



Information Technology and Social Media

In recent years social media has become more and more popular. Many of our volunteers and staff have their own twitter, facebook, Instagram accounts, or other social media accounts. We have set up @Near FM @Near TV across a number of social media platforms, and try to use this new form of communication to promote Near media and to engage in dialogue with others who not have heard about Near and wish to participate. We train programme makers to be responsible for their own content in podcasts and encourage them to use different social media accounts to promote their online content.

As you can see, we are devising a wide range of uses for these technologies and an exciting range of activities for those who are interested in IT. The difference between our operation and others is the social use we wish to put this technology to. This is new territory for IT development and our volunteers have a great opportunity to help us shape such use, which could influence mainstream evolution of ICT.

Archiving

We are establishing an audio-visual archive to record and store the living history of our area. To make archiving possible it's important for programme makers to keep good running orders and a record of the content of their programmes.

Your challenge as a volunteer will be to facilitate others in acquiring the knowledge to harness these technologies for community development and empowerment.

NEAR MEDIA CO-OP SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy

This is the official Policy, approved by the Committee of Management, for participating in social media for Near Media Co-op. If you're a Near Media Co-op employee or volunteer creating or contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, social bookmarking or any other kind of digital media, these guidelines are for you. This policy applies to the use of digital media both for volunteering, work and personal purposes, whether while volunteering, at work or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the digital media is accessed using our facilities and equipment or personal equipment. Please note, this policy links to all other policies therefore social & digital media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies (you can find our policies in Near Media Co-op Operations and Procedures handbook: <http://near.ie/operations-and-procedures-manual/>)They will evolve as new social networking tools emerge, so check back regularly to make sure you're up to date.

We believe that, participation in social computing on behalf of Near Media Co-op is not a right but an opportunity, so please treat it seriously and with respect. Failure to abide by these guidelines or the Near Media Co-op internet safety guidelines contained in this policy could put your participation at risk. Please also follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites.

Use of the Near Media Brand Guidelines

Use of 'Near', 'Near FM' 'Near TV' or any other variant of the Near brand in personal email / Facebook, Twitter or any other Social Network, Blog, Vlog or any other digital account must be cleared by Near Media Co-op Management. Please check with the Social Media moderator before setting up any user name containing the Near brand. If you set-up any account without prior approval, Near Media Co-op reserve the right to require it to be discontinued.

Social Media Moderator: Alan Braddish (Alan@near.ie)

If you publish to any digital platform outside Near Media Co-op, please also use a disclaimer to reflect that the postings on the site are your own and don't necessarily represent Near Media Co-op's positions, strategies, or opinions.

Please also tag Near Media Co-op (by including media appropriate reference, page/profile/hashtag or link in your post) to allow the promotion of your posts.

- **Be transparent:** Use your real name, identify that you work for or volunteer with Near Media, and be clear about your role.
- **Be truthful:** If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing; be the first to point it out and be specific about what it is.
- **Be yourself:** Stick to your area of expertise; write what you know.
- Your honesty - or dishonesty - will be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Please represent Near Media Co-op ethically and with integrity. Make sure that transparency doesn't violate Near Media Co-op's confidentiality or legal guidelines - or your own privacy. Remember, if you're online, you're on the record - everything on the Internet is public and searchable. And what you write is ultimately your responsibility.
- **Add value:** There are millions of words out there - make yours helpful and thought-provoking. Remember it's a conversation, so keep it real. Build community by posting content that invites responses then stay engaged. You can also broaden the dialogue by citing others who are writing about the same topic and allowing your content to be shared.
- If you see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on Near FM, Near TV or Near Media Co-Op, you should report it to the Social Media Moderator. All volunteers and employees are responsible for protecting our reputation.

Moderation

Moderation applies to any content written on behalf of Near Media Co-op, whether the site is on or off near.ie, including on social media or any other digital platform.

We do not endorse or take responsibility for content posted by third parties, a.k.a. user-generated content (UGC). This includes text input and uploaded files, including video, images, audio, executables and documents. While we strongly encourage user participation, we ask third parties to follow Internet Safety Guidelines to keep it safe for everyone.

Of particular importance here is the received verbal consent of any person whose image you want to include either in reference to, or in promotion of your Near FM/Near TV programme or related project. Please note, Near Media Co-Op does not permit tagging of vulnerable adults or anyone under the age of 18.

The “house rules”: Whether content is post-moderated or community moderated, we use this rule of thumb: **Tell the truth and don't be nasty.**

- If the content is positive or negative and in context to the conversation, then it is okay, regardless of whether it's favorable or unfavorable to Near Media Co-op. In addition, if the content is ugly, offensive, denigrating, and/or completely out of context, then we ask our moderators and communities to reject the content.

Please keep in mind that Near Media Co –Op monitors social media related to our organisation, including the activities of our community. If we find any non-disclosed relationships or statements that are false or misleading, we will contact you for correction.

Internet Safety Guidelines

- **Don't slam another organisation:** Play nice. Anything you publish must be true and not misleading, and all claims must be substantiated and approved.
- **Don't over share:** Be careful out there - once you hit "share", you usually can't get it back. Plus being judicious will help make your content more crisp and audience-relevant.
- **Perception** is reality and in online social networks, the lines between public and

private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as an Near employee or volunteer you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about Near Media Co-op.

- **Keep it cool:** There can be a fine line between healthy debate and incendiary reaction. Try to frame what you write to invite differing points of view without inflaming others. And you don't need to respond to every criticism or barb. Be careful and considerate.
- **Did you screw up?** If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post, just make it clear that you have done so.
- **Keep it relevant & timely** – To make sure postings on official and personal digital media outlets are relevant and current, we encourage starting conversations about related events and topics, we only ask not to over-share or mention same event/topic several times in row. Make sure to check with your colleagues if this may become an issue.
- Digital media rewards interesting and witty thoughts. You can be interesting without being controversial.

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your Near Media Co-op activities at risk. Also please always follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites in which you participate. Remember as employee or volunteer you are a representative of Near Media Co-op and you have committed yourself to positively promoting this project. Should you have problems or difficulties within the organisation these should be dealt with through the specified Grievance Procedure and not publicly through any social media platform.