

Introduction user-generated content” (kaplan and haenlein, 2010). the



Introduction of the issue Social media is a phenomenon that has transformed the interaction and communication of individuals throughout the world (Edomswan et al., 2011). Social media websites are forms of electronic communication " that build upon ... the technological foundations of the internet and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The main uses of social media by employees are: blogs, social networking 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 on business due to being easily accessible and providing new ways of connecting with customers (Cisco, 2010; Dunn, 2010; Wilson, Guinan, Parise, & Weinberg, 2011). However, social media presents both challenges as well as opportunities for organisations. Employees are able to attempt new ideas and are able to make sure that ideas are executed relatively quickly (Vaast, 2010). This allows organisations to make themselves more agile and are able to respond to the demands of customers, who are also equipped with large platforms on social media and whose opinion can gravitate large numbers of new customers towards the business (Gallaughier , 2010). It is for these reasons that it is imperative that businesses make sure that the online presence is not negatively affected, however, resulting in the loss of some of management's traditional control over what IT initiatives and applications are being implemented and used within the organisation itself (Kane, Fichman, Gallaughier, & 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 project on public social networking sites; Kane et al., 2009). Organisations, on their own accord, may seek to encourage certain uses of social media and limit others, which justifies the need for governance.

In this regard, organisational policies constitute one of the main vehicles for social media governance available to organisations. Throughout this report, corporate control and the outlying reach of employers over employees' social media presence will be examined. Theories from the literature There are many different, sometimes contradictory theories relating to the topic of social media governance by different corporations. The first theory I will mention is a theory which is called the amplification hypothesis, which states that when uncertainty is expressed, the attitude of the person is fixed. Another theory relating to corporate governance of employee social media is conversion theory which means that the minority in a group can have a disproportionate effect on influencing those in the majority (). This is particularly important if businesses have a disgruntled employee who vents their frustration on social media and this can then lead to other employees shifting their viewpoints to matching those of the disgruntled employee which can have a snowballing effect meaning that swathes of employees can become demotivated relatively quickly.

A third theory relating to corporate governance of social media is reciprocity norm which is defined by ipfs as "the expectation that people will respond favourably to each other by returning benefits for benefits, and responding with either indifference or hostility to harms." (). This is particularly relevant <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-user-generated-content-kaplan-haenlein-2010-the/>

to issue at hand as perceived organisational support (POS) is one of two ways in which reciprocity norm is measured. POS is the amount of which employees believe that the company that they work for values the contributions that they themselves make towards the company and cares about the employees' general wellbeing. Real life examples It is argued by SOMEONE that the link between organisations and their participation and attitudes towards social media is incredibly important as ineffective social media policies can lead to negative publicity and result in diminished company performance (). It can also lead to employees having motivational issues. It is for these reasons that it is imperative that organisations have effective social media policies.

Organisational policies reveal and 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 social media policies to deepen our understanding of the affordances of social media in the workplace and of organisational governance associated with these affordances. Adidas The first example of how companies respond to the contemporary issue of the governance of social media in the workplace is Adidas. Adidas is an incredibly large company with offices and employees situated in many different locations and they manage their employees' social media ventures by taking an incredibly strict, yet transparent approach when it comes to the company's' Social Media Guidelines. Below is an excerpt of Adidas' 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 to respond to govern social media in the workplace as it provides a clear outline of which behaviours are expected and allowed (or not allowed) by the organisation and easily available to each member of the company meaning if an employee is in violation of one of the rules then it is not the company's fault. CNN For the second example I will look at CNN's response to the issue of the governance of social media in the workplace. In 2008, CNN fired a man named Cesare Paziienza for maintaining a personal blog ().

