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RTE

Social Media Guidelines | Fourth Edition 2021

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Welcome to the RTÉ Social Media Guidelines

Social media provide an important tool for RTÉ output and are used widely by our audiences to consume our content, engage with our services, and extend our distribution.

Social media are also used by people who work for RTÉ in their personal lives. This document provides guidance for those who use social media for professional purposes and for some aspects of personal use.

Social media and public media are powerful partners. Social media allows people to enjoy our content in many ways and on many levels, and connects us with audiences.

Protecting the values that are at the heart of RTÉ's Public Service mission is something in which we are all involved. This Guidance will help to ensure that RTÉ protects one such core value: our commitment to impartiality. In a world of misinformation, extreme debate and heated exchange, the role of impartiality as a core value of public service media is more important than ever.

If you work for RTÉ, you are a representative of the organisation, both offline and also when online, including on social media. The same standards apply to your behaviour and conduct, regardless.

Section 1

General Guidance for All Staff

Reason for these Guidelines

These guidelines are meant to assist RTÉ staff and contractors in maintaining our high standards of independence and impartiality; they also aim to protect not only RTÉ's reputation, but also aim to protect you in what can be, at times, a hostile and confrontational environment. The key companion document is RTÉ's Journalism Guidelines; its protocols, principles and procedures are relevant, in all aspects, to what RTÉ does, and what you do, on social media.

What Is Meant By Social Media?

These guidelines cover all social media platforms including but not limited to:

- **Social Networking Sites** (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc);
- **Micro-blogging sites** (Twitter, etc);
- **Content creation** (TikTok, etc);
- **Blogs** (including company and personal blogs as well as comments on all social media platforms);
- **Video and Photo Sharing Websites** (Flickr, YouTube);
- **Forums and Discussion Boards** (Boards.ie, Google Groups, Yahoo! Groups);
- **Online Encyclopedias** (Wikipedia, etc).

Four Common-Sense Rules for Everyone

These rules apply to all those working for RTÉ, and apply to all classifications of accounts (see below):

- **Be Professional:** treat everyone with respect and courtesy and live RTÉ's values.
- **Be Sensible:** Don't bring RTÉ into disrepute.
- **Be Impartial:** If your work specifically requires you to maintain your impartiality, don't express personal opinions on matters of public discussion, contention or debate, or politics.
- **Be Fair:** Don't criticise or demean colleagues. Respect the privacy of your workplace and that of those you work alongside.

Classifications of Accounts

There is no difference between how a personal and an 'official' account is perceived on social media: disclaimers do not offer protection.

That's why everything published by RTÉ on social media is governed by the RTÉ's Journalism Guidelines and now also by this more detailed Guidance. The Guidance also applies, in large part, to the personal use of social media by anyone working for RTÉ.

RTÉ classifies social media accounts as follows:

- **Official Accounts**
(eg: @rte; @rtenews; @rteradio1; @rteplayer)
An account which is officially set up, monitored and managed by RTÉ staff in pursuit of audience, content and brand strategy.
- **Official Programme Account**
(eg: @drivetimerte; @morning_irland)
A programme account which is officially set up and monitored and managed by RTÉ.
- **Hybrid Personal Use by On-Air/Editorial Staff**
(eg: @miriamocal, @bryansixone)
A personal account that an on-air presenter, reporter, or other RTÉ staff member/contractor also uses for work related matters. Holders of such an account must comply with these guidelines when using a hybrid personal account for all use, including without limitation, personal and professional use.
- **Private Personal Use**
A personal account is a social media account set up and operated by an employee or contractor for personal matters and contains minimal association between the user and RTÉ. Nonetheless, these accounts, by nature of the owner's contractual association with RTÉ, are bound by our core rules and, in some cases, by RTÉ's Journalism Guidelines.



Section 1

General Guidance for All Staff

Continued

Principles and Practices

a) Protecting Our Values

When using social media accounts (All Classifications) either on behalf of RTÉ (Classification 1 & 2) or in a personal capacity (Classification 3 & 4), you should:

- Act responsibly;
- Understand the legal guidance documents referred to below (Section 1.1);
- Be authentic, truthful and respectful;
- Avoid disputes;
- Use common sense.

b) Protecting Our People

Whether you are a journalist, presenter, producer, account administrator or, indeed, you simply work for RTÉ, you may be exposed to negative or abusive comment from time to time. This may be general, or it may be personalised.

As a representative of RTÉ, you should at all times refrain from replying to abusive messages or engaging in related exchanges.

If you are the victim of online abuse (intemperate posts, messages or other content that may be personally critical and crudely expressed) or unfair commentary, do not engage with such messages/content and report immediately to your line manager.

So, if someone else is breaking the rules of engagement on a platform, try to avoid a public confrontation. Look for the appropriate reporting procedure of the social network in question, and escalate where appropriate.

Block and ignore: You can block someone if you find their comments offensive or if they're spamming you. Learn how to do so here:

[Facebook blocking](#)

[Twitter blocking](#)

[Instagram blocking](#)

[YouTube blocking](#)

[Snapchat blocking](#)

[TikTok blocking](#)

If it's gone too far

If you are subject to continuous abuse or feel threatened, or you feel your reputation has been impugned, you should report the behaviour to your line manager.

Procedures are in place to support you, and may involve access to support services (HR), reporting to An Garda Siochana (Health and Safety/Security) and reporting to the relevant platform (Communications).

Do not engage with the abuser or fuel their behaviour.

Contact and support

In addition to the above, each social media platform does have a dedicated help section which may have some useful guidance.

[Facebook help](#)

[Twitter help](#)

[Instagram help](#)

[TikTok help](#)

[Snapchat help](#)

[YouTube help](#)

c) Protecting Our Audiences (Terms of Use)

RTÉ's social media accounts share information about RTÉ content and services. We welcome audience comments, likes, shares and posts. As well as observing the native guidelines and terms of use on each platform, we have additional RTÉ community guidelines summarised below.

You can find more detail on Moderation in Section 1.3, where you will also see detailed advice on specific actions for abusive or inappropriate comments.

RTÉ manages its social media accounts in line with the regulatory environment in which we operate, and we operate under the RTÉ Journalism Guidelines 2020 and these Guidelines. Our values as an organisation, which you can view [here](#), guide our approach.

We actively monitor comments on RTÉ social media accounts to ensure adherence to the above and to the specific terms below.

