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SOCIAL MEDIA AND ORGANISATION POLICY (SOMEOP):
FINDING THE PERFECT BALANCE

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This paper proposes a new policy development framework, entitled ‘Social Media and Organisation Policy’ (SOMEOP) which considers the essential aspects that allow organisations to achieve their intended outcomes when using social media tools, without constricting the flexibility they bring. Through an interpretive content analysis within a media and consulting company, as well as extensive literature review, this paper highlights the role policy plays within organisations and the typical procedures that an organisation goes through when developing an appropriate social media policy. Findings from the research indicate that traditional policy development processes are unsuitable for social media implementation. Some reasons include the blurring of home-work boundaries; the widespread availability of social media tools; and the scope of their use. This is where our new framework is able to shed some light. Our research has uncovered that through increased feedback from various layers of management, new social media policies can be developed to embrace changing situations that are not anticipated with traditional tools, such as email.

Keywords: social media, policies, organisations, guidelines, Enterprise 2.0.
1 INTRODUCTION

There is an explosion of social media usage among the general public; especially among the current generation of future employees, who are using these socially based technologies in their daily activities (McAfee 2009). Daily activities transcend across the home-work boundary into their working activities as more employees with social networking skills are entering the workplace. As a result, organisations are beginning to embrace new concepts and technologies of social media within their business activities. In the literature (Figueiredo, Soares & Pocinho 2009) there are reports of business benefits when using social media tools in the long-term. However, within organisations specific guidelines or policies are needed to ensure business activities are not impacted negatively by the changes that implementing social media brings. Regardless of whether managers are cautious, due to previous negative experiences or perceptions, many organisations tend to develop strict policies which restrict or limit socially based technologies (David 2002). Policies specifically designed for social media implementation, need to be developed with the understanding that social media cannot be controlled (Gilchrist 2007; Gotta 2009) in the same way as other technologies in the past. Further, when developing organisational policies, a more practical and non-authoritative approach may help to gain increased benefits of social media. Currently inflexible policies discourage the innovative use of social media technologies (McAfee 2009). Hence a policy development framework that takes a broader perspective is very much needed.

The Cluetrain Manifesto (Levine et al. 2000) incorporates the notion of ‘The end of business as usual’; a sentiment that is echoed through some corporations today and even back to the 90s when independent commercial networks were initially growing (Leiner et al. 2010). It represents a change in the way businesses are approaching their needs, especially in communicating with their customers, business partners and their employees. Corporations are no longer tied to the traditional channels such as email (Lazaric & Raybaut 2005) which are now considered ineffective communication tools for building relationship (Cummings, Butler & Kraut 2002).

The shift from inflexible and passive communication concepts to a flexible and more powerful approach has been evolving over the four years since Web 2.0 was introduced (Gilchrist 2007). Web 2.0 has led to the development and evolution of web-based communities, services and applications such as social networking sites, including MySpace (Thelwall 2008) and Facebook (Curry et al. 2008), online blogs, video sharing sites, such as YouTube, wikis that allow people to create and share knowledge, the provision of ratings for services, products and suppliers (Cook 2008); social tagging or ‘folksonomies’ where people can tag sites or files they think might interest others and share these on their own websites or via online profiles (Cook 2008 p. 21-23).

Initially, Web 2.0 was perceived as an innovation designed for the mass market rather than for business – companies originally viewed social networking applications and products as being little more than a time-wasting interruption for their staff (Trendall 2008). When Andrew McAfee (2006a) spoke about how Web 2.0 tools could make a difference to business; organisations began to take notice in a more positive way. McAfee (2009) explained that these tools would allow enterprises to improve their current intranets and to offer services and facilities already available on the Internet, enabling large organisations to become more searchable, analysable and navigable than smaller firms. This view was echoed by Eric Brynjolfsson, director of the MIT Centre for Digital Business (Brynjolfsson & McAfee 2007).

