



UNISON

Campaigning and organising using social media

Quick guides and tip sheets





Social media guide: Branches online

Branches online

In the old days of setting up a website, it was all crafted by hand. Hours spent sweating over html manuals and every link individually coded.

You can still set up a website from scratch like that if you want to. But before rushing in to building a website just because that's what everyone decided at the last branch meeting, it's worth considering if a website is the right thing for you.

With so many other options - wordpress, blogs, facebook, pinterest and twitter – what's the best thing for your branch, and do you need a website at all?

Why do you need to be online?

Put down on paper first the reasons why you need a website or social media account, what you want to be able to do online, and who it's going to be for.

Write down:

1. What you want to do with your website? Don't have a website just for the sake of it. You may only need an online place where people can get your contact details and the content is fairly static, or you might want to use your website as a way of organising, disseminating information and taking actions.
2. Have you got information that people can't find somewhere else? Most people will go to already established sources of information, so don't fill your website up with loads of information that is hard to keep updated.
3. Who's your audience? You might want to communicate with activists, members, and non-members in different ways.

Organise your materials

What do you already have that you want to put online?

This could include:

- Branch contact details and hours
- Branch newsletters. It can be a good idea to make your branch newsletter available by email subscription
- Branch information – be clear about what can go online. This is a public space so don't put up anything you don't want your employer to have easy access to
- Events – but remember if you start putting up events you MUST regularly update

Stuff from elsewhere:

- <http://www.unison.org.uk/for-members/joining-unison/> - link to the online joining form on the national site
- – you can either add our RSS feed: <https://www.unison.org.uk/rss/feed/block/13> to your site, or add a twitter badge for @unisontweets. How to: <https://support.twitter.com/groups/52-connect/topics/211-tweeting/articles/20170071-how-to-embed-a-timeline>

Tip: Try to keep it small and manageable. Someone has to spend time updating all this stuff, so stick to the things you **really** need to do online.

Wordpress and other web platforms – ‘out of the box’ sites

Before you rush to build a website, it's worth considering publishing platforms like Wordpress.com It's an online blog and web publishing tool that gives you a site structure and content management system all-in-one. It's easy to set up and you don't have to know a scrap of html. And you can make it look and work like a website.

The other handy thing about publishing platforms like Wordpress.com is that it's very easy to add other elements to your site like your facebook, twitter, photo galleries, videos etc with very simple plug-ins.

You don't need a web host to use the online blogging version of Wordpress, but you will need a web host if you opt for a more advanced site using wordpress.org

Building your own website

Branches should only consider setting up a website using html if they have someone who is able to create and maintain the site, using a package like Dreamweaver for example.

It is worth bearing in mind that if the person who keenly sets it up then moves on, you may be left with a redundant website. It becomes dependent on 'experts' to update and change.

If you create a website using Dreamweaver, or other web publishing package. You can then host it via your internet provider or other paid for web hosting service.

It should be supported by some kind of content management system, like Joomla for example, so that anyone in the branch can easily learn how to add or amend content on the site.

Once you have created your web pages you need to have them 'hosted' by a web host.

What's a web host?

Often whoever is providing your broadband service will offer web hosting so you can create your own website. Costs range from free for a basic website to monthly fees for a larger website, with large files. Check with your broadband provider first to see what they provide.

You can get web hosting from a company that is not your internet provider. But most branch websites should be able to get what they need from their current provider.

If you don't currently have a broadband provider, you can try web hosts like [phone co-op](#) or 123-reg.co.uk/web-hosting/

Social media

Using social media is a way of interacting with your members and potential members in a place which they are already visiting and used to getting information from.

Social media offers a different, interactive relationship with the audience than that of traditional websites. It's like having a conversations with your group.

All social media is based on establishing a presence, engaging and growing your contacts. Unlike traditional websites, you cannot just put up static information and then go away and ignore it. It requires regular attention – just like growing a plant!

“Social media is on and active 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Twitter and Facebook operate in real-time. Members, non-members and supporters quickly stop checking a campaign site that hasn't been updated in a week.”

Alex White –

<http://alexwhite.org/2009/08/why-unions-should-embrace-social-media>

Setting up a facebook page is relatively easy, but you have to put in the time to update the information and moderate comments – so it is a commitment. One which many branches might find too much on top of regular branch work.

