

# Social Media, Internet and Email Policy

**Scope:** The scope of this document is to provide rules and guidance for the safe operation and management of IT services. It applies to all employees and volunteers regardless of job, task or function.

## Internet and Email

### **System access**

To ensure that someone does not use your system to access your email or use the Internet in your name, you must ensure that you:

- obey the rules regarding access to the building;
- do not tell anyone else your passwords. If you think someone else may know them, change them;
- do not leave your system unlocked and unattended while logged in. Leaving a workstation unlocked means that unauthorised users could then gain access to the network, be able to access any confidential or personal files and be able to misuse the system in your name.
- Do not allow automatic form filling software or any settings that allow your computer, tablet or phone to remember your password.

### **Downloading infected material from the Internet**

Any information received over the Internet can contain data infected by viruses or trojans. These are small files or programs which can cause substantial damage to the system and/or the information stored therein. This can include your own work. For this reason we require that you exercise every care. In particular you must:

- seek permission from your line manager before downloading or saving any new programme or executive file from the Internet;
- report any circumstances where you suspect that a contaminated file may have been downloaded inadvertently;
- always take notice of messages generated by/use the virus check program installed on your computer.

### **Loading/Installing Unauthorised Software**

Your computer has been set up to run only the software installed. All the licensed programs which have been installed have been tested and verified as being suitable for you to do your work.

## Social Media, Internet and Email Policy

You are expressly forbidden to install or load any program brought from home or obtained from any non-authorized supplier - including the Internet. This includes demonstration programs, games of any sort, programs still being tested, eg beta programs and magazine cover disks.

This is to prevent the possibility of you corrupting our system, importing viruses and causing licensing problems.

If you find that you cannot do your job properly using the built-in programs on your computer you are invited to discuss the situation with your line manager or the Acts Senior Manager. This will be carefully considered. Any modifications to your system will be undertaken in collaboration with the your line manager or the Acts Senior Manager.

### **Auditing Procedures**

The policy conforms to the provisions of all appropriate legislation which protects our interests and your privacy. From time to time we may examine your system and take note of your work history. This procedure is for your protection. It will take place under the terms of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 in order for us to prevent criminal activity, protect our computer systems and to ensure that we are complying with all appropriate laws and regulations.

All sensitive data about yourself is protected under the terms of the Data Protection 1998. It will not be disclosed or used in any way, except in accordance with consents given by you under our Data Protection policy (DP001).

The Directors reserve the right to examine the contents of your computer and work email account. Notice will be given prior to this examination.

### **Accessing Inappropriate Web sites**

Acts Trust has a policy of trusting all staff to behave in a decent and proper way. In the case of the Internet, Newsgroups and emails it is necessary to have detailed rules.

Under no circumstances must you search for, visit, link to, explore or open any site containing material of an indecent or offensive nature. The definition of 'offensive' is very wide and you must remember that your sensibilities may be very different from those of your colleagues. The following list of categories is not exclusive. These are examples of the type of content which is unacceptable and is provided for guidance:

- sites which would cause harassment, alarm or distress to any person with normal sensitivities who may read the site inadvertently;
- hard and soft pornography;
- sites containing indecent or offensive language;
- sick humour;
- animal rights sites advocating criminal behaviour;
- sites containing material protected by copyright, eg. MP3 files, movies, clipart and photographs;

Issued: 23/08/2016

Review: 23/08/2017

Approved: Acts Chair of Board of Directors

Doc OPS705

Issue 001

## Social Media, Internet and Email Policy

- any site which advocates criminal or antisocial behaviour;
- chat sites;
- auction sites, except for work purposes;
- sites which claim to speed up your system;
- sites which offer 'firewall busting' facilities;
- gambling sites;
- sites related to hacking or the unauthorised accessing of other computers;
- sites containing software 'fixes' or shortcuts;
- screen savers, 'themes', wallpaper and similar files.

Acts Trust has a sophisticated firewall system through which most of the above content cannot pass. However, in the nature of electronic communications it is inevitable that you may innocently stumble across sites containing inappropriate or offensive material. Should this happen, you must not explore the site. Instead, disconnect from the site and make a note of the web address and report the circumstances to your line manager or the Acts Senior Manager.

### **Safe use of email**

Our computer systems allow information to be sent both internally and externally by means of emails and attachments.

### **Internal email Communications**

We encourage the proper use of email within Acts in order to facilitate more effective communications, cut down on paperwork and to speed the transfer of work-related information. The following list gives some guidance:

- keep messages short and to the point;
- use lower case - never use capitals as the recipient will think you are shouting;
- keep your group lists up to date to avoid sending unnecessary and confusing messages;
- ask yourself whether it is really necessary to print a message or attachment;
- ensure that any informal or light-hearted remarks cannot possibly be misunderstood;
- never tell jokes or comment on individuals;
- always use the spell checker;
- bear in mind that a quick internal phone call may be more effective;
- finally, never send any message, however well intentioned, which might cause distress or harassment to anyone.

Remember that emails can have a much wider audience than was intended.

