



# Social Media Guidelines for Best Practice

September 2009

**CAN'T DO IT  
WITHOUT YOU**

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# Listen and research the social media environment

A new clique is emerging, “Listening is marketing”, and so it is. Before you represent the ACSA Image Campaign or use social media channels to lobby for the ACSA Image Campaign it is essential that you:

## Research the Space

There are many tools that can help you do this, but a really simply way is:

- To set up [Google Alerts](#), set on “Comprehensive Daily”, and read the posts that are delivered to your in box by subject matter and brand.
- Set up [RSS feeds](#) to popular commentators on aged care issues
- Use [Google Blog Search](#) to search on blog posts and follow the feeds
- Read the top five popular bloggers in your region and see what comments and conversation threads are emerging

## Listen

Take the time to listen to the tone of voice, read and “hear” the words and characteristics to enable you to set your own tone of voice for social media communications. It is likely to be very different to the tone and messages you would adopt for traditional Public Relations functions. This is the domain of consumer relations not press relations. By listening you can understand what is on people’s minds and how they are talking about issues.

## Identify the Influencers and Advocates

From these simple steps you will very quickly be able to gain a snap shot of the influencers. You are looking for influencers who have a propensity to advocate (spread the word virally) for the ACSA Image Campaign. Essentially the influencers are people who are creating the most content online. Through your research using the tools above you will see key blog sites continually emerging providing more opportunities to engage.

The Guidelines for Posting Back a document is provided with this kit and provides further detail about this area.

## **Don't Assume**

Assuming you already know what is going on and what you need to provide in terms of content and resources to social communities is dangerous. Research and provide what the blog community and social networks really want from the ACSA Image Campaign and you will be more successful engaging social media networks and commentators than operating a “push content” policy.

## **Set the parameters before you start**

### **Think before you post comments**

Think before you post anything, there is no such thing as a private post online and every word published stays live long after the publication date. A passionate or angry post may make sense at the time but it may not do so the next day. Do not make any commentary that is deemed to be proprietary, copyright protected, defamatory or obscene.

### **Accuracy**

Make sure you have all the facts before you make any comment or post on social networking sites. Verify all information and facts and figures. Link and reference all other sources to which you maybe referring.

Be ethical: a guide to assist you can be found on the site below.

[http://blogging.wikia.com/wiki/Blogging:Blogger's Code of Conduct](http://blogging.wikia.com/wiki/Blogging:Blogger's_Code_of_Conduct)

You can select the modules you believe are most relevant for your organisation.

### **Maintain Confidentiality**

Do not post any confidential information about the ACSA Image Campaign or any of your employees or representatives. If in any doubt leave it out!

## Getting started

The most important aspect of social media is authenticity; be honest about who you are and what you are representing. The power of the blog has emerged because people like to hear other people's views and recommendations.

### Be Transparent

If you participate in, or maintain a social site, clearly state your role, your goals and your motivations. Call for an action from the online community in an honest and genuine way. Be clear about the goal of the campaign.

Never hide your identity or that you are associated with the ACSA Image Campaign, you may use an alias, but make clear your position within the ACSA Image Campaign team and your representation of your organisation.

For example: If you are an ACSA member say you are a member; if it is one of your staff tell them to say they work for your organisation; if it is a family member they should say they are using aged care services.

### Show Respect

Social communities facilitate open debates with opposing views which can at times create volatile and heated discussions. It is fine to enter the debate, but do so in a calm manner; do not join in the argument; keep to the facts and figures relevant to the conversation. You are likely to build your authority rating and a high quality of followers if you discuss issues in a civil and a well-informed manner.

### No Moles, No Seeding!

Don't ever pretend to be someone else and post comments about the ACSA Image Campaign. Anonymous posts can be tracked and there are many well-publicised cases of embarrassing executives caught out promoting their companies in an underhand way.

### Your Own Personal Blog

If you discuss the issues of aged care, please ensure on your personal social pages you post a disclaimer: ***"The views on this blog are that of the author and do not***

***necessarily represent that of the “Can’t Do It Without You” Campaign and / or insert the name of your organisation”.***

### **Be a Valuable Resource**

If you are on a social network like MySpace or in a Facebook Group, or adding comment to someone else’s blog, make sure you are adding value. Don’t add information unless you are sure it will be have some meaning for readers. Self-promotion is viewed negatively and can lead to being ousted from social networks and banned from web-site forums and groups.

Refresh your latest news content weekly, as this contributes to providing a regular online news resource to the broad social networking community.