And again, remember social media networks are public spaces so don't put up anything you don't want your employer to have easy access to.

UNISON online

UNISON social media accounts: <http://www.unison.org.uk/news/unison-on-the-web/>

More resources: Our pinterest boards have help with social media, campaigns ideas, how tos for Facebook, Twitter and other social media:

<http://www.pinterest.com/unisontheunion/>

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Social media guide: Getting started

Getting started on Twitter or Facebook

It's fairly straightforward to set up on social media, but there are some things you need to think about:

1) Where is my audience likely to be (ie members, activists, potential members)? In our experience, Facebook has more UNISON branches, members, and potential members whereas Twitter is weighted more towards activists and regions – but, more and more, there is a crossover on both.

2) What do I want to use social media for? It's easy to just pump out information, but social media is not just a broadcast channel. It is interactive, and our goals should always be targeted to action away from social media ie -

Taking action – signing a petition, attending an event etc.

Joining the union

Encouraging activism

Supporting activists and members to recruit and organise

Promoting campaigns

Informing the union – surveys, polls, feedback, good practice, branch and regional activity

3) How much time can I give to it? You need to spend time moderating and responding to comments, putting up information, photos and events, keeping your social media constantly on the move and engaging. You may prefer to concentrate on just one outlet at first – eg Facebook.

4) Check out our tip sheets on how to use Facebook pages and Twitter accounts.

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UNISON national office – national service groups, self-organised groups etc.

If you're thinking of setting up social media for your national SG or SOG:

- Talk to your contact on the campaign team in Communications – eg Lisa, Carol, or Ali
- Have a named person on your team who will be responsible for social media
- You need graphics for your Facebook/Twitter/etc. cover – campaigns should help put in a request to the design team
- Let Alison Charlton know via webmaster@unison.co.uk
- Send your account and login details to Alison Charlton at webmaster@unison.co.uk, so that Communications is able to support you if needed.

Getting started on Facebook

- You will need a personal Facebook profile to set up a page for your organisation
- If you would prefer not to use your existing personal Facebook profile to create and administer your organisation's page, you can set up a 'dummy' profile, signing up with a different email address, purely to administer your union pages.
- Facebook page or group? Facebook pages are like web pages – anyone can drop in, and it's better for recruitment, and a wider audience. Groups are like discussion forums, they can be private or public and you can select who joins.
- Always create a facebook page for your branch/region which people can 'like', don't use a personal profile where people become 'friends'. If you currently use a personal profile page for your branch/region convert it to a page:
<https://www.facebook.com/help/175644189234902>

Facebook pages

- Add a header photo to your timeline page. Your image should be 851 px wide x 315 px high
- You can also add milestones, to your timeline, national or local – eg when founded, important agreements, events and cases.
- Add some information to your 'about' tab – contact address, times, UNISON's join online link: <http://joinunison.org> and the UNISON Direct number: 0800 0 857 857 – open 6am-midnight Monday-Friday and 9am-4pm Saturday
- Add photos – events, people, campaigns. If you have a few photos from the same event, it is useful to keep these in separate album.
- Get a unique facebook url – eg <http://www.facebook.com/unisontheunion> Find out how here: <https://www.facebook.com/username>

Using Facebook

- Remember it's a conversation. Pass on info, but ask questions too – engage your followers.
- Use facebook to organise events and meetings. It's a great way for people to let you know if they are coming.
- Try to post twice a week, and no more than 3-4 times a day
- Use images. Your content is more likely to be shared if you attach a photo or image.
- Monitor comments daily, respond to enquiries by referring to your website, delete any abusive posts. Don't try and deal with complex enquiries – refer people to UNISON Direct, regional office or union rep.
- Vexatious posts. Remove posts are libellous or personally abusive, you can let the user know why you are removing them. Give a warning – let the user know if they post inappropriate content again, you will ban them from posting on the page. Your facebook page is a place for members to comment, contribute and discuss, and dissent is allowed, but it must not put other users off posting or on or visiting your page.

