



## **CFRU 93.3 FM Online Communications Policy – Staff and Board of Directors Manual**

Approved October 28 2013

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees of University of Guelph Radio / Radio Gryphon and its related companies ("CFRU"). For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation to; blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube (or other sites associated with CFRU) and the CFRU Website. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet for staff and board of directors under the Collective Agreement and/or CFRU By-laws.

The CFRU values the benefits of social media to build meaningful relationships with its members, station volunteers, partners, stakeholders and the general public. It encourages staff to actively participate in social media and to use it for the general benefit of the CFRU.

Only CFRU employees & board members are free to publish or comment via social media under the CFRU's established sites in accordance with this policy. CFRU members who do not fill these criteria are not allowed to publish or comment via this specific CFRU 93.3 FM Online Communications Policy – Staff and Board of Directors Manual. An additional Social Media policy Entitled "CFRU 93.3 FM Social Media Policy – Members and Programmers Manual" outlines these types of social media interaction on CFRU designated accounts.

Notwithstanding the previous section, this policy applies to all uses of social media, including personal posts on CFRU media, by CFRU employees who are paid employees, or elected board members, as their position with CFRU would be well known within the community. This also includes volunteers or other members of CFRU who have been given specific designation by the Board of Directors, Station Manager or Staff when completing work on behalf of the station. As a result, such volunteers or other members must be presented a copy of this policy and be supported by an advisor to understand the goals and duties of CFRU.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of broadcasting publication or commentary. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of CFRU when you are posting from personal accounts.

### **Respect your audience, the association, and your coworkers**

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that CFRU employees and Board of Directors must otherwise follow.

The public in general, and CFRU's employees, Board of Directors (and its members), reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Do not say anything that contradicts CFRU's official policies and procedures. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. Discussion of controversial topics may be completed, as long as the content and manner completed follows the stations broadcasting guidelines and mandate under CRTC Regulations.

Respect of the CFRU code of conduct and bylaws is mandatory. In addition, the following guidelines must be followed when using social media as a CFRU staff or board member:

- When posting on the CFRU's social media sites, a consistent voice must be maintained – one that complies with CFRU's ethical standards and by-laws, and represents the campus and community radio sector's unique and diverse character.
- All social media activity must be polite and respectful of other people's opinions, even in times of online debate.
- All social media activity must not disclose other people's personal information within social media platforms without their explicit permission.
- Professionalism and quality control must be maintained in the CFRU's online communications platform. This includes encouraging the use of proper grammar, syntax, and style in every social media post and on the website.
- All online content posters must be mindful of the importance of not damaging the CFRU's reputation and/or bringing the CFRU into disrepute.

## **Setting up social media**

Assistance in setting up social media accounts and their settings can be obtained from the Station Manager (info@cfriu.ca). All new accounts must be approved in advance by the Station Manager for proper housekeeping purposes. Accounts are the property of CFRU, and not its employees or volunteers. As such, a record of all accounts, IDs and passwords must be maintained by the Station Manager (in conjunction with staff), and passed on to new employees/board of directors when necessary.

## **Protect CFRU members, business partners and volunteers**

Members, partners or volunteers should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify an individual, partner or supplier by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a customer engagement. It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for a customer (e.g., "Radio station goes green") so long as the information provided does not violate any privacy agreements that may be in place with the member. CFRU social media is not the place to "conduct business" with a potential business partner, such discussion should remain in private communication.

## **Confidential information**

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialogue with the community, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes future un-released events or plans, financial information, research, and association secrets. When in doubt upon posting information on-line, ask for assistance from the Station Manager (info@cfriu.ca).

## **Protect your own privacy**

Privacy settings on social media platforms under CFRU media should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the CFRU website. CFRU accounts should provide detailed information to allow anyone interacting with the account to understand who they are in communication with, and additional station information. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see.

## Responsibility

Each individual is responsible to:

- Read and ensure understanding of the Social Media policy.
- Consult with other staff, programmers, members and Board of Directors about the application of the Social Media Policies.
- Report any issues to the appropriate personnel
- Be prepared to advise members on issues or questions.
- Maintain high levels of awareness of the expectations for all staff and volunteers by ensuring that any new staff, volunteers, programmers or Board of Director's are aware of the required duties under this or the "CFRU 93.3 FM Social Media Policy – Members and Programmers Manual."
- Take action on any issues or breaches.

## Transparency

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. The CFRU believes in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, including a CFRU Identifier and position, be clear who you are, and identify that you work for or represent CFRU in an official capacity. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

Staff shall create a separate profile for CFRU and designate "CFRU" or "Station Position" as their middle name to clearly designate the capacity in which they will be using the account. It is not possible to designate a middle name until after registering for an account. The middle name can be changed at the following URL:  
<https://register.facebook.com/editaccount.php?ref=mb&drop>.

If posting without an account (I.E. on behalf of the Board of Directors), each post should identify the position with the station (I.E. at the completion of the post placing "-CFRU Board of Director")

## Respect copyright laws

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others; including CFRU own copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it. Any pictures must respect the ownership and broadcast copyright policy. Pictures shall not disclose personal information unless receiving direct permission to do so. When material is posted on CFRU's social networking sites that does not follow CFRU's Online Communications Policy, that material should be removed promptly and the individual informed with the reason why it was removed.