### **External email Communications**

All of the points described for internal emails also apply when you send a message outside Acts Trust. Additionally, there are some extra issues which must be considered:

- emails are considered to be a form of written communication. As such it is possible to create a situation in which you have formed a binding contract with eg, a supplier or

Issued: 23/08/2016

Review: 23/08/2017

Approved: Acts Chair of Board of Directors

Doc OPS705

Issue 001

## Social Media, Internet and Email Policy

customer. You must therefore clear the content of the message with your supervisor or manager before agreeing to provide or receive any specific services. He or she cannot help you once the message has been sent and it cannot be retrieved;

- Send attachments only after making sure that they contain no sensitive or confidential information;
- You may access and participate in Newsgroup discussions provided that they relate to your work and provide a positive benefit to your work;
- Under no circumstances must you respond to unsolicited emails of the 'junk' variety or participate in any 'chain letter' activity. Frequently these messages purport to be on behalf of a charity or an individual experiencing distress. The vast majority of these messages are bogus, some contain viruses and all will slow down or damage our IT systems;
- Information messages sent to multiple recipients should be sent as blind carbon copies (BCC)

### **Enforcement**

We expect during the normal course of working that problems with the usage of the computer system will be infrequent and minor. Due to the consequences of a small problem having severe repercussions both internally and externally, however, the organisation has a general policy of dealing with all incidents under the disciplinary procedure (HR402). Only in exceptional circumstances will we deal informally with breaches of this policy.

The disciplinary procedure forms a part of your contract and all disciplinary issues are dealt with in accordance with our overriding duty of fairness. So far as penalties for infringement are concerned, each case will be judged on its merits. However, the organisation will consider all but the most minor situations as being so serious that dismissal may be imposed.

## Social Media

Acts Trust generally views creating or contributing to personal websites, blogs, social networks, message boards, virtual worlds, and other kinds of social media positively. We recognise the desire of many of our employees to participate in online community and encourage this form of networking and idea exchange.

As an employee or volunteer of Acts Trust, you may be seen by our members, attendees, and outside parties as a representative of our organisation. That means that while you may view your online presence as a personal project, many readers will associate you and the views you express with us.

In light of that, we ask that you observe the guidelines outlined below. Please keep in mind that these guidelines will continue to evolve as new social networking technologies emerge. Check

Issued: 23/08/2016

Review: 23/08/2017

Approved: Acts Chair of Board of Directors

Doc OPS705

Issue 001

## Social Media, Internet and Email Policy

back periodically to ensure that you are up-to-date. If you have questions, please contact the Senior Manager.

### **Personal Sites / Blogs**

If you have a personal website or blog or are considering creating one, please discuss this with your team leader.

Please include this, or a similar statement, on your blog home page or in a prominent location on your social media site:

“The posts on this site are my own personal opinions. They are not read or approved by Acts Trust before posting and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of Acts Trust.”

Make sure you ask permission before reporting on conversations or meetings that are meant to be private or for internal use only. **Do not** disclose any information, pictures, or videos that are confidential or proprietary to Acts Trust. This includes information that will become public, but has not yet been announced or posted.

All Acts Trust project names, logos and images are the property of Acts Trust and should be used with permission. You may embed or link Acts Trust-owned video, graphics, or other materials, including video from services or events, to your site if they have been posted publicly by Acts Trust on our websites or social-media.

Please do not post any content that is the property of another individual or company unless you have written permission or are sure that the use of the material is legally permitted. This is your responsibility; we cannot provide you with legal advice regarding copyrights.

### **Use good judgment:**

Remember that what you write is public. You should always assume that it will be read by your boss, your co-workers, volunteers and attendees, members of other organisations, your parents, your children, your spouse, and the person who doesn't like you. Ask yourself if you are comfortable with all of these people reading what you plan to post.

What you write is your responsibility and you are legally responsible for your comments.

- Write as yourself. Use your real name.
- If you choose to identify yourself as an employee or volunteer of Acts Trust or to discuss anything related to the organisation, be clear about your role.

Issued: 23/08/2016

Review: 23/08/2017

Approved: Acts Chair of Board of Directors

Doc OPS705

Issue 001

## Social Media, Internet and Email Policy

- Be accurate in what you write and ensure that you have all the facts about your subject. If you make a mistake, admit it and be quick to correct it.
- Be careful that what you write would not impair your ability to work with your team, lead your volunteer teams, speak with credibility to other organisations, or represent us in the community.
- Remember that frustrations are best expressed in person.
- Sarcasm does not usually translate well, so be careful how you use humour.
- Respect your audience. Be thoughtful.
- Don't refer to volunteers or attendees by name without permission.
- Don't post pictures of others without permission.
- Don't use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conversation that would not be acceptable in our workplace.
- Choose your topics wisely. There are some ideas that are best discussed in a personal conversation rather than a public forum. These might include political views and the charity's stance or policy on certain topics.
- Remember that what you write, even if retracted, is archived and can be with you longer than you might expect.

### **Refer press inquiries:**

Your posts may generate media coverage. If a member of the media contacts you about an Acts Trust-related post or requests Acts Trust information of any kind, contact the Senior Manager for direction on how to respond.

### **Advertise wisely:**

Should you choose to advertise on your site, to the extent you have control, ensure that the ads are consistent with our values.

When in doubt, go positive!

Issued: 23/08/2016

Review: 23/08/2017

Approved: Acts Chair of Board of Directors

Doc OPS705

Issue 001