- Don't publish anything on your facebook page you don't want your employer or the newspapers to see – it's a public broadcast.
- Scheduling your posts. You can now schedule your posts on Facebook, so you can prepare your posts at a time that suits you, but set them to go out at a time when most of your followers will see them. How to schedule posts:
<https://www.facebook.com/help/www/330313507048422/>

More information on how to manage your facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/help/www/364458366957655/>

Engaging on Facebook

Increase likes by:

- Liking other pages
- Sharing posts from others
- Engaging with comments (see above re monitoring comments)
- Add FB likes to your web pages:
<https://developers.facebook.com/docs/plugins/>
- Add a FB badge to your web pages: <https://www.facebook.com/badges/>
- Add your twitter and facebook addresses to your website
- Send us a message on our facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/unisontheunion> to let us know you have a new page and we will like it!

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The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a dark blue rectangular background.

Top tips

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Top tips

Sign up

Username – choose a name that shows clearly who you are: eg @RedcarUNISON

Settings

Profile - you need a 180x180 px profile pic. This is what people will see in their timelines, so make sure it identifies you clearly

Header photo - recommended size 1252x626px. This can be a photo from a rally, of your members, or just a plain block of colour.

Website - Include a link to your website, blog, facebook page or the national UNISON site, or <http://joinunison.org.uk>

Bio - Only 160 chars. Identify who you are – eg: Tweets from [#UNISON](#) Redcar & Cleveland. For help or to join, please call **0800 0 857 857**

More help: <https://support.twitter.com/articles/215585-getting-started-with-twitter>

Get tweeting

- Let people know you are on Twitter – add details to your facebook, website and leaflets
- Check out our UNISON Twitter list for details of region and branch twitter accounts – and follow them:
<https://twitter.com/#!/unisontweets/unisongroups/members>
- Hook your blog or website updates up to your Twitter account – use wordpress plug-in, a twitter management tool like Hootsuite, or Twitterfeed.

Using twitter

- Tweet news, information, keep it restricted to union activity.
- Events – tweet advance notice of your events, link back to your website or facebook for details
- Photos – twitter shows photos and images in a landscape format, so avoid tall photos as heads and legs may get hidden. For twitter graphics, we use a 840x420 px format. Adding a photo to your tweet will increase your retweets and engagement.

Engaging on twitter

- Ask people to tweet you if they are coming to an event, photos, or comments for you to retweet
- Retweet others, and you're more likely to be retweeted yourself
- Use hashtags eg. #livingwage to join in a conversation
- Keep an eye on your responses (@ connect tab) and Direct Messages. DON'T respond to trolling but DO respond to genuine enquiries
- Point people to relevant news and information on your website, blog or facebook



Top tips

- Don't try and deal with complex enquiries – refer people to UNISON Direct, regional office or union rep
- Use email rather than Direct Messages where you can, it's more secure. Don't say anything in a DM that would embarrass you or get you into trouble. If in doubt, always take your conversation offline.
- Don't say anything on twitter you wouldn't be happy to see published in a newspaper – it's a public forum
- Try and tweet every day, but no more than 2 per hour – unless you're live-tweeting an event
- Check out our guidance on using social media in compliance with your workplace and union rules.

More help on engaging and interacting in our guide: **UNISON social media – public interaction**

Managing twitter

- Tweet at times when your followers are reading – often early morning and in the evening.

Tools to help you:

- Hootsuite: <http://hootsuite.com> is a complete social media management tool and app to help you manage multiple social media accounts and schedule tweets and posts
- Bufferapp: <http://bufferapp.com> is a simple tool or app just to help you schedule your tweets, so you can set up your tweets at a good time for you, but they will go out at a time that's good for your followers.
- There are many other social media management apps and tools, for your desktop, tablet, and mobile phone. Choose one that works for you.
- Use separate apps or social media management tools for personal and union accounts, that way you won't accidentally tweet your dinner, or worse, to your members.

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Social media guide: safety at work

"Don't say anything online that you wouldn't want plastered on a billboard with your face on it."

Social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, news 'have-your-say-forums', video and photo-sharing websites, dating sites, blogs and Twitter all present risks for employees who may assume that they are using them for a private dialogue with friends and forget the potential professional implications of their personal use. They are publishing platforms and should be treated as such.

In the workplace, a good rule of thumb is 'don't post anything you wouldn't be happy for your boss to see.'

Facebook can give employees a false expectation of privacy and people often post as though they are having a private conversation with close friends that they can trust.

If Facebook has been accessed from a work machine, the employer will have access to the web-use history, and potentially to a full history of all activity undertaken on the device.

This can give rise to action directly, or influence action in a case that originally started for another reason.