The changes to the way large organisations use their intranets is evident in some of the early adopters of these socially based platforms, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (Allen 2008) and Dresdner Kleinwort Bank1, (Socialtext 2008). Lego and Motorola (Bughin 2008) have also joined the social race with some success. However, the tendency is for senior management to control the growth of

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1 A European investment bank originally known as Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein
these technologies through policies or guidelines. An understanding of social media within organisations is needed when developing policies, to ensure they are flexible, yet provide the necessary guidance and protection to employees and the organisation. The paper aims to present a framework providing insight into social media use and the influences of policy in practice.

Our research question framed to address this aim is: ‘What are the influences of an organisation’s socially-based platform guidelines/regulations on the use of social media technologies in business?’

This paper firstly examines the social media trends within organisations. This is followed by a discussion about policy, which is a ‘structured’ element, and the ways policy may influence the ‘unstructured’ implementation of social media tools. From the research, a new policy development framework for social media tools is presented and discussed.

2 SOCIAL MEDIA IN ORGANISATIONS

Social media in business has seen an increase in proliferation over the past 3 years (McAfee 2009). The term Enterprise 2.0 has been coined as the ‘...use of emergent social platforms within companies, or between companies and their partners or customers’ (McAfee 2006, p.23). This represents how companies are interacting with their customers, business partners and even internally among their employees using socially based platforms. In 2006, Web 2.0 was just gaining momentum among general users, but McAfee (2009 p.21) foresaw that these technologies could be used effectively within organisations for business purposes. Essentially, Web 2.0 is the idea and technology that supports social media as a tool; while Enterprise 2.0 is the concept of how organisations are using those tools in their business activities. For the sake of conforming to the current social convention (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010), we use social media as the keyword linked to Enterprise 2.0 in this paper. For most users today, social media is the social activity that everyone knows (Sultana 2010) where connections are built and strengthened. However in organisations, social media is the epitome of ‘an elephant in a room’ (Press 2008 p.298). It brings to the table a new concept of business where information is shared, and this brings new conflict against the traditional methods of business where secrets are usually kept close within organisations (McAfee 2009). Skeels and Grudin (2009) identify four issues with using social networking which could be related to social media, including 1) the legitimacy of any workplace to use socially based technologies, 2) tensions from mixing personal and work personas, 3) lack of delineation of hierarchy, and 4) the risk of inappropriate communication of information. But even with these issues, social media usage is growing, as evidenced by Sultana’s Nielsen news release (2010b).

There are 3 trends that have led to the exponential growth of social media usage (McAfee 2009 p.47):

1. Free and easy platforms for communication and interaction

Popular collaboration technologies such as traditional email and some instant messaging are referred to as channels, where communications are usually kept private between the sender and receiver; while the opposite of this are platforms where communications and contributions are globally visible and persistent (McAfee 2006b) to more users. The use of platforms went unnoticed until 1997, when blogs were first introduced (McAfee 2009). Users were not required to have a technical understanding of how to develop a blog in order to post their ideas or thoughts online. Different users across different geographical locations could comment on a blog and best of all, it was service that was free for users (Lamont 2007). This immediately brought the new beginnings of what is called the ‘free and easy platforms’ trend.

2. Lack of imposed structure

Technologists were also looking at making a fundamental shift in their roles while building new free and easy platforms for users. Part of the fundamental shift was avoiding an ‘imposed structure’ that is, constricting the users to a set of predefined tools or workflows, which may or may not be useful for them. This is important because technologists saw a new trend among users; where the users were creating their own structures with these platforms (Gilchrist 2007). Wikipedia is a good example of how this lack of structure provided benefits for users in the long run (Tapscott & Williams 2006 p. 12-13). Another example is Delicious, a social bookmarking which allows users to create their own structure by attaching specific tags to their bookmarks (Stolley 2009).

3. Mechanisms that allow structures to emerge
Realising that links on the internet are usually cited by online authors as in a research paper, the founders of Google developed an algorithm entitled PageRank that ranks Web pages based on how many sites are linked to that Web page (Tarcsi 2007). Google became the first search engine to view the Web as a community rather than individual Web pages. The emergence factor for the Web comes from the fact that the online information is the creation of users worldwide interacting with each other while creating new content (Murugesan 2007). Social bookmarking was one of the early structures that emerged and allowed users to attach tags to their shared bookmarks (Xu et al. 2008). Users could essentially identify which bookmarks are actively accessed via a tag cloud depending on the number of times that bookmark was accessed or searched.

