Getting it Right on Social Media
- 10 Do’s and Don’ts

Procurious HQ

CIPS and Procurious Social Media for Procurement Knowledge Partnership
November 2015
GETTING IT RIGHT ON SOCIAL MEDIA – 10 DO’S AND DON’TS

Even for a seasoned pro, or ‘Master’ as we like to say at Procurious, social media can be a minefield to negotiate. One wrong word, one misplaced link, or even something as small as a spelling mistake, can have you people clicking “Unfollow” in droves.

Like with reputation or trust, a social media following takes a long time to build, but can be undermined and disappear in the blink of an eye. But what can you do to ensure that you are getting social media ‘right’, and providing value for your followers.

We’ve pulled together a list of Do’s and Don’ts for you to remember the next time you are linking, tweeting or social networking.

Do………..

1. **Add Some Personality**
Some platforms more naturally lend themselves to being a bit more creative with your profile, while others are very much more suited to a more professional outlook.

It’s important to make this distinction when creating your profile. You can still add some of ‘you’ to a professional profile, but try to get the balance right. Inject some personality into your profile and people will naturally engage more with it.

2. **Use Accounts Wisely**
Use your profiles in a sensible fashion, but also in a way that suits you best. Want to use Twitter to gather information, rather than post yourself? Great – look for people to follow and stay up to date.

If you do post, do this in a logical way. Don’t post a dozen times one day and then nothing for the next week. It’s a sure fire way to stop people following you. Whatever you do, don’t create a profile and leave it to stagnate – it’s probably worse than not having a profile at all.

3. **Post Sensibly**
Facebook is great for keeping up to date with your friends; Instagram is awesome for photos you want to share; Twitter is amazing for condensing your message; LinkedIn can help you get ahead professionally.

Your friends probably don’t need to see your CV, in the same way peers, and potential future employers, don’t need to see photos and videos of your children/pets/wacky family. Keep the message in line with the feel of the platform.

4. **Shorten Your URLs**
There are few things more off-putting on Twitter than a post that is more URL than content. Long URls are hard to read and interrupt the flow of your message.

There are great tools out there like bit.ly and tinyurl that can help with this – plus they’ll also help to steal a few characters back for you.
5. Change Your Public (Vanity) URL
Surprisingly few people take advantage of this on Facebook and LinkedIn. When you first create a business account, your public URL will be a stream of unintelligible letters and numbers. However you can change this to your name, or the name of your business.

This will make it easier for people to find your profile and will be significantly easier for you to remember too.

Don’t………..

6. Overuse Hashtags
People still use hashtags on Facebook, although they don’t work well, while Twitter and Instagram are the key platforms for them. Limit your hashtags to between 1 and 3 in each post, no more. Use too many and people will stop following you, or reading any of your posts.

Try also to fit them into a sentence or post so it makes sense and reads well. Don’t use them on LinkedIn. Ever.

7. Connect with Everyone
You might want to seem like you are a master-networker and one of the most connected people on social media. However, you should be mindful of who you are connecting with. Are they going to give you value? Will you ever have a meaningful interaction with them?

Make sure you’re connected with key colleagues, peers, suppliers, even competitors, but keep it relevant.

8. Auto-post Across All Platforms
Tools like Buffer and Hootsuite are brilliant. Using these tools wisely to schedule content can save you a huge amount of time and effort in getting your message on to social media.

However, remember that each platform displays messages differently, and a post good for Facebook probably won’t work well on Twitter. It’s worth creating tweets separately, as usernames and hashtags you have included won’t display well on other sites.

9. Just Advertise
People have probably followed you based on the strength of your profile, or the value of your message. However, these people don’t just want to hear you advertise your own goods, services or brand.

Other people in your industry will have good messages too, and content that has value too. Help share it across your network and you might find that it increases your own following too.

10. Give Up
Social media can be hard to get to grips with, especially if you are trying to do too much, across too many platforms. Pick the one(s) you are most comfortable with and build them up in order to get the most value from them.

Don’t worry if you aren’t getting hundreds of followers or connections either. Keep trying and posting good content and it’ll happen. Remember, even the best users started at zero.