Case study

In November 2011, an employment tribunal upheld the dismissal of a Mr Crisp for posting derogatory comments about his employer (Apple computers) on his Facebook site.

Mr Crisp argued that they were private, but the tribunal disagreed, pointing out that his postings could easily have been copied and shared by friends.

Avoiding problems

Vitriolic comments posted about colleagues may also be used by an employer to resist an application to reinstate or re-engage an employee who has won a tribunal claim.

Use or sharing of confidential information may risk dismissal for gross misconduct – and potentially even criminal prosecution under the Data Protection Act.

And if members want to change jobs, they should be aware that their posting history might be researched by potential future employers.

Keeping passwords private is essential - excusing a posting on the grounds that someone else knew your password and did it to get you in trouble, is unlikely to satisfy

an employer.

Your rights at work

If disciplinary action is threatened for internet use, the employer's policies should be checked, as well as compliance with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office and ACAS.

There are also proportionality considerations about when it is appropriate for an employer to access private communications, and about any reaction to those communications.

Expressing concerns and campaigning online can be legitimate, but it is imperative to be able to prove that the statements are true.

It is best to avoid hyperbole and remember that defamation actions can also be taken because of statements on the web.

The burden of proof is on the person who made (and/or published) the statement to prove that it is true.

Social media and union work

The same rules apply as for all our other union work:

- UNISON accounts should be restricted to union activity
- Don't post stuff that could be prejudicial or detrimental to the union
- Check the UNISON rule book – Rule I

<http://www.unison.org.uk/for-members/about-membership/rulebook/>

During industrial or strike action, special legal restrictions apply to anything published or said by the union and its representatives. Please check with your regional office.

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Social media guide: interactions

Guidance for staff at national office on public interaction on social media

Using social media is a bit like running a customer service desk. Here's how we generally run our national accounts.

Queries: webmaster@unison.co.uk – Alison Charlton

Retweeting and responding

- If someone joins UNISON and tweets us, or interacts positively with us on twitter, we follow them.
- We RT positive and constructive tweets.
- Check with your manager before RTing petitions, other org's actions, events etc.
- Anyone on the [unisongroups](https://twitter.com/unisontweets/unisongroups/members) Twitter list is fine: <https://twitter.com/unisontweets/unisongroups/members> – but use your judgement when RTing content. Refer to your manager if unsure.
- When RTing groups or orgs - check bios. If in doubt refer to your manager
- Avoid getting into conversation with tweeters or fb posters – except to point them to further action, the website or UNISON Direct.

Facebook comments

- We 'like' comments and comment on them to praise, point to next action, encourage to share etc.
- General policy is to allow dissenting comments on facebook page, but not personal abuse or libel.
- We remove any personal abuse posts, also allegations about other members or UNISON branches or reps, and abusive posts.
- We would usually let the poster know why we are removing them and explain that we welcome discussion and debate, but have to respect the rights and privacy of others.
- Same applies to YouTube.

Problem enquiries on FB and Twitter

We can't offer advice on twitter or facebook. If someone has an issue at work, or home there is a standard response:

- FB – Hi xxxxx, we can't give advice on Facebook. Please contact UNISON Direct for help: <http://www.unison.org.uk/contact-us/> or call 0800 0 857 857 . Open 6am-midnight Monday-Friday and 9am-4pm Saturday.
- Twitter: Please contact UNISON Direct for help and advice: <http://www.unison.org.uk/contact-us/> or call 0800 0 857 857

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Social media guide: case studies

A case study: using social media to organise local communities on a national level

When a moment becomes a movement

<https://storify.com/chuzzlit/nmos14-national-moment-of-silence>

When a moment becomes a movement.

A case study in using social media to organise local communities on a national level.



