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Social Media Management (DGM721)

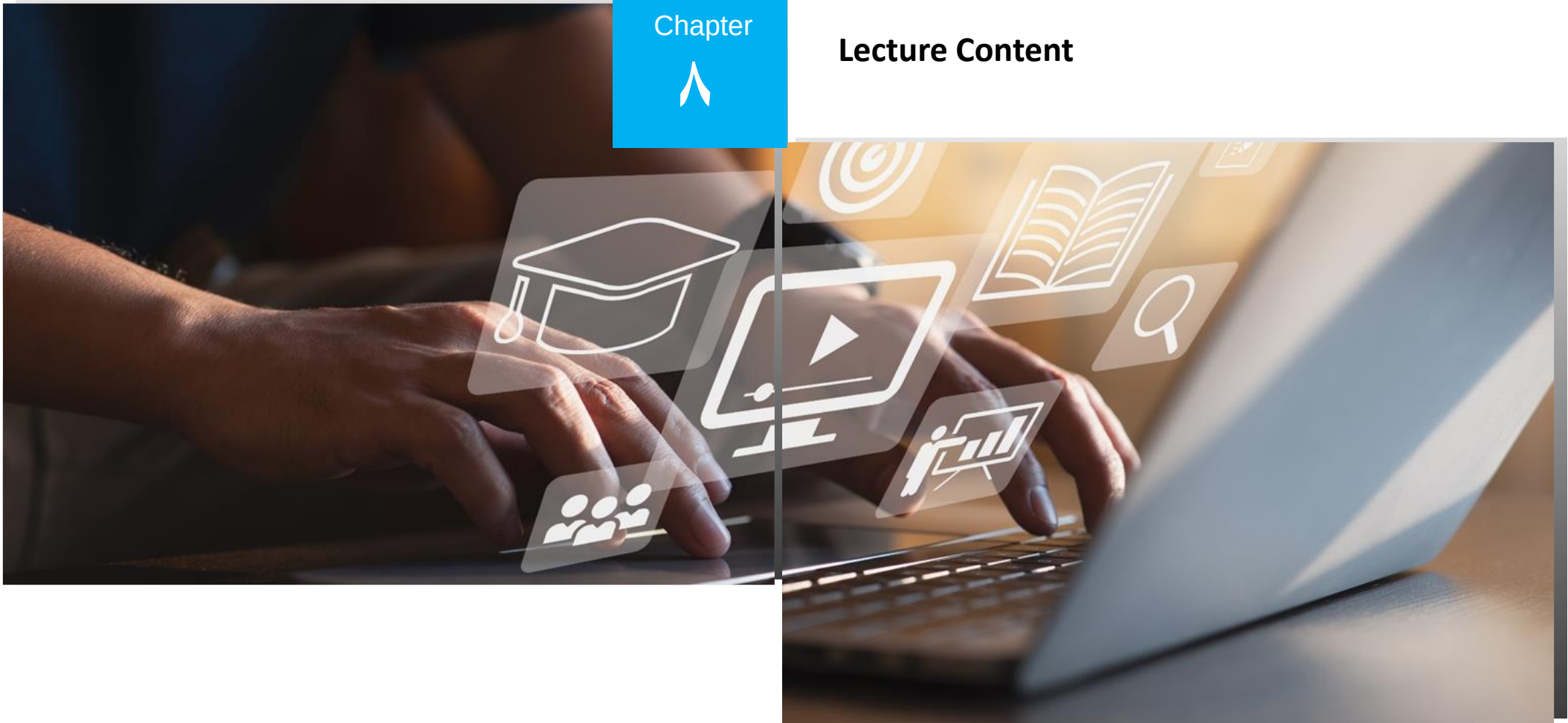
Lecture ^



Chapter



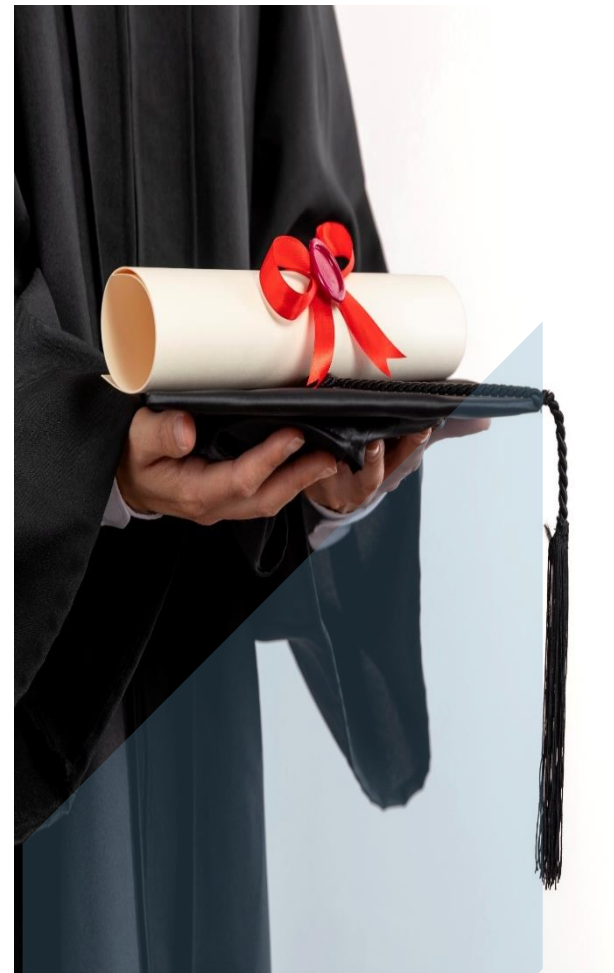
Lecture Content



Legal and Ethical Issues in Social Media

The Content of lecture 8 includes the following:

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2. Social media ethics by organizations .
3. common legal issue .
4. Social Media Policy and Training .
5. Social Media Ethics by Employees .
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Introduction to Legal and Ethical Issues in Social Media

Social media ethics imply that a social media user should be honest about one's relationship, opinion, and identity.

some examples of non ethical behavior from the perspective of organizations are:

- Blog posts or brand reviews paid by marketers, who are hired by an organization and without disclaimer.
- Ghost tweeters.
- Fake customer reviews.
- Fake chat room members.
- Viral campaigns that pretend to be user videos.

Social media ethics have become a highly important topic, because social media are rapidly increasing in use and tend to blur the boundary between someone's private life and professional life.

An unclear line also exists between freedom of speech and inappropriate posts.

Due to the potential dangers related to social media, the need for education about proper social media use is increasing.

Examples of potential dangers of social media use for organizations and employees are as follows:

- **Privacy:** It is difficult to control the personality and information in online communication compared to face-to-face communication.
- **Discrimination:** Social media posts can provide digital evidence of discrimination or harassment.

- **Copyright:** An employee should not be content with copying and publishing someone else's work(text, video, photo, poem, art, etc.) without asking the owner's permission .
- **Intellectual Property:** This risk refers to the issue of whether social media The content is owned by the employee, employer or social media tool and furthermore the employee should not post Secrets of working on the Internet. Another example is related to internet ownership Contacts that a recruiter or salesperson has while performing their job. To a large extent, an agreement can be reached stating who will get a copy of the social Media when this employee leaves the organization.

- **Terms of Service:** If an organization opens an account on one or the other social media, you must accept the terms of service of the tool In order to fully understand what the organization is signing and which are legal Related consequences, legal counsel can be consulted first.