As a result, we will remove posts, graphics, comments, video, photos or any other content, as well as mute, block or report users, in line with the below:

- Comments or replies that are potentially libellous, defamatory, insulting, abusive or disparaging
- Comments or replies that violate another's copyright or intellectual property
- Comments or replies that condone or promote illegal activity
- Comments or replies that are misleading, fraudulent or deceptive
- Comments or replies that use language or express views that are vulgar, hateful, discriminatory, racist, violent, threatening or harassing
- Comments or replies that are spam or intended to cause technical disruptions to an account or platform
- Comments or replies that disclose personal information about a person
- Comments or replies that are not related to the post under which it appears.

While we prefer not to, RTÉ reserves the right to block individuals/accounts which post material that falls into the above categories. RTÉ is not responsible for the accuracy of the opinions, information, advice or comments posted by others on our accounts.

If an audience member is adversely affected by comments on RTÉ's social media accounts, please refer them to info@rte.ie.

Escalation in cases of infringement of RTÉ content or attacks

If you notice a significant infringement of RTÉ content (e.g. creation of a fake 'Late Late Show' page with video content etc from the programme) on a social network then please refer to your local communications team. Depending on the rights' position and the nature of infringement, we may want to consider a formal takedown process. Please note that most social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have their own take-down processes which can take some time. RTÉ has a content team for YouTube, so please flag anything to playerteam@rte.ie

Key Escalation Contacts

See the Hub for an up-to-date list of key contacts.

In cases of PR/Brand attacks or instances of major controversy, please consult with your line manager in the first instance and escalate to the line management and Corporate Communications and Compliance teams as appropriate.

Where there is a personal attack on our journalists or presenters, or cases of misinformation on social media about broadcasts/reporting, notify newsdesk@rte.ie should be alerted for consultation with the Director of News/CA.



Section 1

General Guidance for All Staff

Continued

Breaches of Guidelines

These guidelines are contractually binding and form part of the terms and conditions of employment and/or engagement with RTÉ. Breach of these guidelines will be treated as a disciplinary matter for employees and subject to the normal courses of disciplinary action. Contractors may have their contracts terminated if found to have breached these guidelines.

Obligations and Constraints

We are all obliged to understand the constraints that apply to us as RTÉ staff or contractors when we operate, administrate or use social media that sits in one or more of the above categories.

Staff and contractors should be aware that publishing on social media is no different to publishing on traditional/mainstream media and must be aware of the risks that may arise as a result of publication on social media such as defamation, contempt and privacy and intellectual property rights infringement (including copyright and trademarks). Staff and contractors should refer to the legal guide documents that are available on the Hub (<http://hub.rte.ie/>).

These social media guidelines do not exist in isolation. For a better understanding of how these guidelines are informed by other related policies and guidelines, staff and contractors should be familiar with the relevant sections of the policy documents outlined below.

- **RTÉ Journalism Guidelines**

English: <http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/rte-journalism-guidelines-oct-2012-final.pdf>
Irish: <http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/rte-treoirinte-iriseoireachta-2012.pdf>

- **RTÉ Staff Manual**

English: <http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/RTÉ-Staff-Manual-2006.pdf>
Irish: <http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/RTE-Staff-Manual-2006-Irish1.pdf>

- **Chapter 7 Policies and Procedures, Section 6**

- **RTÉ Personal and Public Activities of Staff**

This section was updated in 2010 and the updated version can be accessed here: <http://hub.rte.ie/resources/rte-personal-and-public-activities-of-staff/>

Note: Section 6 [subsection 4] of the above document provides guidance around the area of RTÉ Staff and Politics.

- **RTÉ Code of Business Conduct (2010)**

- **RTÉ Child Protection Policy**

This policy was updated in June 2013 and developed in line with the requirements of “*Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011*”. <http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/RT%C3%89-Child-Protection-Policy-2013.pdf>

All of these documents are available on the RTÉ Hub: <http://hub.rte.ie/employee-services/human-resources/>

Section 2

Detailed Operational Guide for Set-up and Management of Official RTÉ Branded Social Media Accounts

This section relates to Official Accounts (Classification 1) and Official Programme Accounts (Classification 2). These are accounts set up and managed by RTÉ typically with a view to promoting services or programmes. These accounts (Classification 1 & 2) are the property of RTÉ and all material associated with the account be it content, friends, followers etc are owned by RTÉ. Examples are the @rtenews twitter account or the RTÉ Guide Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/rteguide>.

Context

This section is intended to help RTÉ Staff and contractors engage with users on RTÉ's own sites and with RTÉ authorised accounts on third-party social media sites. RTÉ encourages every production and related services team to actively consider the social media space.

2.1 Editorial Purpose

Social media development must be viewed as part of the commissioning process. Because all programmes and series are different, the application of social media will change from one production to the next. Some programmes will, by their nature, have little or no social media presence. Official Service & Official Programme accounts (Classification 1 & 2) must have a valid communications purpose in line with the platform/brand mission.

→ See Social Media Account and Strategy Checklist – Appendix 1.

It is strongly advised that all informal activity on third-party sites such as Facebook and on blogs be discussed with relevant managers to assess likely risks.

What is the editorial purpose? How does this fit in with the overall editorial and marketing strategy?

Does the social media account appeal to a key demographic that's not already being served via RTÉ.ie? Is this the right account with the right audience?

Does anything similar already exist? If it does, would working with an existing presence be better for the community and for RTÉ?

What commitments are the team willing to make to the social media account? Are the proper resources in place to keep it refreshed and relevant? For how long?

Is the topic of your social media account high risk [e.g. religion, sport, politics, etc.]?

What form of moderation will you employ on your socialmedia account? [See Section 4 - Moderation]

What happens to your online followers when the programme ends?

→ See Section 11 – Exit Strategy.

How will success be measured? What are the targets?

Is the overall time and resource investment likely to be worth the benefit the presence may deliver?

Accountability is essential. The Line Manager/Editor/ Communications Manager/Marketing Manager (as appropriate) will agree on designated social media administrator(s) for Official Service Accounts (Classification 1) and Official Programme Accounts (Classification 2), who will act as both editor and moderator. The social media administrator(s) will be a member of the relevant platform /editorial /marketing team. They will be responsible for maintaining, refreshing and moderating the account.

All social media administrator(s) must be familiar with the legal guide documents that are available on the Hub (<http://hub.rte.ie/>). Publishing on social media is the same as publishing on mainstream/ traditional media. The risks should be carefully considered prior to publishing on social media for example, defamation, contempt, privacy and intellectual property rights (e.g. copyright/ trademark) infringement.

