

# [Introduction user-generated content” (kaplan and haenlein, 2010). the](https://assignbuster.com/introduction-user-generated-content-kaplan-haenlein-2010-the/)

Introduction of the issueSocial media is a phenomenon that has transformed theinteraction and communication of individuals throughout the world (Edomswan etal., 2011). Social media websites are forms of electronic communication “ thatbuild upon … the technological foundations of the internet and allow thecreation and exchange of user-generated content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The main uses of social media by employees are: blogs, socialnetworking sites, wikis and video-or content sharing sites. (Piskorki &McCall, 2010; Vaast, Davidson, &Mattson, forth coming). It is seen by many as having a positive impact onbusiness due to being easily accessible and providing new ways of connectingwith customers (Cisco, 2010; Dunn, 2010; Wilson, Guinan, Parise, & Weinberg, 2011). However, socialmedia presents both challenges as well as opportunities for organisations. Employeesare able to attempt new ideas and are able to make sure that ideas are executedrelatively quickly (Vaast, 2010).

This allows organisations to make themselves moreagile and are able to respond to the demands of customers, who are alsoequipped with large platforms on social media and who’s opinion can gravitatelarge numbers of new customers towards the business (Gallaugher , 2010). It is for these reasons that it is imperative thatbusinesses make sure that the online presence is not negatively affected, however, resulting in the loss of some of managements traditional control overwhat IT initiatives and applications are being implemented and used within theorganisation itself (Kane, Fichman, Gallaugher, & Glaser, 2009; Safko , 2009; Stolley, 2009). Employee use of social media may have diverse impacts upon organisations, both internally (e.

g. related to culture, innovation processes; McAfee, 2006)as well as externally (e. g. what organisational image employees might projecton public social networking sites; Kane et al., 2009). Organisations, on their ownaccord, may seek to encourage certain uses of social media and limit others, which justifies the need for governance.

In this regard, organisationalpolicies constitute one of the main vehicles for social media governanceavailable to organisations. Throughout this report, corporate control and theoutlying reach of employers over employees’ social media presence will be examined. Theories from the literatureThere are manydifferent, sometimes contradictory theories relating to the topic of socialmedia governance by different corporations. The first theory I will mention isa theory which is called the amplification hypothesis, which states then whencertainty is expressed, the attitude of the person is fixed. Another theoryrelating to corporate governance of employee social media is conversion theorywhich means that the minority In a group can have a disproportionate effect oninfluencing those in the majority (). This is particularly important if businesseshave a disgruntled employee who vents their frustration on social media andthis can then lead to other employees shifting their viewpoints to matchingthose of the disgruntled employee which can have a snowballing effect meaningthat swathes of employees can become demotivated relatively quickly.

A third theoryrelating to corporate governance of social media is reciprocity norm which isdefined by ipfs as “ the expectationthat people will respond favourably to each other by returning benefits forbenefits, and responding with either indifference or hostility to harms.”(). This is particularly relevant to issue at hand as perceived organisationalsupport (POS) is one of two ways in which reciprocity norm is measured. POS isthe amount of which employees believe that the company that they work forvalues the contributions that they themselves make towards the company andcares about the employees’ general wellbeing. Real life examplesIt is argued bySOMEONE that the link between organisations and their participation andattitudes towards social media is incredibly important as Ineffective socialmedia policies can lead to negative publicity and result in diminished companyperformance (). It can also lead to employees having motivational issues. It isfor these reasons that it is imperative that organisations have effective socialmedia policies.

Organisational policies revealand reflect the attitudes held by high level decision makers of the companies (Bassellier, Reich, & Benbazat, 2001; Merand, 2006). In the following section you will find a sample of socialmedia policies to deepen our understanding of the affordances of socialmedia in the workplace and of organisational governance associated with theseaffordances. AdidasThe first example of how companiesrespond to the contemporary issue of the governance of social media in theworkplace is Adidas. Adidas is an incredibly large company with offices andemployees situated in many different locations and they manage their employees’social media ventures by taking an incredibly strict, yet transparent approachwhen it comes to the company’s’ Social Media Guidelines. Below is an excerpt ofAdidas’ policy towards social media (): Employees are allowed to associate themselves with the company when posting but they must clearly brand their online posts as personal and purely their own. The company should not be held liable for any repercussions the employees’ content may generate. Content pertaining to sensitive company information (particularly those found within Adidas internal networks) should not be shared to the outside online community. Divulging information like the company’s design plans, internal operations and legal matters are prohibited.

Proper copyright and reference laws should be observed by employees when posting online. This is a very good way tp respond to govern social media in theworkplace as it provides a clear outline or which behaviours are expected and allowed(or not allowed) by the organisation and easily available to each member of thecompany meaning if an employee is in violation of one of the rules then it is notthe company’s fault. CNNFor the secondexample I will look at CNNs response to the issue of the governance of socialmedia in the workplace. In 2008, CNN fired a man named Cesare Pazienza formaintaining a personal blog ().