Based on these trends, some organisations started exploring different social media tools that essentially conduct several activities at a time, such as wikis, micro blogging or micro blogs, social networks, social bookmarking and RSS feeds, to name a few. Over the past few years, there have been several successful implementations of social media within organisations in the UK, US and Europe (Socialtext 2008) and recently in Australia (Stephens et al, 2010). The following cases provide various examples of methods that have been used successfully when implementing social media tools among employees, including: 1) word of mouth, 2) top management introduction, 3) encouragement of usage; and 4) bottom up approach.

1. **British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) – word of mouth**

The BBC, founded in 1922, is the world’s largest broadcasting company and is a semi-governmental instrumentality run by the BBC Trust. In the mid 1990s, Euan Semple, then Head of Knowledge Management, decided to create an online discussion forum to allow editors to communicate with, and help, one another effectively (Wallace 2008). This forum, called talk.gateway, was introduced via ‘word of mouth’, instead of using the traditional corporate information channels (Cook 2008 p. 44). The idea was to get employees to trust and know one another via the forum, where the concepts of self policy, self organising and self management would be encouraged, while avoiding slander or other legal pitfalls. This system is now being used by almost all the BBC’s approximately 26,000 employees and the organisation has become something of a ‘poster child’ for Enterprise 2.0 implementation.

2. **Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein (DrKW) – top management introduction**

Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein is an investment bank headquartered in London and Frankfurt with over 6,000 employees across its various offices (Rangaswami 2006). The bank installed a wiki system back in the 1990s (Socialtext 2008) to improve communication and collaboration within the organisation. This was followed by a blog system in 2002, which was then merged with the wiki system in 2004 (Burton 2006). At the time the wiki system was introduced, nearly 2,500 employees were using the system and this number was increasing by the week (Socialtext 2008), indicating how effective top management support for new technologies can be in the right environment.

3. **International Business Machines (IBM) – encouragement of usage**

IBM, a US-based company, is one of a handful IT companies founded as in the 1880s, before electronic computers (IBM 2009). Its services range from computer hardware to consulting services over a wide range of fields from ‘traditional’ computing through to new areas, such as nanotechnology. In 2005 IBM encouraged its 320,000+ employees to start blogging internally, as allowing them to communicate with their peers across the globe (Cook 2008). In 2007, IBM introduced an internal social network site called Beehive (DiMicco et al. 2009), which was designed to cross the boundaries of work and home, while providing a platform to enable staff to study and understand certain issues (adoptions, usages and impacts of social networking within the organisation). The blogging service managed to attract around 9,000 employees across 65 countries, with over 3,000 blogs (Cook 2008), while the Beehive service has managed to attract more than 6,500 employees since October 2007 (Boulton 2008).

4. **Deloitte Australia – bottom up approach**

One of Australia’s leading professional services firms in audit, tax, consulting and financial advisory, Deloitte started experimenting with social media towards the end of 2008 using Yammer, an internal based Twitter tool for microblogging as the first prototype. Yammer started from lower management usage, where it was employed as a social chat environment. The tool began to attract more users within the organisation when Deloitte’s Digital CEO, Peter Williams encouraged the employees to provide ideas on a new advertising campaign, the Green Dot campaign. More than 50% of Deloitte Australia’s 4,600
employees signed up; and as a result, the headquarters of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (DTT) decided to implement the use of Yammer across its offices globally, with more than 14,000 employees using the tool. The organisation is currently implementing more social media tools, such as social networking with LinkedIn and content sharing on Youtube, as part of their business activities.

These are some examples of how social media is improving business activities within organisations. However, the implementation of social media is not without its failures and risks. One of the earliest organisations within Australia to adopt social media was Westpac Banking Corporation, a member of the ‘Big 4’ banks in Australia. The organisation provided its employees access to social networking and planned to develop a Web 2.0-like portal internally and build a presence with Second Life for new employee training purposes (Winterford 2007). The organisation also made use of blogs and desktop videos as part of its daily business activities. Due to changing business conditions as well as poor adoption rates among its employees, the organisation had to review their social media implementations, and their Second Life presence closed down. One of the main reasons why their implementation failed was the massive rollout (Winterford 2009) as well as the lack of social media policies to suit those implementations. Employees were worried that their actions or comments on those sites would lead to a negative impact on their jobs (Tung 2009). The failure of their implementation also led to the stepping-down of the former CTO who initiated the social media project (Tung 2009).