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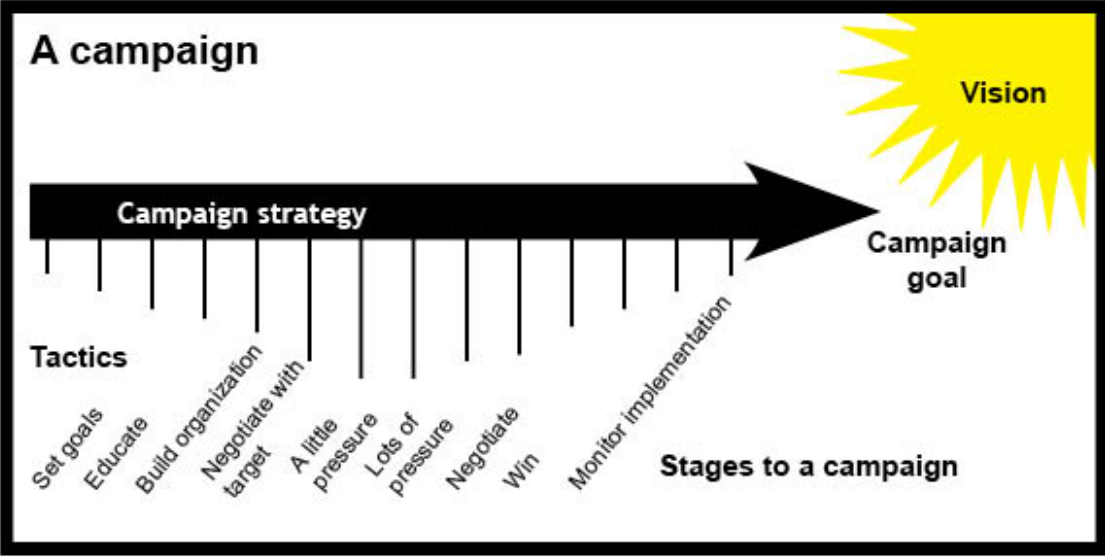
Campaigning and organising
with social media

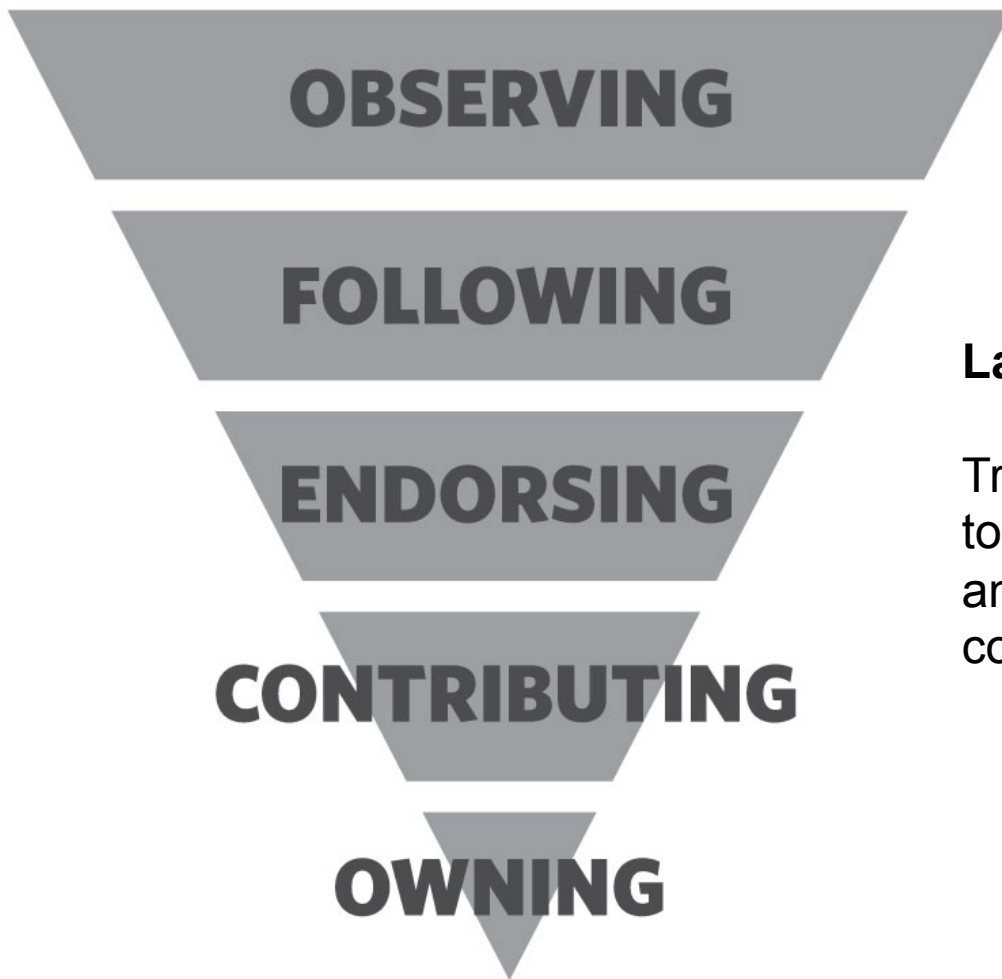
TUC

UNISON

UNISON

Have a campaign goal and strategy –
what would mean a gain or win?