The termination of Pazienzas’ employment ledCNN to receive some negative media attention from other outlets and in an attemptto clarify the company’s position on the governing of social media, BarbaraLevin, a spokeswoman for the news network proclaimed that “ CNN has a policythat says employees must first get permission to write for a non-CNN outlet.”() CNN also sent an email to Pazienza outlining the company’s policy on social media(). Some argued that the case highlighted an as-yetunsolved challenge created by the mash-up of traditional media with socialmedia: how to maintain a corporate appearance of objectivity while allowingindividual corporate reporters unfettered expressions of subjectivity. It can be perceivedthat the failure lies with the managers within the organisation because theywere not transparent with the publication of company policy. Contrasting the two examplesBy pickinga positive and a negative application of social media governance carried out bythe two organisations it is possible to compare the examples previously stated andto compare them against each other and analyse the different ways the companieshave failed or succeeded and if there is any way that both of these companiesbehave with relation to social media governance. A notabletrend between both Adidas and CNN had to do with both of these organisations’growing recognition of social media and professionalisation of their responseto them.

For example, the policies enacted as mentioned earlier often providedstatements explicitly defining their scope and detailing the activities andtools the policy covered, however in CNNs case it was far detailed far too lateand only upon receiving negative publicity. In this sense, both of the earlierpolicies included an opening paragraph defining and Describing Social Media applications. In addition to delimiting theperimeter of their authority, these definitions and descriptions of socialmedia offered a pedagogical dimension as they informed employees about socialmedia, suggesting an acknowledgement of the new, and still rather unknown, character of social media in the organizational context. Our analysis revealed that the sampled policydocuments contained elements representative of organizations’ perceptions ofsocial media affordances as well as of the governance principles put forth byorganizations in response to these affordances. Overall, the organizations didindeed acknowledge the four affordances of visibility, persistence, editability, and association in the policies. Yet, they placed uneven emphasison different affordances as well as highlighted certain unanticipated facetsfor some of the affordances. Our analyses also unexpectedly found relationshipsamong the four affordances as well as between affordances and governanceprinciples.

Examples of responses to the issueOverall, Adidas’response to the issue of social media governance in the workplace is outstanding. On their specific website, they show the policy in it’s entirety (), whichmakes the employees in no doubt at all how they should act. The policy is alsoentirely reasonable without being too restrictive upon the employees’ speech.

By contrast, CNN handled this contemporary issue poorly. The managers of the company had notmade the rules of the company well known at all and only released them whenprompted by an ex-employee whose employment was terminated because ofviolations of a rule which he was not aware of. As a result of poor managementof this issue negative press was created by other news networks, damaging the company’sreputation, which is critically important for a news organisation, as they relyon members of the public trusting the source of the organisation in question. After analysingthe two, it is evident that Adidas sets out a perfect example of how managementshould deal with corporate governance of employees’ social media.

Unfortunately, CNNs response to the same contemporary management issue damaged the reputationthrough the leaked email they sent to the employee after they had been firedand by not making the employees of the news network aware of the standards andguidelines (). Upon reflection, the manager of CNN should have reemployed theworker who was fired and made the standards and guidelines for social mediaposts available to all employees through publication of the rules onto theinternet. ReflectionA year ago, Iworked for as an office administrator for a local cleaning company, APMcleaning and during my time working there one of the other members of staff, working as a cleaner was removed from their position for posting inappropriatecomments on the social media platform, Facebook. The comments were then reportedto the manager of the business and he was promptly removed from his positionand replaced. The company has a clear social media policy located on a pin-upboard in the entrance of the workplace.

If I were the manager of APM cleaning Iwould have responded in the same way but in the future, make it abundantlyclear to any new employees joining the company and outlining the policy on thewebsite of the company which would also increase the transparency of the companymaking the employees know for absolute certain what is and is not allowed to beposted on social media. Whilst in theprocess of researching social media governance in the workplace, I was shockedto find out how some managers and corporate higher-ups of successful companies, such as CNN have little to no transparency on the organisational policies ofsocial media governance within their company. I was also disappointed to find outthat many companies do not make their policies easily accessible for lower-levelemployees to view. Before conducting my research, I was expecting to find farmore examples of companies being to draconian with their attitudes towardssocial media posts, however during my research, I found it to be to the contraryand that many companies are realising the importance of online presence and assuch in an effort to stimulate online discussion about their organisations are looseningthe amount of governance placed upon the employees. Throughout the researchand writing of this report I have found many approaches which has greatlyhelped me as this now means that if I encounter any similar situations as tothe ones that I have researched I will able to solve the problems in a moreeffective way.