

Recommendations for the use of Social Media

For all the Salesians, those in Formation, and the lay collaborators of the Institutions and works of the _____ Province¹ of the Salesians of Don Bosco

Introduction

Social networks² are a new style of communication. It is primarily used to exchange experiences and opinions, to meet friends and stay in touch with acquaintances, in a society increasingly Internet - connected. Their role becomes essential in the reality of many people, as they allow to know new persons and places, and learning of events immediately, entering into dialogue and create groups with different intentions and functions.

Via Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Whatsapp and many other social media, one can make connections with people from so many places in the world that would have been impossible to even imagine a few years ago. With a single click you can find out instantly what happens thousands of kilometers away. Thus, online platforms bring great advantages for users to become consumers and producers of information, because they are virtually available to everyone. In social networks all users are creators, actors, simultaneously and permanently visible.

We need to reflect on our presence and participation on cultural and relational changes that have been made on our use of social networks. The networks bring great benefits, but also carry risks for people and for the institution if we do not live in them, if not handled properly. Technology is not good or bad, is part of the culture, so we have to understand and learn their languages, their advantages and limitations.

The Salesians and social networks

Today it is said that Web 2.0 basically means two things: "First, the user of the network goes from being a consumer of content to a participant in the construction and development of the same. Second, Web 2.0 is the web as a platform, not the social network itself. "However it possible to create a space for collaborative and participatory work that breaks with previous hierarchical and unidirectional models of learning, production and creation of knowledge, communication and information.

For the Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB) and his closest collaborators, Web 2.0 is an opportunity to be present, to spread the values of the Salesian charism and institution, to make contact with many people, especially the young people and the educators who populate the social networks. Through them we can be multipliers of the message and mission of Don Bosco. Today good ideas and personal and institutional values can reach around the world with a click. Of course it's not automatic matter, it must be presented with current languages, at appropriate times and appropriate modality and technology. Not all means or any pattern are suitable for all content for any information or for any communication. If this basic principle is not known, you can waste time and trivialize the message.

Many Salesians of Don Bosco, as well as their close collaborators and volunteers use social networks for private use or for work. These allow to show our face live, show the ideas and the works that Don Bosco and the Congregation are doing in the present.

Many people who see the profiles of the Salesians and their collaborators in social networks, are at a loss to establish the boundaries between their identity, their work and their private lives, they are seen not only as individuals, but as representatives of Don Bosco, the Salesian Congregation. Therefore it is very important to

¹ This document is inspired by the guidelines adopted and put into force on June 2, 2014 by the Provincial of the Salesians of Germany (GER).

² With social networks we refer to all content and Internet platforms that allow users to exchange information and content such as photos, videos, stories, experiences and opinions; publications include personal blogs, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, among others, that may be part of this denomination.

be aware that there is a fine line between the fundamental right of freedom of expression and the duty of loyalty to the Salesian Congregation.

Any comment, expression or individual image can be interpreted as a sign of what the Salesians in the world believe, what they think or do. Hence the great responsibility to inhabit and use the networks, whose privacy is very different from that which remains in physical social relations, real time and physical spaces. It is very important to use well the time and digital space, because it is here that we live and become visible to everyone, especially to those adolescents and young adults, for whom we are an important reference point in their life.

In this new digital reality, which creates its own concepts of presence, respect, information and work, the Salesian Congregation enters and uses these means of communication:

- To collaborate in the evangelizing mission of the Church by offering information about the important events and messages of the Pope.
- to position the Salesians as a religious community founded by Don Bosco dedicated to the mission of evangelizing and educating in favor of children and young people of the working classes.
- to report on the activities of the Province, its sectors and their works (schools, parishes, oratories, missions, social action centers, companies and communication products, etc).
- to convey a positive image of our mission in a transparent, authentic, modern way.
- to maintain an attitude of constant learning exchanging knowledge and experiences of daily work, according to the goals and values of the institution.
- to encourage knowing about Don Bosco, the Congregation and the Salesian Family, to participate in their projects, spread over 130 countries.
- to put the teenager, youth, educators and parents in touch with our ideas, proposals and actions, giving them the opportunity to participate and collaborate in concrete way according to their status.
- to accompany, as Don Bosco did, being "assistants" of adolescents and youth in the virtual world.
- provide pastoral, spiritual, social and cultural benefits that favor the formation of the Salesian Family and all interested persons.
- Be a benchmark and exchange for many people interested in youth, educational and social issues from the perspective of Don Bosco.

Some guide lines

The following guidelines³ are intended to provide some recommendations for the safe and conscious use of social networks to learn and know how to share and interact ethically in the Internet.

1. Presence in social networks: identifiability and accountability

New technologies and social networks of the 21st century is blurring the boundaries between professional and private communication. It certainly is a personal decision to be identified in the user profile as a member of the Salesian Congregation or as a worker in a work of the Salesians of Don Bosco. However his identity as Salesian consecrated worker or employee, must be recognized by their friends, acquaintances and colleagues, as well as outside those circles, for its transparency, authenticity, and individual responsibility.

Therefore the SDB, the employees and the partners who are in social networks:

- must have an identifiable profile with its functions, tasks and mission in some work.
- agree to be responsible for the information shared, the comments generated, photographs and videos that are posted. The network world does not erase any information, image or video broadcast.
- are careful with their statements and interventions so as not to encourage rumors, half-truths or spread suspicion, among others.