The termination of Paziienza's employment led CNN to receive some negative media attention from other outlets and in an attempt to clarify the company's position on the governing of social media, Barbara Levin, a spokeswoman for the news network proclaimed that " CNN has a policy that says employees must first get permission to write for a non-CNN outlet." () CNN also sent an email to Paziienza outlining the company's policy on social media (). Some argued that the case highlighted an as-yet unsolved challenge created by the mash-up of traditional media with social media: how to maintain a corporate appearance of objectivity while allowing individual corporate reporters unfettered expressions of subjectivity. It can be perceived that the failure lies with the managers within the organisation because they were not transparent

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with the publication of company policy. Contrasting the two examples By picking a positive and a negative application of social media governance carried out by the two organisations it is possible to compare the examples previously stated and to compare them against each other and analyse the different ways the companies have failed or succeeded and if there is any way that both of these companies behave with relation to social media governance. A notable trend between both Adidas and CNN had to do with both of these organisations' growing recognition of social media and professionalisation of their response to them.

For example, the policies enacted as mentioned earlier often provided statements explicitly defining their scope and detailing the activities and tools the policy covered, however in CNN's case it was far detailed far too late and only upon receiving negative publicity. In this sense, both of the earlier policies included an opening paragraph defining and Describing Social Media applications. In addition to delimiting the perimeter of their authority, these definitions and descriptions of social media offered a pedagogical dimension as they informed employees about social media, suggesting an acknowledgement of the new, and still rather unknown, character of social media in the organizational context. Our analysis revealed that the sampled policy documents contained elements representative of organizations' perceptions of social media affordances as well as of the governance principles put forth by organizations in response to these affordances. Overall, the organizations did indeed acknowledge the four affordances of visibility, persistence, editability, and association in the policies. Yet, they placed uneven emphasis on different affordances as well as highlighted

certain unanticipated facets for some of the affordances. Our analyses also unexpectedly found relationships among the four affordances as well as between affordances and governance principles.

Examples of responses to the issue Overall, Adidas' response to the issue of social media governance in the workplace is outstanding. On their specific website, they show the policy in its entirety (), which makes the employees in no doubt at all how they should act. The policy is also entirely reasonable without being too restrictive upon the employees' speech.

By contrast, CNN handled this contemporary issue poorly. The managers of the company had not made the rules of the company well known at all and only released them when prompted by an ex-employee whose employment was terminated because of violations of a rule which he was not aware of. As a result of poor management of this issue negative press was created by other news networks, damaging the company's reputation, which is critically important for a news organisation, as they rely on members of the public trusting the source of the organisation in question. After analysing the two, it is evident that Adidas sets out a perfect example of how management should deal with corporate governance of employees' social media.

Unfortunately, CNN's response to the same contemporary management issue damaged the reputation through the leaked email they sent to the employee after they had been fired and by not making the employees of the news network aware of the standards and guidelines (). Upon reflection, the manager of CNN should have reemployed the worker who was fired and made the standards and guidelines for social media posts available to all

employees through publication of the rules onto the internet. Reflection A year ago, I worked for as an office administrator for a local cleaning company, APM cleaning and during my time working there one of the other members of staff, working as a cleaner was removed from their position for posting inappropriate comments on the social media platform, Facebook. The comments were then reported to the manager of the business and he was promptly removed from his position and replaced. The company has a clear social media policy located on a pin-up board in the entrance of the workplace.

If I were the manager of APM cleaning I would have responded in the same way but in the future, make it abundantly clear to any new employees joining the company and outlining the policy on the website of the company which would also increase the transparency of the company making the employees know for absolute certain what is and is not allowed to be posted on social media. Whilst in the process of researching social media governance in the workplace, I was shocked to find out how some managers and corporate higher-ups of successful companies, such as CNN have little to no transparency on the organisational policies of social media governance within their company. I was also disappointed to find out that many companies do not make their policies easily accessible for lower-level employees to view. Before conducting my research, I was expecting to find far more examples of companies being too draconian with their attitudes towards social media posts, however during my research, I found it to be to the contrary and that many companies are realising the importance of online presence and as such in an effort to stimulate online discussion about their organisations are



loosening the amount of governance placed upon the employees. Throughout the research and writing of this report I have found many approaches which has greatly helped me as this now means that if I encounter any similar situations as to the ones that I have researched I will be able to solve the problems in a more effective way.