- **Relationship Disclosure:** When information is published online, an employee It must disclose whether or not the person is acting as an employee of the organization and Thus getting paid to create online ads, viral campaigns, blog posts, and reviews.

Location Disclosure: An employee or employer can also disclose indirectly business secrets by stating a person's location online.

for example, using a geolocation-based tool such as Swarm™, Social media connections may know when an employee is at work and not at work The house .

for example, if the burglars are affiliated or the number of times the employer is logged in a particular airport or in a particular city.

For example, journalists can derive when Strategic discussions are ongoing with competitors or existing suppliers.

Defamation: If an employee publishes false information or lies about a person

Damage to this person's reputation, the organization can be responsible for this in some Situations (**for example**, if the information is posted on the company's website).

Drama Desk: Where social media posts can easily be sent (also outside of work hours), an employee may post something without common sense and thus hurt or embarrassing colleagues (**for example**, when an employee is angry, sad, or tired).

It is important that both employers and employees recognize the potential Dangers directly or indirectly related to the use of social media that may affect organization's reputation.

Although ethical behavior relies heavily on the relational trust ship, organizations can also educate their employees to recognize this hazards and teach them how to act professionally in a variety of situations.

Maybe Method of disciplining employees through social media policy, supplement it an exercise .

Hence, the secret to success in social media (and work ethic in general)Build trust.

Concerning trust between The business owner and its employees but also with its suppliers, customers and above All, with their fans on social media (who is different from customers, but may be prospects or influencers).

By building trust, the organization will be more to learns Save its brand, reputation and functionality when, **for example**, a crisis hits. Especially good Relationships with stakeholders can be a buffer in times of crisis.

this means That the ethical use of social media can facilitate online reputation management and Even crisis management after that. Moreover, SEO can help Reputation management in order to facilitate the participation of (ethically correct) companies information .

(for example, press releases) and to make the Company's website more relevant to it Search engine requirements, social media and smartphones.