The Legal Guide Documents are available here:

- **Legal Advice Note – Defamation and the Protection of Reputation**
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Protection-of-Reputation-KF1.pdf>
- **Legal Advice Note – Privacy Law**
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Privacy-Law-Advice-Note-April-20121.pdf>

- **Legal Advice Note – Contempt**
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Contempt-of-Court-and-Court-Reporting1.pdf>
- **Legal Advice Note – Copyright Infringement (Use of text, photographs, artistic works, audio and/or audio visual content from social networking/media sharing websites (“Websites”) on RTÉ service**
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Use-of-Material-from-Social-Networking-Websites-on-RTE-Services1.pdf>

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The social media administrator(s) are responsible for maintaining regular audience engagement when using third-party sites. This will help to keep track of active accounts and manage any risk-related situations that arise.

The use of non-RTÉ personnel [independent contractors or external agencies] to manage social media accounts (Classification 1 & 2) is fine once the proper insurances about responsibility are in place. (Note: Appendix 1: Clearance to Create a Class 1 or Class 2 Account and Section 1.3 around Moderation). RTÉ must have in-house administrator access on all social media accounts (Classification 1 & 2) even if administration of the account is designated to an independent production company, agency or external contractor.

Care must be taken when posting updates on Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) to ensure that posts are sent from the correct account. This is particularly important for social media administrator(s) using numerous accounts [and who may also have personal social media accounts]. Try not to be logged onto multiple accounts simultaneously, particularly on mobile devices. This can lead to posts being inadvertently published from wrong accounts or, worse again, posts meant for your personal account ending up on Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2).

Passwords

For security reasons, it is necessary to keep the number of those with access details, log-ins and passwords to a minimum. In addition to the social media administrator(s) a senior member of the programme team, usually the Series Producer/Editor, or manager, must at all times, have administrator access to the Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2). In addition, you must utilise and operate the multi-step native verification procedures for log-in relevant to your device and the platform.

In the event that an Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) is being administered by an independent production company, passwords should be changed only by prior agreement with RTÉ.

A list, including contact details, of those with access to the account must be held securely by a designated social media administrator. All passwords should be alphanumeric and include at least one symbol.

2.3 Moderation

Moderation is the monitoring and editorial administration of social media accounts.

It is necessary to understand the level of moderation an Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) requires in order to evaluate whether it should be post-moderated or reactively moderated. The more active the account, the more monitoring is required. No Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) should be left unchecked for prolonged periods.

Before setting up an Official Service/Programme Account (Classification 1 & 2) on a third-party social media platform it is essential for the Producer/Editor to evaluate the risk and to set clear guidelines for the social media administrator(s) around moderation. It is important also to establish a “House Rules” section for the community of users on the third-party social media platform.

→ See RTÉ Branding on Facebook and Twitter – Appendix 4.

Section 2

Detailed Operational Guide for Set-up and Management of Official RTÉ Branded Social Media Accounts

Continued

There are three basic forms of moderation:

Reactive Moderation

Reactive moderation is when the account owner of a social media account/site or a page passively manages it. When informed of a message that is either illegal or inappropriate, the account/site owner proceeds to moderate that comment by removing it.

Post-Moderation

Post moderation is when a social media account/site owner actively moderates comments that are posted to a social media account/site. Prior to being informed of an illegal or inappropriate comment, the moderator chooses to evaluate the comment and removes it.

Pre-Moderation (Restrictions)

Pre-moderation is effectively when a social media account/site owner chooses to restrict comments on a particular post. This is advisable when the content has more than usual potential to invite comment or commentary that is harmful to individuals or communities.

Specifically, RTÉ does not allow racist, sectarian, bullying or sexist comments. As a default, comments under videos uploaded to RTÉ's YouTube channel are pre-moderated. There are particular risks in and around the live broadcast of TV or radio programmes that contain competitive elements; from sports events to big ticket entertainment shows, output where emotions among audiences can run high.

It is important that management of social media moderation is particularly focused around peak periods, immediately before, during and after transmission and/or during press announcements about the series or advance publicity releases. However, all Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) need to be monitored regularly by the social media administrator(s) even when a programme is off-air.

Specific Actions Required

On Twitter

We have updated the T&Cs on RTÉ.ie/about as a guide for our followers. Racist, sectarian, bullying and sexist comments should be reported to Twitter.

A range of options exist for reporting, as follows:

1. I'm not interested in this Tweet
2. It's suspicious or spam
3. It's abusive or harmful
4. It expresses intentions of self-harm or suicide

In general, select option 3. Clarification will be sought as to who is being targeted; in general it is "someone else" or a specific group. Once specified, there is an option to then Mute or Block. Mute is preferred, however where an account demonstrates consistent abuses within these categories, it should be blocked.

Protecting minorities

Pre-moderation is not available for Twitter. However from time to time we may judge that one of our tweets contains content and or links that are likely to fall foul of abusive or inappropriate behaviour. In this case you should choose the reply limiting function.

Language: whilst the formal guidance is to censor bad language, we must recognise that profanity as a means of expression differs from profanity as a form of abuse or threat, and judge accordingly and carefully; "expressive" is not the same as "threatening".

Disagreement and Views

We allow our followers and users to disagree with RTÉ. Users may challenge us (frequently with the accusation of "fake news") however this is not sanctionable. Action should be taken only when such views are expressed inappropriately within the categories as specified, or if false allegations are made. Other followers or users may be bullied by third parties on our accounts. Action should be taken, as above, to report, and mute or block.

Note too that RTÉ staff may be the victim of bullying, specifically, overt threats and offensive language that feels threatening. In the case of overt threats, these should be screen-grabbed and reported to the responsible Line Manager, who will consider the appropriate escalation.

Other Twitter Issues: Often an account that tweets or replies inappropriately will be obviously fake (clues: multiple digits in handle; very small number of followers; few authored tweets). These should be reported (this account is fake) and blocked. Often, users use our tweets to spam replies. These should be reported (spam function) and blocked.

Disputes: note that where a follower disputes a muting, blocking, hiding or similar sanction, and queries same (for example, by DM or to the RTÉ Information Office), our policy is to refer them in general to the T&Cs on RTÉ.ie/about. We do not enter into a dialogue; as owner of the account, we reserve the right to moderate fairly within the protocols as set out above, and decisions are final.

