



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Key Details

- Approved by the Board of Directors of Newcastle Upon Tyne Musical Theatre Company on: 18th May 2016
- This Policy became operational on: 25th May 2016
- Next review date: January 2022

Introduction

Newcastle Upon Tyne Musical Theatre Company is referred to throughout this document as "NMTC".

Company and cast members of NMTC are referred to throughout this document as "Members"

Members are entitled to access Social Media services and social networking websites via their own personal equipment.

This Social Media Policy describes the rules governing use of Social Media by Members.

It sets out how Members must behave when using the NMTC's Social Media accounts.

It also explains the rules about using personal Social Media accounts at work and describes what Members may say about NMTC on their personal accounts.

Why This Policy Exists

Social Media can bring significant benefits to NMTC, particularly for building relationships with current and potential sponsors, patrons, Members and friends. However, it is important that Members who use Social Media within their personal accounts do so in a way that enhances NMTC's reputation. Conversely, those members should not do so in any way that can damage NMTC's reputation.

There are also security and data protection issues to consider.

This policy explains how Members should use Social Media safely and effectively.



Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Members who use Social Media no matter whether for business or personal reasons.

It applies no matter whether that Social Media use takes place a) on business premises, b) while working from home, or c) for any personal use.

Social Media sites and services include (but are not limited to):

- ❑ Popular social networks such as **Twitter** and **Facebook**
- ❑ Online review websites such as **Reevo** and **Trustpilot**
- ❑ Sharing and discussion sites such as **Delicious** and **Reddit**
- ❑ Photographic social networks such as **Flickr** and **Instagram**
- ❑ Question and answer social networks such as **Quora** and **Yahoo Answers**
- ❑ Professional social networks such as **LinkedIn** and **Sunzu**

Responsibilities

Everyone who operates a business or personal Social Media account or who uses their personal Social Media accounts at work has responsibility for adhering to this policy. However, the The Board of Directors of NMTC is ultimately responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this Policy, and will appoint designated personnel who will have key responsibilities as follows:

- ❑ The Publicity Manager via the Social Media Coordinator is ultimately responsible for ensuring NMTC uses Social Media safely, appropriately and in line with NMTC's objectives, and responsible for providing apps and tools to manage NMTC's Social Media presence. They are also responsible for proactively monitoring for Social Media security threats.
- ❑ The Marketing Manager via the Social Media Coordinator (and any other appropriate person) is responsible for rolling out marketing ideas and campaigns through NMTC's Social Media channels.

General Social Media Guidelines

The Power of Social Media

NMTC recognises that Social Media offers a platform for NMTC to promote publicity and marketing, and to build NMTC's profile online.



NMTC accepts that Members will be involved in online conversations on social networks. Social Media is an excellent way for Members to make useful connections, share ideas and shape NMTC's profile, while supporting NMTC's goals and objectives.

Basic Advice

Regardless of which social networks Members use, or whether they are using business or personal accounts, following these simple rules will help avoid the most common pitfalls:-

- Know the social network.** Members should spend time becoming familiar with the social network before contributing to it. It is important to read any Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and understand what is and what is not acceptable on a network before posting messages or updates.
- If unsure, do not post.** Members should err on the side of caution when posting to social networks. If any Member feels an update or message might cause complaints or offence, or might be otherwise unsuitable, they should not post it. Members can always consult the Publicity Manager or Social Media Coordinator for advice.
- Be thoughtful and polite.** Many Social Media users have got into trouble simply by failing to observe basic good manners online and Members should beware of this. Members should adopt the same level of courtesy when communicating via email.
- Look out for security threats.** Members should be on guard for social engineering and phishing attempts. Social networks are also used to distribute spam and malware. Further details below.
- Do not take any steps or make any comments which might commit NMTC to any agreement or contracts.** Some social networks are very public, so Members must not make any commitment or promise on behalf of NMTC.
- Do not allow matters to escalate.** It is easy to post a quick response to a contentious status update and then regret it. Members should always take time to think before responding, and hold back if they are in any doubt at all.

Use of NMTC Social Media Accounts

This section of the Social Media Policy covers all use of Social Media accounts owned and run by NMTC.

Authorised Users



Only people who have been authorised to use NMTC's social networking accounts may do so.

Authorisation is provided by the Publicity Manager or Social Media Coordinator. It is typically granted for Social Media-related tasks that will help promote the company. Allowing only designated people to use the accounts ensures the company's Social Media presence is consistent and cohesive.

Creating Social Media Accounts

New Social Media accounts in the name of or on behalf of NMTC must not be created except by the Publicity Manager or the Social Media Coordinator.

NMTC operates its Social Media presence in line with a strategy that focuses on the most- appropriate social networks, given available resources.

If there is a case to be made for opening a new account, Members must raise the proposal with the Publicity Manager or Social Media Coordinator who will then refer to the Board of Directors.

Purpose of Company Social Media Accounts

NMTC's Social Media accounts may be used for many different purposes.

In general, Members should only post updates, messages or otherwise use these accounts when that use is clearly in line with NMTC's overall objectives.

For instance, Members may use company Social Media accounts to:

- ❑ Respond to enquiries and requests for help
- ❑ Share blog posts, articles and other content created by NMTC
- ❑ Share insightful articles, videos, media and other content relevant to NMTC, but created by others
- ❑ Provide patrons and supporters with an insight into what goes on at NMTC
- ❑ Promote marketing campaigns
- ❑ Support new initiatives

Social Media is a powerful tool that changes quickly. Members are encouraged to think of new ways to use it, and to suggest those ideas to the Publicity Manager and Social Media Coordinator.