## Controversial issues

If you see misrepresentations made about CFRU in the media, you may point that out and report any incidents to the Station Manager when additional monitoring, action or follow-up may be needed. Staff and Board of Directors must act promptly when issue arise, and try to deflate any escalating events at first notice. Spirited debates are appreciated and encouraged under our mandate; however any comments that contradict this and other CFRU policy/bylaw must be addressed immediately. As a result, a statement similar to "Thank you to all involved in this discussion, it is great to see spirited free-speech on this platform, however we ask that you be mindful of our Social Media policy, available here ([www.cfru.ca/socialmedia](http://www.cfru.ca/socialmedia)) when posting on CFRU on-line accounts" is encouraged to be posted. Such comments and reminders of our social media policy are also encouraged periodically on all accounts.

## **Be the first to respond to your own mistakes**

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly. Report issues to your supervisor as soon as possible.

## **Think about consequences**

For example, consider what might happen if a CFRU employee is in a meeting with a partner or prospect, and someone on the partners' side pulls out a print-out of your blog and says "This person at CFRU says that product sucks."

Saying "Product X needs to have an easier learning curve for the first-time user" is fine; saying "Product X sucks" is risky, unsubtle and amateurish.

Once again, it's all about judgement: using your communication to trash or embarrass CFRU, our members, or associates/affiliations, is dangerous and ill-advised.

## **Disclaimers**

Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for, but that they're not speaking officially when posting on personal account. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble - it may not have much legal effect.

## **Don't forget your day job.**

Make sure that using social media does not interfere with your job or commitments to members.

## **Enforcement**

Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause under additional and related CFRU policy, bylaw, collective agreement and contracts.

## **Policy changes and availability**

Changes to this or "CFRU 93.3 FM Social Media Policy – Members and Programmers Manual" may be made by approval by the Board of Directors, under its Policy Committee or the Boards of Director's policy plans or as outlined in the Collective Agreement, Station Mangers Contract or Bylaws (as applicable). This and other Social Media Policy must be made available to the public via the website [www.cfru.ca/socialmedia](http://www.cfru.ca/socialmedia) and maintained by the CFRU; as outlined in the Collective Agreement, Station Mangers Contract or Bylaws (as applicable).

## **Social media tips**

The following tips are not required or mandatory under the CFRU social media policy, but will contribute to successful use of social media by the organization. Note these will change over time and are again only a guideline.

### **Recommendations to effectively promote across multiple social media platforms.**

- Include links and handles in e-mail signatures;
- From time to time, mention additional platforms the show or station may be using (i.e "check out the twitter page for more frequent updates");
- Ask for help from others to promote the show or station, for advice on topics of discussion and to contribute directly on-air;
- Give permission to let others share your content.

#### **Recommendations to increase effectiveness of communication on Facebook.**

- Post in groups or on the wall of those with similar interests to the show.
- Keep content fresh and new, update material two to three times a week (but not more than twice a day);
- Use multimedia, such as photos and video, as it increases interaction on a post by upwards of 50 percent;
- Always include links in posts (if possible) to external material;
- Use humour (when appropriate), as it created entertainment value and enhances recollection.

#### **Recommendations to increase effectiveness of communication on Twitter.**

- When a post asks a question, it invokes a response which creates discussion;
- A carefully designed background for Twitter page that looks professional and represents the show or station creates consistency in branding;
- Using #hashtags and providing links generate action by the reader to explore more in detail;
- Commenting on other posts or retweeting increases exposure, not only by those who the content is passed on to, but it also can make the original poster of the message aware that you actively engaged with them;
- By using a story in a post, it provides interest, education and a reason to come back to the platform;
- Using the “element of surprise” can grab interest from a reader, but the use of “shock” content could turn people away from an account.

#### **Recommendations to increase effectiveness of communication on blogs.**

- Be cautious of comments left; deletion or failure to respond can alienate or start conflict on a blog;
- Be generous in praise and attribution, as typically the post will be archived for others to view;
- Using a list to generate discussion works well;
- Stay away from profanity, as it alienates audiences and is unprofessional;
- Keep the title of a post short and easy to remember so reference can be made back to that post.

#### **Recommended process to implement a new social media platform.**

1. Get intelligence (decide if social media is the correct method to meet the goals of the users).
2. Clarify objectives (the social media efforts should serve the station/programmers mission and strategic plan);
3. Design strategies (Identify who to get involved, what training is needed, where are opportunities to get off to a good start, how to track progress?, and how can to communicate success);
4. Implement the plan (while providing support and resources to those who ask for it);
5. Measure outcomes (including if the initial plan is in place, if social media is helping to achieve goals, if changes to be made);
6. Leverage learning (which allows everyone to pause, reflect, learn and reapply efforts to move forward).

#### **Leadership**

It is encouraged that one staff and one board take on the role of “Social Media Officer” within the organization to reduce confusion (As outlined under the Collective Agreement and Bylaws/BOD Handbook, if applicable).

#### **Approval:**

Drafted by Barry Rooke Board of Directors Chair March 2013

Reviewed by Heather Jarvis Outreach Coordinator April 2013

Sent to Board of Directors for Approval September 2013

**Approved by: Board of Directors October 28 2013**