On Facebook

The above guidance applies also to Facebook, however the remedies and choice of actions differ. In general, inappropriate comments may be hidden, or reported. Note that there are a multitude of remedies and options available for Facebook pages, too detailed to list here. Please read the detail at the link below carefully, and take time to understand your options in the context of these Guidelines and this additional guidance in particular. <https://www.facebook.com/help/329858980428740>

On Instagram

The above guidance applies also to Instagram, however the remedies and choice of actions differ. You should take time to understand the general RTÉ guidance in the context of the specific functionality available within Instagram. [https://help.instagram.com/527320407282978/?helpref=hc_fnav&bc\[0\]=Instagram%20Help&bc\[1\]=Privacy%20and%20Safety%20Center](https://help.instagram.com/527320407282978/?helpref=hc_fnav&bc[0]=Instagram%20Help&bc[1]=Privacy%20and%20Safety%20Center)

2.4 RTÉ Branding

→ See also Branding on Facebook and Twitter guidelines – Appendix 4.

The RTÉ Brand may not be used without permission and consultation. Permission to use any RTÉ brand must be sought before the logo is used.

Approved programme logos and associated logos can be obtained from the relevant Communications Department or online at www.rte.ie/branding.

Note that there are clear guidelines for the creation of avatars, and use of the core logo and / or service logo is mandatory. Incorrectly branded avatars, headers or other assets will be removed.

References to RTÉ should always carry a fada when used on all media, including third-party social media accounts. On those occasions where use of the fada will present a corrupted character/symbol, RTÉ can be displayed without a fada.

Programme teams should ensure that all programme images used by independent production companies on third-party websites including social media accounts (Classification 1 & 2) are approved and cleared for intellectual property rights such as copyright or trademarks. Additionally it is essential to include the brand/logo of your IBD/programme, or approved programme photography on third-party websites including social media accounts (Classification 1 & 2). This not only elevates awareness of the brand but also provides a higher level of openness and transparency.

Positioning yourself as an RTÉ brand means you must present yourself in a trustworthy and genuine manner. Programme teams should ensure that brand/logos, where used, are in accordance with RTÉ's brand guidelines at www.rte.ie/branding.

All headers should contain links back to the relevant landing page on RTÉ.ie.

Section 2

Detailed Operational Guide for Set-up and Management of Official RTÉ Branded Social Media Accounts

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The bio/information page should capture the RTÉ association, programme/campaign insight and any other information pertinent to the social media account [e.g. hours of operation, TX information etc].

If using approved programme photography, it should be clear to users that they are interacting with an Official Service or Programme Social Media Account (Classification 1 & 2) operated by RTÉ. You should superimpose the channel logo onto key images using the templates as specified at www.rte.ie/branding

Account naming

→ See also Branding on Facebook and Twitter guidelines – Appendix 4.

Where RTÉ programmes have a presence on social media, the programme name must appear with RTÉ preceding it [e.g. RTÉPrimeTime, RTÉMorningIreland]. It is also permitted for the channels to have a presence and they should appear with RTÉ preceding the station name [e.g. RTÉ2, RTÉRadio1]. It is permitted to use the RTÉ title without the fada only in the handle; the fada should be used on the name. For example: “RTÉ Radio 1”, @rteradio1.

2.5 Social Media Account Creation

All Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) must be set up by RTÉ, in conjunction with RTÉ e-mail addresses, to ensure that content can be linked across all platforms and the benefit to RTÉ is maximised.

→ See RTÉ Brand Guidelines and also branding on Facebook and Twitter guidelines – Appendix 4.

Please note that RTÉ's preference is that official Official Accounts (Classification 1) lead at all times; Official Programme Accounts for specific programmes (Classification 2) should only be opened where defined bespoke objectives exist; in fact, the creation of such accounts is discouraged.

For radio and TV programmes and/or series commissioned from the independent sector, all Official Service/ Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) should be set up, in the first instance, by RTÉ. A social media administrator(s) from the independent production company should then be designated as an additional point of contact. Official Service/ Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) should NOT be set up as pages on independent production company corporate sites. Log-in details and passwords must be forwarded to the programme/series Editor[s] and the relevant Communications division. These should not be changed without 24 hours prior notification to same and should never be changed during transmission of the programme without consultation.

Programme teams should conduct online searches before new Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) are created to determine if existing accounts, sites, pages or profiles can be used more effectively instead. RTÉ also has contractual partnerships with social networking sites for example [YouTube] and the relevant marketing department should be consulted before developing any Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2).

If mistakes are made in the creation of new Official Service/ Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) it is essential to correct or delete them. Deletion usually needs to be done in collaboration with the third-party social media platform and may require input from a senior RTÉ manager.

Privacy settings

Be aware that the use of social media can expose you and RTÉ to scams and other threats. Please review the privacy settings when setting up a social media account (Classification 1, 2 & 3) and ensure you use a strong password to protect the account. It is important to never use the same password across third-party websites and make sure the password is unique so as to elevate its strength level. If in doubt you should consult RTÉ Technology's guidelines on strong passwords available here <http://hub.rte.ie/resources/strong-password-guidelines/>



Section 2

Detailed Operational Guide for Set-up and Management of Official RTÉ Branded Social Media Accounts

Continued

2.6 Engagement

Before an Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) is launched (be it a page/profile/site) you must determine what level of audience engagement is desired, what resources are needed and over what period of time this will take place. For example, a Facebook page that promotes upcoming editions of a TV programme by utilising clips, promos and/or teaser information will need continuous updating.

→ See Social Media and Your Show – Appendix 1.

Tone of voice

We are interested, and interesting. We are respectful, restrained, and we live our values.

→ See note on Moderation and “House Rules”.

Behaviour likely to cause extreme offence [racist and sexist insults, for example] should not be tolerated by RTÉ or on an RTÉ-branded space within a social networking site and offending comments should be removed. Neither should behaviour that is likely to put young people at foreseeable risk or harm be tolerated. (Refer to section 1.12 Children & Young People under the age of 18). Where we do intervene, we will do so responsibly and sensitive to expectations.

Friends/Follows/Likes

When using social media accounts (All Classifications) you may want to “like” a page on Facebook or “follow” an account or individual on Twitter, but remember that a “like” or a “follow” may make other users think they are more trustworthy – it can be seen as an endorsement by you or RTÉ.

If you have any doubts about whether you should follow an account on Twitter or “like” a page on Facebook, don’t.

Tweets/Retweets

When using social media accounts (All Classifications) always consider the possible implications of the content that you are about to post. Could it reflect badly on you or RTÉ? If so, don’t publish.