Inappropriate Content & Uses

NMTC's Social Media accounts must not be used to share or spread inappropriate content, or to take part in any activities which could bring NMTC into disrepute.

When sharing an interesting blog post, article or piece of content, Members should always review the content thoroughly, and should not post content or a link based solely on a headline.

Further guidelines can be found below.



Members should refrain from the use of bad language within posts relating to NMTC's or private issues.

Use of Personal Social Media Accounts

The Value of Social Media

NMTC recognises that Members' personal Social Media accounts can generate a number of benefits. For instance:

- ☐ Members can make contacts that may be useful for marketing, publicity and helping to sell tickets.
- ☐ By posting details of NMTC, Members can help increase NMTC's profile online

Personal Social Media Rules

Acceptable use:

- ☐ Members may use their personal Social Media accounts to help to promote NMTC.

Talking about the company:

- ☐ Members should make it absolutely clear that their Social Media accounts do not represent the views or opinions of NMTC.
- ☐ Members may wish to include a disclaimer in Social Media profiles: 'The views expressed are my own and do not reflect the views of Newcastle Musical Theatre Company'.

Safe, Responsible Social Media Use

The rules in this section apply to:-

- ☐ Any Member using NMTC's Social Media accounts
- ☐ Members using personal Social Media accounts in a manner detrimental to NMTC.

Users must not:

- ☐ Create or transmit material likely to be defamatory or incur liability for NMTC.
- ☐ Post messages, status updates or links to material or content that is inappropriate.
 - ☐ Inappropriate content includes: pornography, racial or religious slurs, gender-specific comments, information encouraging criminal acts or terrorism, or materials relating to cults, gambling and illegal drugs.



- This definition of inappropriate content or material also covers any text, images or other media that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Use Social Media for any illegal or criminal activities.
- Send offensive or harassing material to others via Social Media.
- Broadcast unsolicited views on social, political, religious or other non-business related matters.
- Send or post messages or material that could damage NMTC's image or reputation.
- Interact with other musical theatre organisations in any ways which could be interpreted as being offensive, disrespectful or rude. (Direct communication of this nature should be kept to a minimum.)
- Discuss any individual within the organization or other organisations.
- Post, upload, forward or link to spam, junk email or chain emails and messages.

Copyright

NMTC respects and operates within copyright laws. Members may not use Social Media to:

- Publish or share any copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party. If Members wish to share content published on another website, they are free to do so if that website has obvious sharing buttons or functions on it.
- Share links to illegal copies of music, films, games or other software.
- Copyright material includes: costumes, make up, self images etc. (See following; Policy Enforcement Monitoring Social Media Use; paragraph 7)

Security & Data Protection

Member should be aware of the security and data protection issues that can arise from using social networks.

Maintain confidentiality



Users must not:-

- ❑ Share or link to any content or information owned by NMTC that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive. This might include sales figures, details of key customers, or information about future strategy or marketing campaigns.
- ❑ Share or link to any content or information owned by another company or person that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive.
- ❑ Share or link to data in any way that could breach NMTC's data protection policy.

Protect social accounts

- ❑ NMTC's Social Media accounts should be protected by strong passwords that are changed regularly and shared only with authorised users.
- ❑ Wherever possible, members should use two-factor authentication (often called mobile phone verification) to safeguard NMTC's accounts.
- ❑ Members must not use a new piece of software, app or service with any of NMTC's Social Media accounts without receiving approval from the Publicity Manager or Social Media Coordinator.

Avoid social scams

- ❑ Members should be alert for phishing attempts, where unauthorised parties attempt to use deception to obtain information relating to either NMTC or its Members.
- ❑ Members must never reveal sensitive details through Social Media channels.
- ❑ Members should always avoid clicking links in posts, updates and direct messages which look suspicious. In particular, users should look out for URLs contained in generic or vague- sounding direct messages.

Policy Enforcement

Monitoring Social Media Use

NMTC's internet connections are provided for legitimate NMTC use.

NMTC, therefore, reserves the right to monitor how social networks are used and accessed through these connections by its Members.

Any such examinations or monitoring will only be carried out by the Social Media Coordinator and reported to the Board of Directors as necessary. Additionally, all data relating to social networks written, sent or received through NMTC's Internet Connections is part of official NMTC records.



NMTC can be legally compelled to show information to law enforcement agencies or official bodies.

NMTC reserve the right to remove, edit or mark as inappropriate any posts by others in or out of NMTC's Social Media at any time for any reason.

Any images produced by the cast during rehearsals or the production should only be shared in the Company's official closed Facebook group/page.

Any images posted on personal profiles/pages are not the responsibility of NMTC. Any person who posts such images should be prepared to deal with any legal actions/consequences, from rights holders or other interested parties.

Potential Sanctions

Knowingly breaching this Social Media Policy is a serious matter. Users who do so will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of membership.

Members and other users may also be held personally liable for violating this policy.

Where necessary, NMTC will involve the appropriate law enforcement agencies in relation to breaches of this policy.

Junior Members

Junior Member must supply a signed parental consent form to cover the use of any photos or images that may be posted on NMTC's Social Media accounts or for publicity purposes.

This must be documented within NMTC's Child Protection Policy.

Contravention of This Policy

Any Member who intentionally or recklessly fails to abide by NMTC's Social Media Policy will be subject to such sanctions as may reasonably be imposed by the Board of Directors.

Any Member found to repeatedly or seriously breach this Social Media Policy may be required to forfeit membership of NMTC.