

# Hunters for BC Social Media Policy

Hunters for BC recognizes the crucial role social media plays in providing news and information to our members, general public and business partners. Our organization has embraced the Internet and social media sites as essential elements of our future.

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by Directors, and volunteers, hereafter “personnel” of Hunters for BC, hereafter “Hunters for BC” and its related projects. For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation; blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, Twitter, Flickr, Tumblr, Instagram and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

This policy aims to help personnel understand how the organization’s business practices, guidelines and policies apply to social media. It applies if you are Hunters for BC personnel, whether you create content or provide support in another role. Hunters for BC personnel need to evaluate their social media efforts in conjunction with this policy.

Hunters for BC personnel are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. Hunters for BC personnel are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as Hunters for BC personnel (other than as an incidental mention of place of volunteer in a personal blog on topics unrelated to Hunters for BC).

Notwithstanding the previous section, this policy applies to all uses of social media, including personal, by Hunters for BC personnel who are Acting Board Members or Committee Members, as their position with Hunters for BC would be well known within the community. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that Hunters for BC personnel must otherwise follow.

## **Hunters for BC Personnel Online Social Media Activities**

Hunters for BC organization respects the rights of its personnel and its authorized agencies’ associates to use blogs and other social media tools not only as a form of self-expression, but also as a means to further the organization’s business. It is important that all personnel & associates are aware of the implications of engaging in forms of social media and online conversations that reference Hunters for BC and/or the associate’s relationship with the organization and its brands, and those personnel recognize when the organization might be held responsible for their behavior.

## **Our Expectations for Personal Account Behavior in Online Social Media**

### **1. Don't Tell Secrets**

It is perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information. We must respect the wishes of our members, partnerships and corporate sponsors regarding their confidentiality. We must be mindful of the competitiveness of our industry.

## **2. Protect your own privacy**

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the Hunters for BC website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see. If you are unsure on how to set up your privacy settings on your social media accounts, you should contact your IT and work with them to have it set up correctly.

## **3. Be Honest**

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you work for Hunters for BC. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also, be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

## **4. Respect copyright laws**

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others; including Hunters for BC own copyrights and brands. You should 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.

If you do post your non-profit work product on your personal social media account, please remember that Hunters for BC owns the rights to that work product even though it is posted on your personal account.

If your personal account contains the Hunters for BC brand or that of any Hunters for BC business unit, you must change or remove the branding if you leave Hunters for BC.

## **5. Respect your audience, Hunters for BC, and your coworkers**

The public in general, and Hunters for BC's personnel, members and partners, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Do not say anything contradictory or in conflict with the Hunters for BC website. Do not be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, 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. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of Hunters for BC.

If your personal account contains material that could reflect badly on Hunters for BC, it's business operations or your colleagues, or is contrary to Hunters for BC policies, you may be asked to remove your affiliation with Hunters for BC from the personal account.

## **6. Protect Hunters for BC Board Members and Partners**

Partners or Board Members should not be cited or referenced without their approval. Never identify a Board Member or partner by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of an engagement. It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for a partner (e.g., Partner 123) so long as the information provided does not violate any non-disclosure agreements that may be in place with the partner or make it easy for someone to identify the partner. Your blog is not the place to "conduct business" with a partner.

## **7. Controversial Issues**

If you see misrepresentations made about Hunters for BC in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. Brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Do not try to settle scores or goad competitors or others into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.

## **8. Be the first to respond to your own mistakes**

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake 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, deal with it quickly.

## **9. Think About Consequences**

For example, consider what might happen if Hunters for BC personnel are in a meeting with a partner or prospect, and someone on the partner's side pulls out a print-out of your blog and says "This person at Hunters for BC says that product sucks." Saying "Product X needs to have an easier learning curve for the first-time user" is fine; saying "Product X sucks" is risky, unsubtle and amateurish. Once again, it's all about judgment: using your blog to trash or embarrass Hunters for BC, our partners, or your Board Members, is dangerous and ill-advised.