Remember the constraints and obligations you carry on RTÉ’s behalf as a staff member or contractor. Retweeting a post by an RTÉ colleague or an RTÉ headline is unlikely to be a problem. In some cases, however, you’ll need to consider the risk of retweeting third-party content as it may seem like an RTÉ endorsement of the original author’s point of view, product or programme.

Posting video and audio

All video and audio recordings made for the purpose of uploading on Official Accounts and/or Official Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) are to be produced to the highest quality and standards.

When posting RTÉ content on social media accounts (All Classifications), check any and all rights, clearances and copyright/ trademark permissions have been obtained. If unsure you should review contracts with the relevant Line Manager to ensure that RTÉ has the necessary clearance for the rights in the content you are about to publish.

No self-produced, behind-the-scenes video or audio can be uploaded on any social media accounts (All Classifications) without prior approval from the programme producer.

No “reveals” of programme content or story-lines are permitted ahead of transmission dates or publicity strategy timelines.

Linking to video and audio

When using social media accounts (All Classifications) do not link to video and audio posts that could bring you or RTÉ into disrepute. Be mindful of these guidelines, RTÉ’s Journalism Guidelines, general standards of decency, appropriate language, and content.

Linking to RTÉ content

RTÉ’s strategy is to focus on engaging with users on the sites they visit, in the conversations they are having, as well as directing to additional information and content on the various RTÉ output channels. Some users may currently consume little or no RTÉ content and this provides a way for them to discover the depth and breadth of what we have to offer. On Official and/or Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) it is essential, therefore, to link back to RTÉ in some manner [e.g. RTÉ One, rte.ie, RTÉ 2fm, etc.]

If, however, it becomes necessary to link to other social networking or microblogging sites, this should clearly be for editorial purposes. This should always be the case when referring to any external links.

On air, we shouldn't only note the RTÉ URLs but, when possible, should also highlight our presence on third-party sites. However, this should be done while maintaining the integrity of the RTÉ brand.

YouTube

RTÉ official YouTube channel facilitates short clips and extra footage. Do not start a YouTube account for any RTÉ programme, series or event. Ensure that independent producers do not start YouTube accounts or use their own existing YouTube accounts for video related to RTÉ content. Contact the relevant RTÉ Marketing/RTÉ Press office to discuss uploading clips to the RTÉ YouTube channel. Please consider in advance of publication whether it would be prudent to disable comments.

Soliciting Contributors or Programme Participants

Any intention to use social media accounts (All Classifications) to promote participation in contests, to seek the submission of material to RTÉ or for any other campaign that requests user information [e.g User Generated Content] **must be presented to the relevant Line Manager in your area.**

Such participation needs to be managed consistent with RTÉ's policies and guidelines listed in the appendices of this document. **A full proposal outlining the reason for requesting this form of participation needs to be submitted and then approved by your Line Manager.**

If you are soliciting contributors and programme participants under the age of 18, or through an account aimed at children and young people, refer to subsection 1.12 Children & Young People and RTÉ's updated Child Protection Policy which must be complied with.

2.7 Rights Issues & Clearance

All designated social media administrator(s) must be familiar with the legal guide documents that are available on the Hub (<http://hub.rte.ie/>). Publishing on social media raises the same issues as publishing on mainstream/traditional media; thus [social media administrators/ you] must be aware/ mindful of issues such as defamation, contempt and privacy and copyright and/or trademark or other intellectual property rights infringement.

Make sure you understand, and are comfortable with, the terms and conditions of third-party social media sites before uploading RTÉ material or inviting users to upload user-generated content to social media accounts (All Classifications). By uploading RTÉ content, it is likely that we are agreeing to and will be bound by the site's terms.

If you wish to use content from third-party social media sites, make sure RTÉ has obtained the necessary rights clearance to any content prior to using it e.g. If in doubt, contact your Line Manager for confirmation. RTÉ is potentially liable to the social media site itself and the rights holder of the content if material is posted that is not cleared.

If you want to use uploaded RTÉ content from other output areas [e.g. Radio or TV], you should consult with that programme to get the permissions necessary to facilitate this.

Third party social media platforms' terms and conditions often state that the site is for personal use only. Be aware, therefore, that if you use such a site to promote RTÉ content, RTÉ may technically be in breach.

There is a possibility that third party users will use RTÉ content and RTÉ trademarks which RTÉ makes available on third-party social media sites; while this may be an acceptable risk, RTÉ content and RTÉ trademarks and/or brands should only be posted for as long as necessary and be removed once they have achieved their purpose on the third-party social media site.

Make sure you set up all necessary privacy settings on social media accounts (All Classifications) in order to manage risk. However, keep in mind there is no privacy on the web.



Section 2

Detailed Operational Guide for Set-up and Management of Official RTÉ Branded Social Media Accounts

Continued

Protection and Intervention

All third party social networking sites have instituted various measures for protecting themselves and for intervening in contentious situations; these aren't standard and can change from site to site. RTÉ Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) should never set out to duplicate these processes.

There are some circumstances in which RTÉ will need to plan and implement an additional "light touch" intervention [e.g. to remove comments posted by others that are likely to cause offence]. Depending on the situation, you'll need to work out the appropriate action and decide on how this action should be done, who should do it and when. If you are unsure whether or not intervention is necessary, your Line Manager will determine how best to move forward.

2.8 Crisis Management

What's a social media "crisis"? For these purposes, it can be anything from an inaccurate post being published on a social media account, to an account being hacked. Managing the incident may simply be a case of deleting a post published inadvertently.

Ultimately, it is best not to try to hide mistakes but important too not to get drawn into discussions and arguments on such issues on social media platforms. Use the same tone when rectifying any error that you'd use when normally posting to that account. Don't suddenly become very official if you generally use a light-hearted tone. But be careful not to make things worse.

Choose your words carefully; tone sometimes gets lost in written communication. React as quickly as possible and try to move on swiftly. By reacting slowly, it may look like RTÉ is ignoring an issue, and this can be interpreted as ignoring a potentially serious error.

Try also to capture screen grabs of the tweet/posting as evidence of what precisely was published.

The social media administrator(s) of Official or Official Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) **must** regularly monitor social media platforms for reaction to programmes and postings and act promptly to negate any damage.

If you are concerned about a mistake or incident consult your supervisor. For serious breaches, also inform the relevant Press Office so as they are fully informed should they need to deal with any media attention the incident may attract.

Who to contact in case of a social media crisis: Your local communications manager.

Messaging on social media platforms during a crisis cannot be completely controlled, but engagement and a quick response can counteract inaccuracies before they become damaging.

