POL36 - Social Media Policy for Volunteers

Social media is a place where people exchange information, opinions and experiences to learn, develop and have fun. Whether volunteers are contributing through a corporate account or using one of their own, they should remain productive and positive in tone. This policy provides practical advice to avoid issues that might arise from the use of social media in the workplace.

Scope

We expect all our volunteers to follow this policy.

Policy elements

"Social media" refers to a variety of online communities like blogs, social networks and forums, as well as social media platforms used by APM including (but not necessarily limited to) LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube. This policy covers all of them. We consider two different elements: using personal social media at work and representing APM through social media. This policy covers personal accounts and the use of official APM accounts. Although the guidelines in this document are intended to apply to social media contributions on project management-related topics, please bear in mind that anything posted on social media by a volunteer could potentially be linked back to APM. We ask volunteers to refrain from posting content online that could be interpreted as discriminatory, indecent or offensive.

How to use social media effectively

Tone of voice

Tone of voice (ToV) is extremely important when you're trying to build a brand – it's about the impression we leave on our audiences who read what we write. We need to appeal to members, corporate partners and the next generation of project professionals, so our tone must project a professional and friendly image. We also have journalists and industry leaders following us, so it's important that we always come across in a consistent and professional – but personable manner.

See Appendix 1 for more information about our tone of voice

Messages

Consistent ToV is achieved with the occasional reinforcement of brand values and personality. To help with this, here are the key corporate messages that APM is focused on underpinning via social media:

- We set the standard – We're proud to create and uphold leading standards for the project profession.
- We represent the whole of the project profession.
- We're the leading source of knowledge and insights for the project profession.
- We listen, adapt, act and advocate for the project profession.
- We promote the power of the project profession for good.

See Appendix 1 for more information about tone of voice

Hashtags and keywords help people understand what type of post/article/blog/new story you've written. Keywords and hashtags should be used to help surface your post to members who may find it relevant. The hashtags and keywords relevant to APM are:

- #projectmanagement
- #Projectmanager
- #GetChPP #GetChartered (Hashtags used together)
- #APMpoll
- #APMwebinar
- #APMblog

- #APMmembership
- #APMnewsletter

Event hashtags
- #APMawards
- #WiPM
- #APMconference
- #APMvolsforum

We also use hashtags that are relevant to the specific news story/blog we have written, for example, if the blog is around mental health, we will include a #mentalhealth or #wellbeing hashtag. Avoid using too many hashtags, as some platforms' algorithms will mark your post as spam. If you'd like to find relevant hashtags to your post, Use the search tab to search and see what trending hashtags people already use. Capitalize on those by using them in your Tweets.

Instagram – 3-5LinkedIn – maximum of 4
Facebook – maximum 3 (posts with 1-2 hashtags performed better than posts that contain 3-5)

Activities APM is championing through social media:
- Sharing APM news stories and blogs
- Commenting on relevant industry articles
- Announcing APM company news and milestones
- Supporting marketing campaigns
- Supporting APM at any industry events we are running, or supporting SIG and other industry events

Twitter (X)

As of November 2024, APM has ceased all activity on its official Twitter (X) account, as well as all associated APM volunteer Twitter accounts. We no longer use this platform to engage with project professionals, corporate partners, or affiliated organisations.

Avoiding hazards – what not to do on social media

Using personal social media
- Ensure others know that personal account or statements don't represent APM. Volunteers can associate themselves with the company when posting, but they must clearly brand their online posts as personal. **Volunteers shouldn't state or imply that their personal opinions and content are authorised or endorsed by APM.** We advise using a disclaimer such as "opinions are my own" in your bio/profile section and when expressing opinions in your posts to avoid misunderstandings.
- Avoid sharing intellectual property like trademarks on a personal account without approval. Confidentiality policies and laws always apply.
- Avoid any defamatory, offensive or derogatory content. It may be considered as a violation of APM's anti-harassment policy, if directed towards colleagues, clients or partners.
- Volunteers should not use any APM branding in their profile picture or cover photo.
- Please do not share any statistics around the number of APM Members or Qualification holders on social media. These numbers will be shared from time to time by the official APM accounts, but volunteers should refrain from sharing statistics or figures in case they're accidentally taken out of context.
- Please do not post any copyrighted material unless you have permission (in writing) from the copyright owner. This includes photographs, graphics, text, video clips or any other material created by another person. Sharing copyrighted material without permission can result in a financial penalty or even legal proceedings.

Representing APM

Some volunteers represent APM by handling corporate social media accounts or speaking on our company's behalf. We expect them to act carefully and responsibly to protect our company image and reputation. Volunteers should:

1. Be respectful, polite and patient when engaging in conversations on our behalf. They should be extra careful when making declarations or promises towards customers and stakeholders.
2. Avoid speaking on matters outside their field of expertise where possible. Everyone should be careful not to answer questions or make statements that fall under somebody else's responsibility.
    - If you're asked a question or receive a comment on social media that you're unsure how to respond to, please refer to point 4
3. Only post content if you have the proper permission from its rightful owners. If it belongs to someone else, please don't post it.
4. Avoid deleting or ignoring comments for no reason. If APM receives a negative comment on social media, please flag this to the APM social media team social@apm.org.uk rebecca.gallacher@apm.org.uk who can help draft a response.
5. Never post discriminatory, offensive or libellous content and commentary – even in jest. Correct or remove any misleading or false content as quickly as possible.
6. Refrain from liking any comments/posts that:
    - contain spam;
    - defame any person or belief;
    - deceive others;
    - contain obscene, offensive, threatening, abusive, hateful, inflammatory material;
    - promote sexually explicit material or violence;
    - are off-topic, irrelevant or unintelligible.
7. Steer clear of sharing information or data concerning financial information, sales trends, strategies, forecasts, legal issues or future promotional activities.
8. Avoid giving out people's personal details to cover any non-employees or non-customers too.
9. Avoid commenting on, sharing and liking any competitor posts, or posts from neutral accounts that promote our competitors.
10. Do not set up social media pages, groups, or accounts that represent APM. Please request set up via APM's social media specialist. Rebecca.Gallacher@apm.org.uk

Disciplinary consequences

Be aware that we monitor all social media postings on our corporate account. We may have to take disciplinary action if volunteers do not follow these policy guidelines.

Volunteers are required to abide by the Code of Professional Conduct and can be held account for their actions under it.

Submitting content to the APM Social Media team

APM's social media team is always happy to receive ideas and submissions for content. If you have something that you would like APM's social media team to post to our official accounts, please first consider the following points.

- **Does the social media team know it's coming?** Before sending anything, please check with rebecca.gallacher@apm.org.uk to make sure that there's capacity to share your post
- **Is it relevant to our audience?** Is it something that project professionals want/need to know about
- **Will it reflect well on us?** Could anything about your idea potential harm APM's reputation or cause us embarrassment?
- **Do I have all the necessary information?** What happened, who was involved, when it happened, where it took place, whether there were any important outcomes?
- **Do I have a good quality picture?** All social media posts need high quality images. This doesn't mean we need professional photos taken with expensive

camera equipment, but we do need photos that meet a certain standard. Use the guidelines below to avoid common mistakes:

If photographing/ filming an individual	If photographing/ filming an event	If photographing/ filming a building or project site
Do make sure they appear professional (dress and body language) **Do** try to picture them doing something that relates to the story. **Don't** picture them against a background that's too busy. If you can, try to find a neutral background, such as a blank wall **Do** ask for permission to film individuals and ask if they are happy for the video to be shared across marketing channels.	**Do** try to get a sense of activity (e.g. people at our stand, or the crowd watching one of the speakers) **Don't** just take pictures of brochures, posters, etc. These don't give a sense of activity. Try to picture people doing things instead **Don't** take pictures that only focus on one person. Try to show people interacting (e.g speakers addressing a crowd, or people networking) **Don't** take pictures that show lots of empty seats	**Do** make sure the site fills the frame **Don't** include anything in your shot that could give a bad impression (i.e. litter or graffiti in shot, staff not wearing safety equipment, etc)

Video tips
Do try to video in a quiet area with little background noise. **Do** make sure lightening is good. Avoid dark areas/shadows. **Do** check sound – make sure sound is being picked up. **Try** and make sure you keep a still hand so the camera is stable.

Naturally, **all photos should be in focus, well lit and high-resolution** (minimum of 1MB – adjust your camera settings to take the highest quality photo)

Version control

Author	Reason for revision	Version number	Date
Rebecca Gallacher	First release	1.0	23/11/2020
Rebecca Gallacher	Tone of Voice added	2.0	25/11/2020
Rebecca Gallacher	• Grammar check • Updated TOV • Added video guidelines	3.0	27/05/2022
Rebecca Gallacher	• Updated hashtags • Updated representing APM section • Formatting • Updated to reflect new brand	4.0	7/03/2022
Rebecca Gallacher	• Hashtag updated • filming permission	5.0	09/01/2024
Rebecca Gallacher	• Removed Twitter	6.0	17/04/2025

Appendix 1

What is tone of voice?

Everything we write counts because the tone of our language defines how people respond to us. Every communication from us is an opportunity to tell our story. It's also an opportunity to make APM better, by solving a problem, simplifying a task, prompting a decision or building a relationship.

Tone of voice is how our brand attributes come across in our words and how we communicate. It's why our brand attributes are also our tone of voice principles. It's therefore not just about what we say but how we say it. It's about the impression we leave on our audiences who read it.

Our tone of voice expresses our personality and makes our communications more engaging. By writing in a tone that is true to our brand, we live that brand and mirror what we value as an organisation. Having a set of principles also ensures consistency within and across departments. By speaking with one voice we can help the project profession deliver successful projects for everyone's benefit.

Tone of voice principles

- We write with energy: mixing long and short sentences, using bullet points where appropriate, breaking up copy with headings and avoiding overly long paragraphs
- We avoid jargon and acronyms wherever we can
- We use contractions and conversational, but professional language
- We're not afraid to bring our personality and perspective to what we write
- We develop content that is balanced, considered, well-informed but with a clear point of view running through
- Where appropriate, we break up copy with call-outs and stand-firsts, summarising and highlighting our viewpoint
- We write in the first and second person: from a person, to a person
- We address what our readers want to know, not just what we want to tell them
- We use the fewest and clearest words to express what we mean
- We invest in the quality and clarity of our writing
- We ensure that what we write is carefully planned, well considered and well structured
- We plan our schedule of communications carefully, so we neither over communicate nor under communicate