### **Keep Listening: Monitor Comments**

It is important that you view social media as a networked community. Participants welcome comments which add to building a community. Respond in a timely fashion to any comments and if you are allowing people to post to your social site, get a balance between over moderating and under moderating comments. The best guideline is to allow freedom of expression, but ensure you moderate against any spam.

### **Optimise and Link Back**

- Understand your keyword
- Optimise all content for search
- Add linkable information first, then links (editor insert: links to positive coverage in the source list is a subtle way to build positive associations)
- Cite materials included in your articles and provide links to the original sources
- "Follow the notability" by aligning with those with gravitas. High authority equals high respect.
- Connect with well-linked-to users to build your visibility
- Make tagging and bookmarking easy
- Reward inbound links

## In Summary

- Research and Listen, don't assume
- Look for the influencers and understand the social neighbourhood
- Create your information and conversation in the tone and language of the social communities
- Follow the rules; it easy to get social media right, but it is easier to get it wrong
- Keep listening and monitoring
- Optimise and Link back
- Track your success (see Internet Web Tools document with this kit)

## Valuable resources

Rules & Ethics

<http://www.blocouncil.org/disclosure>

Social Media Marketing Examples

<http://www.beingpeter/2008/09/ive-been-thinki.html>

Social Media Global Usage Trends

[http://www.universalmccann.com/Assets/wave\\_3\\_20080403093750.pdf](http://www.universalmccann.com/Assets/wave_3_20080403093750.pdf)

Roundtable Briefing

<http://econsultancy.com/reports/social-media-roundtable-briefing-june-2008>

Blogging Wikia

[http://blogging.wikia.com/wiki/Blogging:Blogger's\\_Code\\_of\\_Conduct](http://blogging.wikia.com/wiki/Blogging:Blogger's_Code_of_Conduct)

## The Web 2.0 Glossary

**AJAX / XML.** These are terms describing the methodology and technology used to create Web 2.0 pages. AJAX means Asynchronous Java and XML and is used to make web pages more responsive while avoiding the need to load the page each time new information is needed. XML, which stands for Extensible Markup Language, is used to make the website more interactive.

**"Anything" 2.0.** Since Web 2.0 became a buzzword, it has become popular to add "2.0" to the end of common terms when describing a website. For example, the makeover of [WhiteHouse.gov](http://WhiteHouse.gov) is termed "Government 2.0" because it puts a Web 2.0 face on a government website.

**Avatar.** The visual (oftentimes cartoonish) representation of a person in a virtual world or virtual chat room.

**Blog / Blog Network / Blogosphere.** A blog, which is short for web log, is series of articles usually written in a slightly informal tone. While many blogs are online personal journals, blogs cover the full range from personal to news to business with subject matter that ranges from personal to serious to humorous to creative. A blog network is a series of blogs hosted by the same website or company, while the blogosphere refers to all blogs across the Internet regardless of whether they are an individual blog or part of a blog network.

**CAPTCHA.** This refers to those crazy letters and numbers you have to decipher and type in when filling out a form on the web. It is a mechanism used to check whether or not you are human and is used to prevent spam. [Read more about CAPTCHA.](#)

**Cloud / Cloud Computing.** The Internet is sometimes referred to as the "Cloud". Cloud Computing refers to the recent trend of using the internet as an application platform, such as using an online version of a word processor as opposed to using a word processor that is installed on your computer's hard drive. It also refers to using the Internet as a service, like storing all of your pictures online at Flickr rather than keeping them on your hard drive. [Read more about Cloud Computing.](#)

**Enterprise 2.0.** This refers to the process of taking Web 2.0 tools and ideas and introducing them to the workplace, such as creating a [business wiki](#) in order to hold online meetings or using an internal blog as opposed to sending out email memos. [Read more about Enterprise 2.0](#)

**Geotagging.** The process of including location information, such as providing the location a photo was taken or using the GPS of a cell phone to 'geotag' where you were when making an update to your blog or a social networking site.

**Linkbait.** The process of creating potentially viral content with hopes of obtaining a large number of incoming links. For example, writing a satirical article of a current event in hopes of attracting a lot of attention. A negative aspect of linkbaiting is intentionally saying something unpopular in hopes of creating a stir or creating a hyper-provocative title to an article.

**Link Farm.** Many search engines give weight to the number of incoming links to a web page in order to determine the quality of a page. Link farms are webpages filled with links with hopes of raising the search engine ranking of destination pages. Most modern search engines like Google tend to recognize link farms and ignore the links produced.

