## Social Media Guidance

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<th>Effective date</th>
<th>Approved by</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>21/07/12</td>
<td>CIBSE Directors</td>
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<td>CIBSE Comms Committee</td>
<td>Ed Palmer</td>
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### Distribution

Available on downloads area of CIBSE website

### Change history

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<td>Ed Palmer</td>
<td>11/07/12</td>
<td>Changed from 'policy' to 'guidance'</td>
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### Contacts:

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<th>Name</th>
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Summary

1. This guidance is intended for CIBSE staff and any consultants or volunteers acting as representatives of the Institution (hereafter referred to jointly as “staff”), and covers:
   a. Staff setting up a social media account connected with CIBSE activities
   b. Staff using social media related to CIBSE activities
   c. Staff using non-CIBSE social media in connection to CIBSE related activities
   d. general advice to stakeholders (members, volunteers, groups, committees etc.) on social media.

2. Contact the CIBSE Communications team (see cover sheet for contact details) if in doubt on any of the advice in this paper.

Introduction

3. The widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to engage and communicate with our audiences (including members and potential members) in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our stakeholders, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

4. The primary objectives of CIBSE’s social media engagement are:
   a) To further the charitable objectives of the Institution
   b) To support the delivery of CIBSE’s strategic objectives: http://www.cibse.org/content/documents/about/Strategicplan2011.pdf
   c) To disseminate relevant and timely information, as a key channel in CIBSE’s marketing strategy
   d) To drive traffic to the CIBSE website and Knowledge Portal
   e) To position CIBSE as a forward looking, professional institution which is the hub of sustainable building services engineering information online

5. Social media can help to drive awareness, engage Members and provide an additional voice for the Institution with new audiences. However, there are also risks to this engagement, if messages of dissatisfaction, misinformation or frustration proliferate without timely intervention.

6. There are a number of social media groups administered by CIBSE staff:
   - CIBSE Twitter feed (@CIBSE)
   - CIBSE LinkedIn company page and discussion group
   - President's blog
Purpose

7. The purpose of this guidance is to:
   - Make CIBSE’s online presence as positive as possible
   - Aid users to clearly distinguish whether information provided via social networking applications is official communication from CIBSE as distinct from personal commentary
   - Manage and reduce any legal and governance risks to CIBSE

Statement of guidance

8. This guidance governs the publication of information and commentary on social media by staff or representatives of CIBSE.

9. For the purposes of this guidance, social media means any facility for publishing online information and commentary, including blogs, wikis and social networking sites (including for example Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube). This guidance is in addition to and complements any other policies regarding the use of technology, computers, email or the internet, particularly the IT Guidance for CIBSE Staff.

10. CIBSE staff are free to publish information or comment via social media in accordance with this guidance. CIBSE staff are subject to this guidance to the extent that they identify themselves as speaking on behalf of the Institution (other than, for instance, as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to CIBSE activity).

11. Publication of information and comment on social media carries the same obligations as any other kind of publication and should follow the ethical and legal standards which CIBSE staff normally follow in their work.

Setting up social media

12. Permission for new official CIBSE social media channels should be obtained from the Head of Communications and assistance obtained from the CIBSE Communications team in setting up social media accounts and their settings.

13. The CIBSE logo and other branding elements should not be used on social networking applications which are unrelated to or not representative of CIBSE. Guidelines for member’s use of the CIBSE logo can be found on the website.

14. Before starting to use a social media channel, there should be a clear business case to ensure that we are addressing the primary objectives listed above and that we are not duplicating activities. You will need to consider the following:
   - What outcomes do you want to achieve? How does the proposed channel help achieve CIBSE’s strategic objectives?
   - Who is your target audience?
• Do you need a new social media channel, or could you use an existing one (such as the CIBSE LinkedIn discussion group) or an alternative (such as email or direct mail)?

• What content will you be posting? Do you have the resources you need to keep it maintained with accurate and relevant content?

• What is your exit strategy, particularly if your project is temporary?

• How will you manage inappropriate posts, or issues which require PR involvement in a timely manner?

• How will you measure success? Try to set a target and a review point before you launch

15. Once the social media channel has been agreed, the account owner and the relevant member of the CIBSE Communications Team need to work together to set the channel up in line with these guidelines and other guidance specific to the channel.

Staff online identities

16. You must act responsibly when posting online, particularly in activity conducted with a CIBSE e-mail address or which can be traced back to the Institution’s domain or which uses CIBSE’s assets. The CIBSE.org address and any other CIBSE domain names attached to your name signal that you are acting on CIBSE’s behalf. When using a CIBSE e-mail address or CIBSE endorsed social media channel (for example LinkedIn discussion groups), all actions are public. Individuals are responsible for their online activities, but CIBSE is also potentially liable.