Social media ethics by organizations

We talk about explicit actions that the organization can take in order To encourage ethical behavior on social media.
In particular, in addition to construction Trust, the organization can create a social media policy .
(or a social media token for ethics) with a matching training program me.
Moreover, you must take into account Calculate Social Media Tools Terms of Service.

The current era is the age of social media, in which all small and large enterprises rely on it to operate.

Many people run their businesses entirely online, relying on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as their major means of communication.

While effective, this strategy has its own set of drawbacks. The profits it generates are proportional to the legal risks your company may face if it is not handled properly and on time.

common legal issue

Social networking services like Facebook, and others were the first to make social media extremely popular.

The biggest concern concerning the use of social media is the problem of privacy.

There are no specifically set restrictions as to how social media sites or other external entities can utilize or exploit an individual's or Body Corporate's shared information.

1. **Revealing Confidential Information**

The most common, and potentially most deadly, legal issue with social media is the leaking of confidential information.

The secrets of your firm, as well as some vital information about shares and rules, are frequently leaked out by employees or other parties with information.

This could end up being a direct danger to your company. You may lose your business as a result of its decline, or someone else may be able to seize it utilizing all of your confidential information.

2. Illegal Use of Trademarks

A trademark can be used in two ways. The first is a favorable element, whereas the second is entirely bad.

Use of a company's trademark with its expertise is a beneficial aspect.

Businesses frequently accept the use of their trademarks when they are aware of it.

Their business will benefit as a result of this.

The negative approach is to pass off another company's trademark as your own or to use it to make money.

The solution is for social media services to make sure that unauthorized users are not allowed to use trademarks.

3. Defaming Problems

The technique to take here is to think before you write. Another common legal issue on social media is making statements that could be used to discredit a company. People in business, or those who were once part of the firm, frequently make unethical and defamatory remarks on social media.

This may appear insignificant, yet it can have catastrophic consequences.

Even anonymous posts can be tracked to reveal the author's identity.

4. Ambiguous Posts on Social Media

It's impossible to stay away from social media these days. However, because social media posts, statuses, and tweets are short communications, they can appear unclear. Your unintentional message could be misinterpreted in a variety of ways.

This could turn into a major issue for you and your company. Before making any unclear comment or posting, double-check your work.

5. Illegal Use of Copyrighted Work

Unauthorized use of copyrighted content, such as movies, images, articles, and websites, is a widespread legal problem today.

Using someone else's copyrighted work without their permission is both immoral and illegal.

Employees are informed about privacy as part of the protection. When sharing your work on social media, be sure to mention that it is copyright protected.

Social Media Policy and Training

A social media policy is often part of a larger IT policy on business conduct.

An organization can create a social media policy from scratch, or it can rely on ethical communication guidelines of industry associations.

Templates, guidelines, and examples of social media policies can also be found in a social media policy database, such as Just one example concerns IBM™'s social computing guidelines, which were created by means of crowdsourcing among the employees.

These guidelines are part of the organization's global business conduct guidelines

A social media policy is a corporate code of conduct with official guidelines that stipulate how employees should behave online and appropriately use social media during and outside the business.

Its main purpose is to avoid legal problems or undesired business implications and to inspire employees how to advocate the organization in an online setting.

Social Media (Policy) Audit ::

that social media use should follow a social media strategy, which serves the organizational strategy.

Social media should only be used if they can help reach the business objectives or solve business problems.

In order to know which problems are to be solved and by which principles, a social media audit can be performed with

a survey and in-depth interviews of employees.

An audit may, for instance, also uncover whether employees use social media in an ethical way, whether they are aware of the social media policy in the organization, or whether the managers have an accurate idea of the online behavior of employees.

Such insights may be used to set a social media policy or to recommend additional training.

An example of a social media policy audit survey is given in (Flynn 2012).

Communication Principles and Standards:

A social media policy contains principles about the way employees are ought to act, which should be consistent with the corporate values.

For instance, a social media policy can be explicitly driven by corporate values, e.g., collaboration, transparency, diversity, respect ,responsible -digital-media-principles).

Furthermore, a social media policy can set the organization's online voice and tone.

For instance, it can define the expected response time (e.g., an organization can commit itself to respond to answers on Facebook™ within 16 h, on Twitter™ within 2 h, and to emails Social Media Ethics by Organizations within 24 h).

In addition, possible characteristics of the organization's voice can be defined.

For instance, if the voice is set to approachability, curiosity, and knowledge, then social media posts will rather be conversational, using exciting words and providing casual information.

Chief Social Media Officer::

a dedicated job description for a Chief Social Media Officer is rising in organizations.

Having the right people in charge of social media is crucial. It does not necessarily concern people under the age of 25 who use social media a lot because older people may have relevant experience with marketing principles and knowledge about the business.