Following consultation with Legal and your line manager, it may be advisable for a senior staff member to tweet or to post a carefully worded message on the relevant social media account (Classification 1 & 2) after the event so as to clarify the incident and the outcome, reaching out to those who were most active during the crisis to alert them to this follow-up.

If the security of an Official or Programme Account (Classification 1 & 2) has been breached, requesting all those with access to the account to log out and changing the password is sufficient.

2.9 Exit strategy

It is important to have a clear plan from the start about how long the association between RTÉ and the Official RTÉ Service and/or Programme Accounts (Classification 1 & 2) be it a site/ profile/page will last.

It is incumbent on the social media administrator(s) to maintain the account or to arrange an exit. Above all, the account should not be neglected carrying risk to RTÉ and its brand.

If a programme is not envisaged to endure beyond a single series, and no obvious strategic purpose can be argued for a presence on social media platforms, then a dedicated social media account (Classification 2) may not be worthwhile. Often the RTÉ website provides a platform that can amply meet the needs of programme-makers [i.e. in terms of recruitment, call-outs, casting etc].

Section 2

Detailed Operational Guide for Set-up and Management of Official RTÉ Branded Social Media Accounts

Continued

If an Official Service/Programme Account (Classification 1& 2) does exist and a programme will be off-air for a significant length of time i.e more than a month, then a migration/exit strategy needs to be implemented. The social media administrator(s) should publish a post that directs fans/followers to alternative RTÉ social media accounts (Classification 1& 2) in order to retain and share that fan base. If no regular posts and moderation are planned during a hiatus, that programme's social media stream should be closed off to posts and comments by others and perhaps unpublished until such time as moderation is reinstated.

Exit and migration plans on all Official Service/Programme Accounts (Classification 1& 2) must be communicated to RTÉ Marketing and Communications departments.

2.10 Advertising

It is commonly understood that advertisements which appear on RTÉ's Official Service or Programme Accounts (Classification 1& 2) on third-party social media platforms are outside of RTÉ's control, not connected with the organisation or its output and fall under the third-party social media platform's authority. However, it is still your responsibility to keep an eye on the full range of advertisements that appear on RTÉ's Official Service or Programme Accounts (Classification 1&2).

You should alert your Line Manager immediately if unacceptable advertisements appear.

RTÉ content uploaded to third-party sites by RTÉ should not include any advertising.

2.11 Children & Young People

As outlined in RTÉ's Child Protection Policy, a child means a person under the age of 18 years. Young people, as per the same policy, can be regarded as children between the ages of 15 and 18 years of age. As mentioned earlier in these guidelines all staff should be familiar with RTÉ's Child Protection Policy.

Staff should be sensitive to the minimum age requirements on different social networking sites, which is often set at 13 years. This is intended to prevent users below the minimum age from registering for full membership and

then being able to publish online. But they also give a clear indication from the site owner about what the owner considers to be a suitable minimum age for casual visitors, even though the site owner may not be able to enforce this.

Some social networking sites attract a significant proportion of children and young people particularly those aged 13 and upwards. This is a demographic which is clearly prone to risk on social networking sites.

Where an RTÉ Official Service/Programme Account (Classification 1& 2) is directed at children and young people, the social media administrator(s) for that account should ensure:

- Communication on the account is open, clear, unambiguous and should be suitable for the likely audience of the relevant RTÉ brand or programme/strand
- RTÉ content uploaded to the account should be suitable for the likely audience on the social media account (Classification 1, 2 & 3);
- User generated content, inspired by an RTÉ call to action, should be suitable for the likely audience on the social media account (Classification 1, 2 & 3) and parental consent should be obtained.
- Social media administrator(s) who, through the course of the management of an account receive allegations of abuse or who become concerned about the welfare of a child must report all such allegations and/or concerns to RTÉ's Designated Liaison person in accordance with RTÉ's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

2.12 Product Endorsements

RTÉ's revised programme makers' guidelines and journalism guidelines are explicit on the need for editorial integrity and independence. In this regard, administrators of accounts (all classifications) must never knowingly endorse a product or service in return for monetary benefit or benefit in kind (for example, a gift). Endorsements could take the form of a promotional tweet, a link, a favourable Facebook post, or other recommendations.

Section 3

Personal Social Media Accounts of RTÉ Staff and Contractors

3.1 What is meant by Hybrid Personal/Personal Account?

This section refers to the use of social media by RTÉ staff and contractors of social media accounts which have not been set up or managed by RTÉ.

Outside of official RTÉ social media accounts (Classification 1&2), RTÉ considers all other social media accounts, of staff and contractors, to be personal accounts (Classification 3&4).

RTÉ recognises that personal accounts, particularly those of on-air/ editorial staff, are likely to be associated with RTÉ, a likelihood which increases significantly if the social media account is used for work purposes; for example, if you post content related to your position in RTÉ or you use your account to highlight upcoming programmes or series.

In devising a common sense, practicable approach to social media, considering existing usage, RTÉ splits the classification of personal accounts into two categories:

Class 3 *Hybrid Personal Account*
Class 4 *Personal Account*

3.2 Hybrid Personal Accounts (Classification 3)

This is a personal account that an on-air presenter, reporter, or other RTÉ staff member/contractor also uses for work related matters. Holders of such an account must comply with these guidelines and the RTÉ Journalism Guidelines – to the letter - when using a hybrid personal account for all use, including without limitation, personal and professional use.

RTÉ accepts that these accounts may be used legitimately in connection with RTÉ business however the account remains the responsibility of the account owner. If RTÉ staff and contractors choose to use personal social media accounts for work purposes they should observe the following:

- You should identify yourself as an RTÉ employee or contractor in the profile/biography.
- You should use a personal image and not the RTÉ logo.

- You should include language to indicate that shared links, retweets, etc, do not constitute endorsements.
- Hybrid Personal accounts (Class 3) should contain the disclaimer: "*The views expressed are my own and do not express the views of RTÉ.*" However, be mindful that this disclaimer offers no protection in the event of libel or defamation.

This disclaimer should be displayed in the interests of transparency and maintaining trust with the public. Its purpose is to alert online users to the personal nature of the account. However, note that it does not serve as protection and staff and contractors are liable for their accounts and are bound by these guidelines. RTÉ could also be vicariously liable for acts of its employees. Humorous or arch phrasing of this disclaimer is not appropriate.

Note: Staff with existing hybrid personal social media accounts should retrospectively inform their line manager if the account references "RTÉ" in the account name. If you wish to start using a hybrid personal social media account (Classification 3), discuss the potential risks and conflicts of interest with your line manager.

