suppliers should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. All pictures and video featuring exhibit properties and events for members, partners and suppliers cannot be shared without written approval. Externally, never identify a member, partner or supplier by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a member engagement. If you have questions, please contact the ESCA to see if permission has been granted by a particular third party.

Respect Your Audience and Your Coworkers

Remember that ESCA is an organization whose employees and clients reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory—such as politics and religion. If you have been asked to blog on behalf of ESCA or if you are commenting on company blogs avoid these topics and focus on subjects that are business-related. If your blog is self-hosted, please do not discuss ESCA matters and make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of ESCA.

At a minimum in your own blog, you should include the following standard disclaimer: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent ESCA's positions, strategies or opinions."

Further, blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, social networks, or other tools hosted outside of ESCA's protected environment should not be used for internal communications among fellow employees. It is fine for ESCA employees to disagree, but please don't use your external blog or other online social media to air your differences.

Write What You Know

Write in the first person and make sure you write and post about your areas of expertise, especially as related to ESCA. If you are writing about a topic that ESCA is involved with but you are not the subject matter expert, you should make this clear to your readers. Please respect brand, trademark, copyright, fair use, trade secrets (including our processes and methodologies), confidentiality, and financial disclosure laws.

You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work. And it is good general blogging practice to link to others' work or mention an individual's contribution in a tweet.

Be Transparent

If you are blogging about your work or if you are endorsing any ESCA services, please use your real name and identify that you work for ESCA, clearly stating your role with the company. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, be the first to point it out.

ESCA trusts and expects that employees exercise personal responsibility whenever they participate in social media. This includes not violating the trust of those with whom you are engaging. ESCA employees should not use social media for covert marketing or public relations. If and when members of ESCA's internal or external facing functions are engaged in advocacy for the company through social media, they should identify themselves as employees of ESCA.

For individuals who are not participating in social media as part of an official function of their job, make it clear that what you say does not necessarily represent the views and opinions of ESCA.

By virtue of identifying yourself as an ESCA employee within a social network, you are now connected to your colleagues, managers and even ESCA members. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at ESCA.

Be Respectful and Own Your Mistakes

There can be a fine line between healthy debate and incendiary reaction. Do not disparage others. You don't need to respond to every criticism or barb. Try to frame what you write to invite differing points of view without inflaming others. Some topics—like politics or religion—slide more easily into sensitive territory. So be careful and considerate. Once the words are out there, you can't get them back. And once an inflammatory discussion gets going, it's hard to stop.

If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post—just make it clear that you have done so.

You are Responsible for What You Post

Remember that there are always consequences to what you publish. If you're about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, review the suggestions above and think about why that is. If you're still unsure, and it is related to ESCA business, discuss it with your manager. Ultimately, however, you have sole responsibility for what you post to your blog or publish in any form of online social media.

Don't Forget Your Day Job

You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job or work commitments or create a conflict of interest for ESCA. Unless your job description states otherwise, if you are a non-exempt employee or contractor your participation in social media is strictly voluntary and will not be subject to compensation.

Reference Requests

ESCA prohibits managers and employees from responding to employee reference requests, except for those necessary for continuing education or application to academic institutions. Managers and employees do not have authorization to provide “blind” recommendation letters or reference about a current or former employee, even if requested by an employee. This prohibition includes responding to any requests for recommendations from third parties through social networking websites and from government officials or agents through onsite visits. The company will only verify dates of employment, job title, and income as authorized by the current or former employee.