An organization should hire someone who has both business savvy and social media savvy (e.g., great writers and storytellers), regardless of their age.

Social Media Monitoring and Training::

on social media strategy and ROI on social CRM, an organization should regularly review its social media dashboard metrics.

Monitoring social media conversations also enables an organization to correct people's misstatements related to the organization.

on opinion mining. Monitoring can generally be considered as an ethically correct action, as long as it is announced in a (social media) policy and that the people involved are aware that monitoring takes place.

Similarly, if an organization blocks certain websites or social media tools, it should be clearly stated in a policy.

However, trusting employees might be an alternative to actually blocking sites, e.g., by hiring people that fit the organization and by regularly training them.

Social Media Ethics by Employees

Different theoretical approaches exist to assess whether something is ethically correct or not.

Ethical frameworks generally distinguish the following approaches::

- **Utilitarian Approach:** Ethical decisions will choose for a certain behavior that maximizes utility , which is most useful or most positive with regard to its outcomes or consequences for all stakeholders (“the greatest good to the greatest number”).

- **Rights Approach:** Ethical decisions will choose for a certain behavior that best protects and respects the rights of all stakeholders.

- **Fairness and Justice Approach:** Ethical decisions will choose for a certain behavior that treats stakeholders equally or proportionally.
- **Common Good Approach:** Ethical decisions will choose for a certain behavior that best serves the community as a whole, instead of only the stakeholders.
- **Virtue Approach:** Ethical decisions will choose for a certain behavior that best reflects some virtues or ideals in order to reach an individual's highest potential (e.g., honesty, courage, compassion, integrity, generosity, tolerance, etc.).
- **Principle Approach (Or Care Ethics Approach):** Ethical decisions will choose for a certain behavior that best fits a specific code of ethics, i.e., by applying personal, professional, or global ethics

Online behavior of individuals may refer to business use or personal use.

situations, employees should respect some general do's and don'ts .

Examples of ethical do's and don'ts for employees are:

- **Policy:** When communicating anything related to the organization, employees should act in accordance to the organization's code of ethics (i.e., the social media policy and more generally the policies on IT and business conduct).

Permission: When communicating anything related to the organization, employees should first ask their manager for (oral or written) permission.

Written permission is particularly required when it concerns confidential or copyrighted material (i.e., that belongs to current or former employers or third parties).

Furthermore, identifiable client information should not be posted online without client's permission.

Reputation Management: Employees should contribute to online reputation management to protect both the organization's and their own reputation.

Also private social media use should be considered from this perspective (when clients or colleagues are personal connections or when personal social media posts are in the public domain).

- **Privacy:** Individuals should set privacy settings to safeguard private content.

Employees should act professionally, also in their spare time.

In order to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, different accounts can be created to separate their private use of social media from their professional use (i.e., a personal online identity versus a professional online identity).

Influencers:: Everyone who recommends or endorses products should comply with the law when making recommendations.

This obligation applies to influencer marketing in general and is based on traditional legislation to avoid unfair commercial practices, such as the FTC Act of 1914 in the USA and the Unfair Commercial Practice Directive 2005/29/EC in the European Union.

order to **enhance transparency for consumers on social media tools** (Gratz et al. 2021).

This matter is also essential to create a digital single market (e.g., Such guidelines and self-regulative provisions help avoid deceptive ads, and offer details about how advertisers but also endorsers can act in an ethically correct manner.

Legal & Ethical Issues in Social Media — Enhanced by AI

AI amplifies both opportunities and risks on social platforms.

Ethical challenges arise when AI algorithms prioritize engagement over truth (e.g., spreading misinformation, emotional manipulation).

Social Media Ethics by Organizations

AI-driven tools (chatbots, content recommendation engines) must reflect ethical values.

Ethical dilemmas: biased content delivery, algorithmic favoritism, data privacy.

Companies must audit their AI systems for fairness and transparency.

Common Legal Issues & AI

Copyright infringement: AI-generated content must respect IP laws.

Defamation risks: AI bots may auto-post content without legal screening.

Data protection: AI-driven analytics can violate privacy if not regulated by law (e.g., GDPR).

Policy, Training & Employee Ethics in the AI Era

Social Media Policy and Training

Policies must now include **AI usage guidelines**:

- Responsible use of generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Midjourney).

- Prohibition of deepfakes or synthetic media without disclosure.

AI-based monitoring tools detect policy violations in real-time.

Employee Ethics and AI Tools

Employees using AI must verify outputs to avoid ethical breaches.

Misuse of AI (e.g., fabricating data, automating attacks) may damage brand and violate laws.

AI-powered training platforms can simulate ethical decision-making for employees.



Thank You