3.3 Personal Accounts (Classification 4)

A personal account (Classification 4) is a social media account set up by an employee or contractor of RTÉ for personal matters and contains minimal association between the user and RTÉ (example: a personal Facebook page). Nonetheless, these accounts, by nature of the owner's contractual association with RTÉ, are bound by these guidelines. When commenting on matters of controversy or public debate, you are reminded to be mindful of any perceptions of impartiality, even if inadvertent.

Section 3

Personal Social Media Accounts of RTÉ Staff and Contractors

Continued

If you operate a personal social media account (Classification 4), you may say that you work for RTÉ in your profile/ biography but accounts should then contain the following line: "The views expressed are my own and do not express the views of RTÉ."

→ RTÉ Staff should read this in conjunction with Chapter 7, Section 6 of the RTÉ Staff Manual – RTÉ's Policy on the Personal and Public activities of Staff as well as Appendix 5 of the RTÉ Code of Business Conduct (Sections 7 & 12).

2.3 Ownership of RTÉ content on Personal Accounts
RTÉ owns the Intellectual Property Rights to RTÉ related content on hybrid personal and/or personal accounts (Classifications 3&4). RTÉ reserves the right to instruct RTÉ staff and contractors to do such acts as are necessary to transfer ownership of such content to RTÉ. RTÉ reserves the right to instruct RTÉ staff and contractors to remove RTÉ related content from their hybrid personal and/or personal social media accounts (Classifications 3&4).

RTÉ reserves the right to instruct RTÉ staff and contractors to remove content from hybrid personal and/or personal social media accounts which brings RTÉ into disrepute (Class 3 & Class 4).

Failure to comply with instructions referred to in this paragraph 2.3 will be treated as a disciplinary matter for employees and subject to the normal courses of disciplinary action. Contractors may have their contracts terminated.

Principles & Practices for Personal Accounts

The principles and practices outlined in these guidelines should be followed; however these guidelines do not exist in isolation and are informed by other related RTÉ policy documents. Individuals should understand the obligations and constraints as employees and contractors, as laid out in the 'obligations & constraints' section in the introduction to these guidelines.

Disrepute: Although acting in a private capacity, you are still a public representative of RTÉ.

Do not bring RTÉ into disrepute.

- Consider the consequences of whom or what you are following.
- When engaging in online dialogue, avoid personal attacks and insults.
- Do not post links to inappropriate material.
- Impartiality: RTÉ staff and contractors should be mindful of the need for impartiality and objectivity at all times.
- Editorial Staff should not state political preferences or compromise their impartiality
- Editorial staff should not reveal their personal feelings or bias on current news topics
- Non-editorial staff should consider very carefully how their views might be interpreted in the context of RTÉ's overall commitment to balance, fairness and impartiality.

Can You Use It: Staff should be aware that disputes or controversy arising from posts on hybrid pages have the potential to damage RTÉ and may have legal implications. Always check the terms and conditions of the relevant social media platform, for example: Facebook – uploaded content remains the property of the person who uploaded it.

The Legal Guide Documents are available here:

- Legal Advice Note – Defamation and the Protection of Reputation
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Protection-of-Reputation-KF1.pdf>
- Legal Advice Note – Privacy Law
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Privacy-Law-Advice-Note-April-20121.pdf>
- Legal Advice Note – Contempt
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Contempt-of-Court-and-Court-Reporting1.pdf>
- Legal Advice Note – Copyright Infringement (Use of text, photographs, artistic works, audio and/or audio visual content from social networking/media sharing websites (“Websites”) on RTÉ service
<http://hub.rte.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Use-of-Material-from-Social-Networking-Websites-on-RTE-Services1.pdf>

Privacy & Confidentiality

Be careful with details of your private life and the private life of others including without limitation the privacy of users on social networking sites; this can affect public perception.

- Do not criticise colleagues or reveal confidential information of RTÉ or third parties.
- Do not compromise or reveal confidential sources.
- RTÉ Staff and/or contractors must not post original or internal RTÉ copy until it has been first published by RTÉ.
- Social Media should not be used to promote personal/ third party business interests, without declaration of potential conflicts of interest.

Section 4

Using Material from External Third Party Social Media Sites

RTÉ recognises that social media provides a source for material which may be used in the course of reporting a story and/or making a programme.

The guidance below is particularly relevant to RTÉ's Editorial staff such as journalists, editors, producers who use information on social media sites in the course of their work, but all RTÉ Staff and contractors should be familiar with the guidance outlined in this section.

This section covers the use of material from all social media platforms including but not limited to:

- **Social Networking Sites** (Facebook, LinkedIn)
- **Micro-blogging sites** (Twitter)
- **Blogs** (including company and personal blogs as well as comments)
- **Video and Photo Sharing Websites** (Flickr, YouTube)
- **Forums and Discussion Boards** (Boards.ie, Google Groups, Yahoo! Groups)
- **Online Encyclopaedias** (Wikipedia, Sidewiki)

4.1 Information gathering & Source Material

Care should be taken when using material emanating from social media sites and streams. Treat source information as you would information from any other source. There is never any presumption of accuracy until the information is checked and verified. General guidance is outlined below however staff should read this in conjunction with *RTÉ's Journalism Guidelines & RTÉ Programme Standards & Guidelines*.

Principles & Practices

- **Accuracy:** Can you independently verify this information as accurate? If not, don't use it.
- **Can you use it?**: Material on websites may not necessarily produce content that complies with Irish law relating to defamation, privacy or contempt. Check the terms and conditions of the relevant social media platform, for example Facebook, uploaded content remains the property of the person uploading it. Ensure all relevant clearances are obtained prior to publication e.g copyright/trademark clearance.
- **Attribution:** If a story originates online from a social media or source, it should be attributed as such.
- **Gathering Information:** Save any web pages or links used in the course of researching a story. Tweets and posts can be deleted by posters and their existence denied. To counteract this, save the material in the form of a screen grab as evidence of its initial existence.
[Press Ctrl + Alt + Print Scrn, which copies the screen image; Paste into Paint, which is on all Windows PCs, in the Accessories folder].
 - In the case of Twitter, look at the number of tweets sent by the relevant account. Examining the number of tweets and their content will give a good idea regarding the veracity of the account.