³ These lines are inspired by the documents of the German Bishops Conference, the Conference of Major Superiors of Religious Orders, the rules for using social media in the German Caritas Association, in the "Social Media Guidelines" of the city of Berlin Commission and in the Austrian Red Cross.

- commit to correct misstatements or contradictory indications including dates, places and sources where necessary. It is a mark of a mature person to admit one's faults.

2. Presence in social networks: communication of content

Social networks are public spaces of communication. Therefore, to published it is potentially making it visible to everyone and involves risks such as the inadvertent distribution of information, but also offer the possibility of direct and rapid exchange.

Therefore Salesians, employees and partners are invited to:

- Support the work of the Salesians, sharing the content that is distributed by official channels, making room for the viewpoints and criticism that are objective and constructive.
- Take part in the discussions held in the official channels of the Salesians of Don Bosco, where one can contribute his/her experience, knowledge and opinion.
- Offer pastoral help or give advice, and be open to dialogue and exchange of information. If the request is beyond one's experience and ability, he/she should indicate another more competent person, bearing in mind that if the information provided is inadequate, it may damage the image and educational pastoral work of the Institution.
- Accept friendship and connections with other social institutions or individuals who can contribute to generate a spirit of solidarity, but be careful not to click too fast on the button "I like" or "I do not like" or enter into relations with other people before observing their profile and viewpoints, as they may go against the beliefs or values of the Institution.
- Share content (messages, pictures or videos) that are consistent with one's vocation or function within the institution, which are a good example for children and young people for whom they work. They, like their parents and colleagues can view our profile and content sharing. For this reason avoid images that are inconsistent with one's vocation or function that may lend themselves to misunderstanding.
- Before you share and disseminate content in social networks, it is important to check the sources and accuracy of the information. It is not wise or educational share false content. People trust us and consider us as reliable sources. We have a duty to be responsible.
 - Preserve the author's right: to share or disclose contents other than his own, it is necessary to mention who the author or at least the source from which it was copied.
- Overcome the temptation to post personal discussions (especially on the Facebook wall or similar).
- Know and proceed in accordance with the legal provisions of one's country when exchanging files, especially with children and adolescents.
- Keep in mind that pornographic content is morally unacceptable in the Congregation and may be illegal, for these reasons any publication of this material is prohibited.
- Avoid that readers can draw the wrong conclusions, it is advisable to avoid political statements.

3. Social Network and respectful relationships with others

As part of the Catholic Church, the SDB and all workers who collaborate with the Salesians, should express personal belief in a polite, truthful and respectful manner even though may have other beliefs from the others. The "Preventive Salesian style" must be present in the messages and in the means chosen to publicize them, ensuring that they contain the following features: proactive and cautious, optimism and realism, innovation and interdisciplinary, ethics and professionalism. For us it is important that in both the physical and the virtual relity, while remaining clear in our position, we respect those who think differently.

Therefore:

- Be tolerant in the face of other beliefs and open to other opinions.
- Use, in the case of controversial debates, a balanced and serene language that expresses esteem.
- Remain calm and be objective, even if the arguments presented is not convincing.
- Observe what is sacred for us or for other religions.
- Be aware that online platforms is not a place for defamation, violation of human rights, intolerance, contempt of skin color or origin of birth or anything else which might lead to misunderstandings in this sense.

- Do not provoke heated debates or get into discussions where they exist; if you are involved in any, remain calm, be objective and open to dialogue. Be the first to apologize when wrong.
- Stay away from ironic language and messages, as they easily ignite passions and create controversy.

4. Problems and confidentiality

The obligation towards confidentiality and discretion also applies to social networks. Therefore:

- All internal information, which is part of the confidential institutional data can not be published.
- Confidential information and personal data, should not be part of public discussion on social networks.
- Respect the privacy of every person, so do not make public their defects, errors or their problems in the family or work.
- If you discover or witness of crime, go to the relevant authorities.
- In case of uncertainty, before publishing anything, please contact your supervisor, Delegate for Social Communication and, if necessary, the Provincial.

5. Security, rights and obligations

You should learn and be updated on the use of social networks. Do not forget that content such as images, videos, profile information and comments are potentially visible to everyone and that some Internet applications have access to your data. It is a fact that any type of publication you make becomes an element of your virtual personality.

Therefore:

- Pay careful attention to your personal and professional network.
- Do not spread too many personal details in public.
- Check the settings of security and privacy.
- Before you set up a profile, please read the terms and conditions of their social network. If there is any problem with the application, contact the delegate of Social Communication.
- Respect copyrights, always applying the following rule: use files, images, graphics, music or videos that have permissions and always cite the author.
- If you post pictures, you must obtain permission from the ones who appear in the photo. If there are children and adolescents, may also require written authorization from their guardians. Application forms can be obtained from the delegation of Communications.
- If you want to use social networks as an employee in order to establish networking, include the logo of the Congregation, talk first to your superior.
- The provinces and the respective works of the SDB should follow corporate design manuals and rules for using the logo and the Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco.
- People belonging to any degree to the institution, who make improper use of the social networks and media, are morally and legally responsible, personally, for their actions.

The activities of the _____ Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco in social media are managed and coordinated by the Delegate of the Social Communications members under the supervision of the Provincial in charge. You can contact them on the telephone _____, and email _____ (City and Institution), _____ (2015).

Department for Social Communication & Social Communication Delegates