

Law Firm Helping Companies Manage Social Media Risk

MySocialPolicy Reducing Risk In The Social Workplace

In an historic first in

Australia, a law firm (BlandsLaw) has developed a suite of social media policy products, designed to assist companies and suppliers manage their social media risk. As BlandsLaw has extensive expertise in workplace and commercial law and is an active user of social media, they are well placed to advise companies on the many aspects of social media. "I would call us a 'social' law firm" says General Manager, Vivienne Storey. "Meaning that social media is integrated into the way we do business, not just used as an add on or marketing afterthought." Australians are among the most avid consumers of social media worldwide with nearly 11 million users on Facebook as of December 2011 (socialmedianews.com.au).

And it's not just about sharing photos and status updates with friends.

Businesses are increasingly using social media to engage with customers. LinkedIn Australia, the professional social networking site, now has over two million members. With

an increasing number of cases relating to social media in the courts, this suite of social media policy products is a timely resource for employers. Implementing a social media policy helps ensure employers are across the potential risks faced with the increasing use of social media in the workplace. Postings

on Facebook and the general use of social networking sites by individuals to display their displeasure with employers, employees and coworkers are becoming common. Nearly every business is affected by it.

Even a business that doesn't make use of social media for recruiting or branding purposes can be affected by what others post about it, including their own employees. And unless employees have clear guidance to tell them what type of social media posting is acceptable and what is not, they may think they have free reign to post whatever they want,

including information about the company. Some of the risks companies face include: Leaking of confidential information (often inadvertently) Bringing the company into disrepute Potential unfair dismissal claims Public airings of employee grievances Ambiguity regarding ownership of social media accounts Adverse impact on brand reputation The

recent case where Fair Work Australia found against Linfox for an unfair dismissal case, where an employee was making disparaging remarks about his employer on Facebook, further highlights the need to have a well thought out social media policy that employees are trained on.

Policies should be comprehensive and tailored to the work place in order to be relied upon in a court case. "Additionally, a strategically executed social media policy can be an invaluable training resource to ensure employees understand the social media medium and its inherent risks", says Vivienne. The social

media policy products have been separately branded under the

MySocialPolicy identity and more detailed information can be found at <http://mysocialpolicy.com.au> Press Contact Vivienne Storey General Manager BlandsLaw Tel: 61 2 98055600 Vivienne.storey@blandslaw.com.au www.blandslaw.com.au www.mysocialpolicy.com.au

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