Section 4

Using Material from External Third Party Social Media Sites

Continued

- **Hoaxes & Spoofs:** Be mindful of the existence of bogus accounts. Many websites and social media streams contain bogus information [such as spoof news reports]. Some campaigning and activist sites mimic the domain names and lay-outs of official sources for the purposes of satire or misinformation. Online searches should be carried out to ensure that a social media account is unique. **If there are two accounts purporting to be from the same user, there is a strong possibility that at least one of the accounts is a fake. #**
- **You should perform thorough provenance checks** before using material from websites or social media streams. Check the “About Us” section on websites, or similar tools provide domain information such as domain registrar, status, administrative and technical contact information for the owner of any domain name, IP and IP location information].
 - Accounts that have considerably fewer followers than are being followed should be treated with extra caution.
 - **Bias:** As with any medium, hidden commercial or political agendas can shape social media content. Checking links from a website can often reveal political or commercial affiliations.
 - **Out of Date Information:** Even trustworthy sources can contain pages that are not updated. Always use recognised sources to corroborate that information found online is current.
- **Privacy:** Huge numbers of individuals post material – including pictures, audio and video – which may reveal information about themselves. This material is generally for the benefit of friends and acquaintances and the uploader retains ownership of such material. [Such material should not be used without the consent of its owner.] A balance needs to be struck between appropriate use of material that an individual may have unthinkingly put in the public domain and respect for their privacy even if they have become part of a news story. If in doubt about whether to use material consult your line manager.

Appendix 1

Social Media and Your Show

There are many ways that you can integrate social media into your show. Below are some examples.

You may wish to view the presentation by Twitter's Dan Biddle, which is available on the RTÉ Hub.

However, it is advised that you meet with Communications before you go into production to explore what approach best suits.

Call outs and information

For all call outs and general information use the official Facebook and Twitter accounts.

To generate content

Use Twitter and Facebook to ask viewers for their ideas for content [best guests, questions for guests, jokes, opinions, topics etc.]. The administrator on the account needs to manage this and moderate responses.

To build characters and drama

If the presenter/character in your programme does not have his/her own social media account, there may be a case for setting up a specific social media account for the run of the show. Blogs are also a good option here.

To generate discussion around your programme

Viewers are increasingly using Twitter to connect with each other as they comment on a TV show while they're viewing. To generate Tweets about your show, use verbal call outs and onscreen straps [details below] and the hashtag for your show or the hashtag for a particular question eg #elev8 or #whatlouldo or #dothisfirst.

Competitions and giveaways

This is a great way to build followers and can be an ideal match for shows with merchandise to distribute. Offering prizes and running competitions through Facebook and Twitter will build viewers around a particular show, or a particular idea featured in a show. Please contact the RTÉ Competitions team to discuss appropriate Terms & Conditions and any plans for giveaways under an RTÉ-branded account.

Exit strategy

It is important to have a clear plan from the start about how long the association between RTÉ and the site/profile/page will last.

If a social media stream does exist and a programme will be off-air for a significant length of time [more than a month] then a migration/exit strategy needs to be implemented. Discuss this with the Marketing and Communications Departments prior to setting up accounts.

Appendix 2

Case Study: RTÉ Branding on Facebook and Twitter

Social media accounts should only be set up following approval from the relevant Line Manager and following permission from the Marketing and Communications departments and/or the Social Media Co-ordinator. All accounts should be set up as stand-alone and not through independent producers' corporate pages. Login and password details must be forwarded to the Commissioning Editor and RTÉ Television Press Office. These should not be changed without 24 hours notification to the relevant RTÉ contacts and should never be changed during transmission of the programme without prior consultation with RTÉ.

2.1 Facebook

2.1.1 Naming an account

RTÉ must appear in the name of ALL social media accounts. The preferred style is: RTÉ/Name of Show. RTÉ should also be mentioned in the description and the page should also carry full transmission details. If using Facebook too far in advance as to be accurate on transmission details, contact the TV Press Office. Include the name of the broadcast channel and include the correct corporate branding of RTÉ One and RTÉ Two [and not RTE 1 and RTE 2]. Include a website url at the top of the description.

Once a Facebook name is established and you pass 100 'fans', the name cannot be changed, so this MUST be done correctly at the outset.

2.1.2 Account Description

The cover photo and profile image on the account should always be officially approved by RTÉ and the cover photo should feature an RTÉ logo. Logos can be added using basic photo manipulation programmes [Gimp is free to download and is simple to use]. Be careful when adding logos to ensure the positioning is appropriate and doesn't interfere with the branding of the programme. Approved programme logos and associated images can be obtained from the relevant communications department or http://www.rte.ie/branding/user/print/print_eps_serviceslogo.html

House Rules

A section on 'House Rules' should also be included on the information page. This is useful in the moderation of comments. Suggested wording:

"We encourage fans of [Programme] to leave comments on this page. However, we will review all comments and remove any that we deem inappropriate or offensive. We will leave what you share that relates to the subjects covered on this page. We reserve the right to block users who violate these "House Rules". Comments posted unless otherwise stated do not represent the opinions of [Programme], [Production Company] or RTÉ."

2.2 Twitter

2.2.1 Naming an official RTÉ account

RTÉ must appear in the name of ALL class 1 and 2 social media accounts.

The account name is restricted in length to 20 character spaces, so bear this in mind even at the earliest stages of your pre-production. Plans to have a big social media presence may fall down if the account name doesn't transfer properly onto these platforms.

The preferred style is: RTÉ/Name of Show, with the handle [@]. For Example: RTÉ Fair City [account name], @RTEFairCity.

The fada is to be used in all references to RTÉ but the fada cannot be used in the handle (@), and shouldn't be used in hashtags. In these cases, leave out the fada.

2.2.2 Hashtags

When deciding on a hashtag, choose one that is organic and simple. Only include RTÉ in the hashtag in order to differentiate from a programme of the same name on another channel [e.g. Don't Tell The Bride – #rtedttb. BBC Three uses #bbcdttb; The Voice of Ireland – #rtethevoice – BBC One uses #thevoiceuk).

Account Description

RTÉ should be mentioned in the description, as well as full transmission details [include the channel – with correct branding of RTÉ One or RTÉ Two not RTE 1 or RTE 2]. You only have 160 characters, so try to be snappy. Use intelligent abbreviations and don't use text spelling. This description can be changed at any time, especially if you want to give different emphasis while the programme is in production, in its promo phase, during transmission and also post-transmission. Include a website url in the section for that link.

Avatars

Only RTÉ approved official photos or artwork should be used as avatars and they should include the RTÉ logo [channel specific]. Service logos should be stacked. Please refer to www.rte.ie/branding.



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