**Mobile 2.0.** This refers to the trend of websites recognizing mobile devices and utilizing their special features, such as Facebook knowing that you have signed on with your smartphone and using the GPS to tell where you are located. [Read more about Mobile 2.0.](#)

**Office 2.0.** An early term that has lost ground to 'cloud computing', Office 2.0 refers to the trend of taking office applications and turning them into web applications, such as online versions of a word processor or spreadsheet. [Check out a list of Office 2.0 applications.](#)

**Personalized Start Pages/Custom Home Pages.** A web page that is highly customizable, often featuring a news reader and the ability to add widgets, and is designed to become your web browser's "home" page. Excellent examples of personalized start pages are [iGoogle](#) and [MyYahoo](#).

**Podcast.** The distribution of audio and video "shows" across the Internet, such as a video blog or an Internet radio show. Like blogs, they can range in subject matter from personal to business and serious to entertaining.

**RSS/Web Feeds.** Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is a system of transporting articles across the internet. An RSS feed (sometimes simply called a 'web feed') contains either full or summarized articles without all the fluff contained on the website. These feeds can be read by other websites or by RSS readers.

**RSS Reader / News Reader.** The program used to read an RSS feed. RSS readers allow you to aggregate multiple web feeds and read them from a singular place on the web. There are both online and offline RSS readers. [A Guide to RSS Readers.](#)

**Semantic Web.** This refers to the idea of a web capable of gleaning the subject matter of web pages without relying on keyword phrases within the content. In essence, it is the process of teach a computer to 'read' the page. [Read more about the Semantic Web.](#)

**SEO.** Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of building a website and creating content in such a way that search engines will rank the web page(s) higher in their listings.

**Social Bookmarking.** Similar to web browser bookmarks, social bookmarking stores individual pages online and allows you to 'tag' them. For people who like to frequently bookmark web pages, this can provide an easier way to organize the bookmarks.

**Social Networking.** The process of building online communities, often accomplished both through 'groups' and 'friends lists' that allow greater interaction on websites. [Find out more about social networking.](#)

**Social Media.** Any website or web service that utilizes a 'social' or 'Web 2.0' philosophy. This includes blogs, social networks, social news, wikis, etc.

**Social News.** A subset of social bookmarking that concentrates on news articles and blog posts and utilizes a voting mechanism to rank the content.

**Tag / Tag Cloud.** A 'tag' is a descriptive keyword or phrase often used to categorize a piece of content. For example, an article about World of Warcraft might have the tags "World of Warcraft" and "MMORPG" because those tags accurately categorize the article's subject matter. A tag cloud is a visual representation of tags, usually with the more popular tags being shown in a larger font.

**Trackback.** A system used for a blog to automatically recognize when another blog links to an article, usually creating a list of 'trackback' links at the bottom of the article. [Read more about how trackbacks fuel the social web.](#)

**Twitter / Tweet.** Twitter is a micro-blogging service that allows people to type in short messages or status updates that can be read by people following them. An individual message or status update is often referred to as a 'tweet'. [Find out more about Twitter.](#)

**Viral.** The digital version of grassroots, 'viral' refers the process of an article, video or podcast becoming popular by being passed from person to person or rising to the top of popularity lists on social media websites.

**Web 2.0.** While there is no set definition of Web 2.0, it generally refers to the use of the web as a more social platform where users participate by generating their own content alongside the content provided by the websites. [Read more about Web 2.0.](#)

**Web Mashup.** The most recent trend of the web is the 'opening up' of websites whereby they allow other websites access to their information. This allows information from multiple websites to be combined for creative effect, like the information from Twitter and Google Maps being combined to create a visual representation of 'tweets' coming in from all across the map. [Check out the best mashups on the web.](#)

**Webcast.** A broadcast that takes place over the web and uses both audio and visual effects. For example, a web-based conference call that sends a presentation with charts and graphs to go alongside the speech. Webcasts are often interactive.

**Widgets / Gadgets.** A widget is a small piece of transportable code, for example a calculator or a countdown to a movie's release. Widgets can be placed on websites like a social networking profile, a custom home page or a blog. The word 'gadget' is often used to refer to a widget that is designed for a specific website, like iGoogle gadgets.

**Wiki / Wiki Farm.** A wiki is a website designed for multiple people to collaborate by adding and editing content. Wikipedia is an example of a wiki. A wiki farm is a collection of individual wikis, usually hosted by the same website. [Browse through a list of wikis by category.](#)