Another example of how social media could bring an unforeseen risk to an organisation was when an employee of Telstra, the leader in Australian communication, impersonated the Communications Minister on the publicly accessible channel Twitter; as well as using a blog to make unendorsed comments about Telstra and its employees (LeMay 2009). This incident has brought considerable negative attention to the organisation, as Telstra is the main communications provider for the Australian government; and the public could be confused about the nature of the professional relationship between Telstra and the government (Moses 2009b). The organisation was also scrutinised about the way it handled the employee’s reprimand following the incident. It has been reported that if the case were handled differently, Telstra would have been thought of more favourably (LeMay 2009). Following the incident, Telstra was one of the first major Australian companies to develop guidelines for its employees on social media usage (Oakes 2009). As the examples above demonstrate, while the implementation of new technologies can be successful without policies and guidelines, there are inherent risks involved when employees are not aware of protocols and the organisation’s expectations. Further, it is not until an issue or an incident arises that the lack of organisational policy becomes evident. Then both the employee and the organisation seek a clarification or ruling, which does not exist, opening the door for scrutiny and criticism. Hence, policies and guidelines provide a sense of security and control (Johnston 2009) for both employees and the organisation.

3 ROLE OF ORGANISATIONAL POLICY

Two main types of policies include: 1) Public policies - usually within government departments and represent a course of action to attain specific results; and 2) Private policies – used by non-government organisations, but limited in available public resources as well as legal coercion (Althaus, Bridgman & Davis 2008). In this paper, we focus on private policies used within organisations. The need for policy stems from an explicit or implied effective and efficient operating objective; where the economies of scale, established methods as well as best practices are identified and implemented (Moule & Giavara 1995). Part of this objective is the need for senior management to adequately convey these organisational requirements to their employees; and to ensure that controls are in place in order for these requirements to be fulfilled (Moule & Giavara 1995). Generally, publications about policy support the notion that ensuring the effective operation of information systems (IS) within organisations is an enormous undertaking where responsibilities fall at both the organisational and individual levels (Howlett 2009).

According to Moule and Giavara (1995), the main objectives for policies being developed are to:

- ensure the consistency of process and deliverables within an organisation
- prevent re-occurrence of known problems such as defamation caused by employees, inefficient business activity and many more.
improve communication via standard forms and terminology accepted on the organisation level; and facilitate and reinforce the implementation of new processes and technology.

Management normally communicates formal company direction, rules and regulations using policies, with an objective of dictating appropriate employee behaviour (von Solms & von Solms 2004). A policy is therefore the tool of governance which guides decisions towards achieving a rational outcome for an organisation (Banks 2009; Howlett 2009). Policies are usually adopted by the board of senior management with an intended effect which bring benefits or avoid negative effects to the organisation (Althaus et al, 2008). A policy does not exist without some substance (which includes objectives, principles etc.) or even an organisation (includes departments, procedures, ROIs etc) (Arts & Tatenhove 2004).

A standard policy is declared within organisations through official written documents which uses the endorsement or signature of the higher executives to demonstrate that it is in force (Howlett 2009). Essentially, the policy is the ‘rulebook’ for the employees within an organisation with details about how they should and should not act while being employed by the organisation (Althaus et al, 2008). Based on the literature (Althaus et al, 2008), a general policy consists of some standard components as follows:

- Purpose statement – comprises the reason the policy was created and the impact that is intended
- Applicability and scope statement – describes who and what actions are affected by the policy
- Effective date – the date when the policy comes into effect
- Responsibilities – indicates which department, organisation or person who are responsible in carrying out the policy statement
- Policy statements – refers to regulations, requirements, or any modifications to organisational behavior that the policy is impacting (Althaus et al, 2008).