Ladder of engagement

Tracking and following up to take people from likes and shares to joining, contributing then leading.

Case study



storify.com/unisontweets/teaching-assistants-a-class-act-lovetas



The goal - #LoveTAs – 29 November

UNISON

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Strategy

storify.com/unisontweets/teaching-assistants-a-class-act-lovetas

- Plan social media with on the ground activity
- Prepare your activists and branches
- Prepare your supporters, bloggers, press
- Support with materials, ideas, plans
- Publicise event/actions ahead of time
- Conversations to keep up momentum
- Feedback on success and thank people

Getting started

- Who do you want to reach out to? What networks are they already on?
- How are they using social media – mobile, tablet, web – adjust your content
- Give enough resources to make it a conversation, not a broadcast
- Apply the same principles of organising to social media – engagement, conversation, relationship



when girls are allowed to be girls,
we all do better.

#EndChildMarriageNOW unicef

UNICEF @UNICEF · May 28
When girls are allowed to be girls, we all do better. [#endchildmarriagenow](https://pic.twitter.com/xVBfXBWGMv)
pic.twitter.com/xVBfXBWGMv

Reply Retweet Favorited Flag media

Effective content

- ❖ A strong image that everyone can identify with.
- ❖ Emotion.
- ❖ Keep the post short
- ❖ Use a hashtag

Effective content is....

- A human interest story
- Compelling quotes
- Photos – worth a 1,000 words
- A timely angle
- A connection with your audience's interests
- A call to action

Number one FB post



Post Details

You might like UNISON. Hide

UNISON
Get involved in #LivingWageWeek, all next week. Look out for announcements. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

about 2 months ago

Like Comment Share 249 Likes 7 Comments 264 Shares

14,136 people saw this post Boost Post

0 People Reached

520 Likes, Comments & Shares

FROM YOUR PAGE AND POSTS		
249 Likes	7 Comments	264 Shares

FROM LIKES, COMMENTS & SHARES		
0 Likes	0 Comments	0 Shares

TOTAL		
249 Likes	7 Comments	264 Shares

0 Post Clicks

Photo views	Link clicks	Other Clicks
0	0	0

0 NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

Hide Post	Hide All Posts
0	0

Report as Spam	Unlike Page
0	0

But you don't have to have a stunning photo. Even simple graphics or posters work well.

This was our top shared post last year. It has:

- ❖ Broad interest
- ❖ Simple graphics
- ❖ Timely info
- ❖ Few words
- ❖ Call to action

Avoiding the P45 tweet

- Check your employer's policy on social media and IT use and union rule book
- Use separate accounts for personal/union work
- Restrict union accounts to union activity
- Use to organise, not comment. Always an action
- Be professional. Friendly, not personal
- Know the law and your rights

“Don’t say anything online you wouldn’t want plastered on a a billboard with your face on it”



These laws apply to you online

- ✓ Defamation
- ✓ Libel
- ✓ Contempt of court
- ✓ Intellectual property/copyright
- ✓ Data protection
- ✓ Bullying, threatening behaviour, hate crime
- ✓ Industrial action and election rules

But you also have rights

- ✓ Unfair dismissal
- ✓ Disciplinary procedures
- ✓ Human Rights Act:

Article 8: Right to privacy

Article 10: Freedom of Expression

Where an employer acts in a manner that may interfere with one or more of these fundamental rights, it can often be proved to be a justified interference if it was to protect another right, such as the reputation of a company or an individual from harassment.

Disclaimers mean nothing

“These views are mine and don’t represent those of my employer” is not a get out of jail free card.

Your employer can still hold you to account for breaching a code of conduct or policy.

Retweeting or sharing a libel is the same as publishing it yourself.

In brief

- ✓ Set your goals
- ✓ Plan ahead
- ✓ Support your campaigners
- ✓ Use effective content
- ✓ Always have an action
- ✓ Keep safe





Digital media contact:

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