## **Our Expectations for Professional Account Behavior in Online Social Media**

Hunters for BC and its related projects social media accounts are intended to promote and expand the organization's brand, products and activities. The account and any ongoing activity are subject to approval, monitoring, editing and modification by Hunters for BC. Hunters for BC must be the administrator and owner of all professional accounts.

### **1. Be Professional**

The Internet has blurred the line between public and private, personal and professional. Just by identifying yourself as Hunters for BC personnel, you are creating perceptions about your expertise as well as about the organization and its business units. In your use of social media reinforce the idea that you are reasoned, professional and knowledgeable. Post an appropriate photo of yourself. Use privacy tools to restrict your most private information.

Professional accounts have specific goals set by Hunters for BC, which are assigned to the personnel using the account. Professional accounts should reflect standards of good taste and good judgment. Personnel who maintain professional accounts represent the Hunters for BC brand. Discourse should be civil, fair, lawful, and reasonable.

Content on a professional account must comply with Hunters for BC policies. Any content that is not lawful or does not comply with Hunters for BC policies will be removed and you may be otherwise disciplined.

## **2. Do Not Tell Secrets**

Do not disclose confidential or proprietary organization information, business plans or similar information. Know the laws and regulations that may apply, including those regarding the host medium on which you are working.

Make sure your social media efforts do not violate the organization's privacy policy. Do not comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties with whom Hunters for BC is in litigation without appropriate approval. Follow others on social media sites that may be helpful to learning about your job or your beat, or how better to utilize social media. Manage your "Friends" carefully to avoid concerns of bias. Don't let your association with a group, as a "fan" or otherwise, be misinterpreted.

## **3. Intellectual Property**

Understand the consequences of using someone else's intellectual property (including photographs, texts, names and other copyrights or trademarks). If you are writing about a product that can be interpreted as an endorsement or if you use a testimonial, you must disclose any and all connections you have with the seller of that product or service. Likewise, if referring to the findings of research that was conducted at your request, disclose the connection.

## **4. Write what you know**

Make sure you write and post about your areas of expertise. Stay away from speculation about the work or talents of others, including co-workers and competitors. You can be personally responsible for content on blogs. Remember that social media can go viral quickly. What you write can be distributed widely, is ultimately your responsibility, and lives on forever. Comply with copyright and trademark laws, e.g. do not plagiarize or cut and paste from another site.

## **5. Be interactive**

Use platforms that give you the broad reach and optimal interactivity, such as Facebook Group Pages.

## **6. Pause before publishing**

If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, do not shrug it off and hit 'send.' Take a minute. Figure out what is bothering you and fix it. If you are still unsure, you might want to discuss it with your manager or the legal department. Ultimately, the responsibility for what you publish is yours. Strive for accuracy, clarity and transparency with the audience and sources; correct factual errors; assure diverse voices in your stories. Double-check and verify information gathered from social networks before you take the information into a print, on-air or online story for the organization.

## **7. Make it a conversation**

Be real and personable. Do not be afraid to bring in your own personality. Try to avoid contentious conversations with readers. Take the high road in disagreements. The reader does not have to remain calm, but you should. Do not be baited into saying something you would regret or would reflect badly on you (or Hunters for BC).

### **8. Add value**

There are more than 460,000 words in the English language and at least twice as many blogs. The best way to get yours read is to write things that people will value. There are plenty of blogs out there that are divisive, crude and rude. Social communication should be thought-provoking and build a sense of community that is helpful to our partners, members, and Board members.

### **9. Keep learning**

Identify and pay attention to savvy and informative social media users in the community. They can often be information and connectivity goldmines and help your own social media talents grow. Keep in mind that this is an evolving medium. It means we need to be flexible and change as technology, interests and the needs of our readers change.

### **Social Media Tips**

The following tips are not mandatory but will contribute to successful use of social media. The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about. Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. If you're not design-oriented, ask someone who is and take their advice on how to improve it. The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it or ask someone else to look at it first.

### **Disclaimers**

Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for, but that they're not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble - it may not have much legal effect.

Wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer saying that while you work for Hunters for BC, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of Hunters for BC.

The Social Media Director can provide you with applicable disclaimer language and assist with determining where and how to use that.

### **Enforcement**

Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from the Board for cause.