17. Outside the workplace, your rights to privacy and free speech protect online activity conducted on your personal social networks with your personal e-mail address. However, what you publish on such personal online sites must not be attributed to CIBSE and must not appear to be endorsed by or originated from CIBSE. If you choose to list your affiliation to CIBSE on a social network, then you must regard all communication on that network as you would other professional interactions.

Creating content

18. Be direct, informative and brief. Avoid jargon or ambiguous language. Spell and grammar check everything. Use sentence case format, not capital letters. Useful guidance on writing clearly can be found here: http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/

19. Always evaluate your contribution’s accuracy and truthfulness. Before posting any online material, ensure so far as is reasonably practical that the material is correct and appropriate. You must respect copyright, you must be certain not to post material for which you do not own the copyright, or otherwise you must have clear permission to post from the copyright owner. Remember that CIBSE publications are copyright material. See paragraph 27.

20. If you make an error, acknowledge this and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of
posting something improper (such as copyrighted material or a defamatory comment), deal with it quickly – better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

21. CIBSE members must also remember that they are bound by the CIBSE Code of Conduct and Royal Academy of Engineering Statement of Ethical Principles which can be found online at the CIBSE website: www.cibse.org/codeofconduct

Confidentiality

22. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see. It is acceptable to talk about our work and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not permissible to publish confidential information. This includes things such as:
   a) announcing a CIBSE Member’s name and details;
   b) posting financial information or reports about CIBSE or another organisation;
   c) revealing information about a Member of CIBSE; and/or
   d) revealing any information which is not publicly available.

23. Privacy settings on social media platforms must be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to that on the CIBSE website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal must be set to limit access.

24. Personal information is governed by the Data Protection Act. As a rule, you must not post personal information about a third party without their express written approval.

Be transparent

25. When participating in any online community on behalf of CIBSE, disclose your identity and affiliation with CIBSE and your professional or personal interest. When posting to a blog, always use your name. Never create an alias and never be anonymous.

26. Always provide a means by which you can be contacted in a timely manner (normally email or direct telephone number).

Respect copyright laws

27. It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use/dealing of copyrighted material. Never quote more than short excerpts of someone else’s work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others’ work rather than reproduce it.

Respect your audience, CIBSE, stakeholders and your colleagues

28. The public in general, and CIBSE’s employees, contractors and stakeholders, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Do not be afraid to be yourself,
but do so respectfully. This includes avoiding not only obvious offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity etc but also being sensible and non-confrontational on topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

29. If you are posting in a personal capacity, use your best judgement and make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not reflect the official views of CIBSE. However, do not rely on this, as some users will perceive your comments to be official CIBSE views. If in doubt, do not post.

Controversial issues

30. Seek support from the CIBSE Communications Team before:

- Responding to a negative post. If a blogger or any other online participant posts an inaccurate, accusatory or negative comment about CIBSE, seek advice.

- Responding directly to a journalist. If you are contacted directly by a journalist regarding issues of concern to CIBSE.

The Use of Disclaimers

31. Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for but that they are not speaking officially. Staff who use their personal social media accounts to talk about topics related to CIBSE must display where appropriate a disclaimer in their profile stating that their personal opinion does not necessarily reflect the opinion of CIBSE. Something along the lines of "Any views expressed are personal and must not be taken as an official CIBSE statement". In the event that there is insufficient space in the profile for the above disclaimer you must at least include the words “Personal Views” in your profile. Bear in mind though that even this good practice may not have that much legal effect.

32. CIBSE does not normally provide technical guidance. If, as a member, you wish to respond to technical discussions, then you must make it clear that the views expressed are your opinion, and not an official CIBSE statement. If you consider it necessary for CIBSE to express a view on a technical matter, this must only be done in consultation with the Technical Director, who may also seek advice from the Publications or Technology committee, as appropriate.

Enforcement and responsibility

33. This document has been produced to provide guidance to those using social media for or on behalf of the Institution. Breaches of the policy by CIBSE staff may be subject to disciplinary action. Breaches by contractors may render contracts void. Breaches by officers and volunteers may lead to a formal complaint under the CIBSE Code of Practice, and be referred to Professional Practices Committee under the Disciplinary Code.
34. The CIBSE Communications team reserves the right to require the closure of any official social media applications or removal of content published by CIBSE staff which may adversely affect CIBSE’s reputation or put the Institution at risk of legal action.