Policies have become more comprehensive as modern organisations become more dependent on a wide range of technologies which support ‘all aspects of their strategic and operational activities’ (Doherty, Anastasakis & Fulford 2010). Today, that comprehensiveness has been extended to communication-specific or technology-specific policies. This is the case for social media technology. The similar comprehensive and authoritative approach was evident when the electronic email was first introduced within organisations (Flynn & Kahn 2003). Hence, when a new technology appears to be beyond the control of senior management, it usually leads to policies which severely restrict or block those technologies (Madigan et al, 2004). Management perceive new technology risks are often associated with the cost of policy violations, which are complicated to calculate or estimate, especially in large organisations. These include issues such as legal liability, intellectual property, profit/loss and reputation which needs to be kept secure (Madigan et al, 2004). Hence, many policies developed are complex in nature and tend to be overly comprehensive. A significant issue for organisations is that communicating to staff the existence of the policy is only half of the equation; as employees also need to know how they should comply with policies, from a procedural perspective (von Solms & von Solms 2004). Organisations could gain more benefits from these tools when implementing social media, by providing some flexibility in the policy which takes into account the nature of the technology and the employees’ behaviours; and through the creation of shared norms, meanings and assumptions that comprise organisational culture inherent as part of the policy development (Schein 1985).

4 TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Based on Flynn and Kahn (2003), there are rules to which organisations must adhere when developing policies for communication channels. These include retention, disposition, classification, transmission, data protection, technological solutions, user management, electronic time management and more (Flynn & Kahn 2003). One of the main rules concerns controlling content in order to control risks to the organisation (Flynn & Kahn 2003). Such rules, as avoiding jokes or unsubstantiated opinions, are appropriate for organisations, as they are for all communication channels. A key issue for social media, however, stems from the responsibility of the written information; understanding the impact on the audience; and bringing value, not only to the organisation, but also for employees who are using the
technology (Yardi et al., 2009). Some policy inclusions that are mandated to protect the organisation may impact negatively on the way social media tools operate. Social media tools allow users to share different formats of content with each other; however if an organisation were to introduce content filters as part of a policy document, the use of the tools would be hampered. Installing content filtering applications when working with social media would limit the advantages that the application could bring to the organisation. A good example of this situation is when certain useful content posted by an employee or user might be blocked because it has a keyword that is blocked by the filter, as in the case with Australia’s proposed national internet filter (Moses 2009a). Whitty (2004) conducted a study on the impact of content filtering within Australian organisations and found that more employees are requesting more access to non-work related such as instant messaging, news, politics and weather, which leads to new social media-like activities. Interestingly, employees with effective policy had few issues when using social media tools, as they had no need for a content filter. However, employees within organisations without a clear policy preferred their organisation to remove the content filtering application (Whitty & Carr 2006). Whitty (2004) assumed that the filtering application works in certain situations, and depends on the organisational culture, as well as how the policy was implemented. The more involved are employees in the ‘process of implementation, the more likely their acceptance level towards new implementation to be higher’ (Whitty 2004 p. 52). Now that we have established a background of social media, and policy in general, it is interesting to explore the few organisations which have published information about their social media policies. Generally, policy development lacks guidelines for social media. As an initial comparison, we have chosen 4 social media policies that highlight the differences between the current social media policy components (Quilty 2009; Alexander 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPARISON COMPONENTS</th>
<th>Coverage (1)</th>
<th>Marking the responsibility (1)</th>
<th>Ramifications of conduct (1)</th>
<th>Highlighted needed transparency (1)</th>
<th>Disclaimers / Warnings (1)</th>
<th>Effective level (1 – 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telstra Corporation Limited Social Media Policy Date effective: April 2009</td>
<td>Privacy, Intellectual property, workplace ethics</td>
<td>Easy to understand statements and to whom it applies to</td>
<td>Clearly highlighted under Breach of Policy</td>
<td>Employees are made aware every time they read as it is repeated in every section</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerhouse Museum Blog Policy Date effective: April 2007</td>
<td>Workplace ethics</td>
<td>Highlighted but without much emphasis for the employees</td>
<td>Only referenced to the Code of Conduct</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>All blogs must be accompanied by a specific disclaimer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Government Information Management Office Social Media 101 Date effective: April 2010</td>
<td>Privacy, Intellectual property, workplace ethics</td>
<td>Responsibility is marked for employees but not as clearly as it is required</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No but the differences between official, professional and personal use of social media is clearly marked</td>
<td>Encouraged to be used for official usages</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dell Inc. Global Social Media Policy Date effective: 5 August 2010</td>
<td>Intellectual property, Trade secret, workplace ethics</td>
<td>Clearly marked the responsibility of users and emphasised throughout the policy</td>
<td>Ramifications of actions are clearly covered</td>
<td>Only employees who have undergone the Dell social media training courses are allowed to represent Dell. Others are required to represent that their opinions are their own</td>
<td>Only a waiver is mentioned here</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Social Media Policy Comparison

From Table 1, each social media policy has its strengths and weaknesses. These need to be taken into consideration when developing a new social media policy in an organisation. We have applied a basic 5 point grade system to rank each component within the policies. Each component is awarded a maximum of 1 point depending on the level of detail provided in the policy and the influence of the component in effective policy development. The first column depicts the coverage of the policies, in terms of the legal aspects; while the second column reviews the clarity of responsibilities highlighted within the policies.
The remaining columns show the ramifications that an action has on employees; the level of transparency needed from employees; and finally any disclaimers or waivers from the organisation in regards to the policies. Of the 4 social media policies analysed, Dell Inc was found to have the most effective social media policy. Dell Inc’s social media policy provides simple, but effective, guides for their employees when using social media. Their policy also clearly marks their responsibility as well as the ramifications of inappropriate actions but in a very professional and simple tone. The other policies should not be ignored as they highlight other strengths, such as Telstra’s clarity and transparency concerning ramifications – this may be attributed to their poor previous experience outlined in Section 2. Hence, based on the analysis of these comparative results, we have identified certain characteristics from various policies which would benefit organisations when developing social media policies. By unpacking these characteristics and analysing further, we have proposed a new framework for developing an effective social media policy.

5 FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

A framework provides guidance and structure for any activity; either for an individual, a group or an organisation. When developing an organisational policy, a framework is useful to highlight specific aspects that might otherwise be overlooked. The framework we propose therefore takes a holistic approach to social media and organisational policy development, assisting an organisation when navigating through the policy development process. From a review of the literature, there are no current frameworks that provide a holistic approach for organisations as they develop social media policies. As mentioned above, from our analysis certain characteristics from the different policies have been identified as worthy. Some of the available social media policies cover the main aspects of social media (Alexander 2010) while others consider each stage that organisations go through in their business (Johnston 2009). By focusing solely on the main aspects of social media, the policy created would be flexible, but is unlikely to cover many of the obligations and ramifications about which employees need to be aware. However, when too much focus is afforded to scrutinising every stage of the organisation’s business, this would lead to a very complex and controlling policy, that would impact the effectiveness of social media tools (Cook 2008). With this in mind, we propose a new framework that combines both aspects of policy development; 1) strengthening the understanding of legal obligations and impacts for employees, while 2) being flexible for the organisation to benefit from social media. This framework is aptly entitled ‘Social Media and Organisation Policy’ or SOMEOP; and comprises 5 main components as demonstrated in Figure 1. The five components are considered essential elements for an organisation which is developing a new social media policy. Each component is based on the combination of the standard communication policy development (von Solms & von Solms 2004) applied to the analysis of the elements that are necessary for organisations to reap benefits from social media (Quilty 2009). The chosen components in Figure 1 reflect the three key issues that are normally addressed in any organisational policy development, namely ‘Legal’, ‘General’ and ‘Notification’ that a standard communication policy ‘should’ include (Grensing-Pophal 2001). These comparison components are based on their relation to our interpretations of ‘the three sorts of knowledge about policy: epistemic knowledge (causal links and chains – coverage and responsibility), practical-technical knowledge (derived from tacit knowledge – ramifications and disclaimers) and practical value rationality (derived from an ethics point of view - ramifications)’ (Tenbensel 2006). The 2 additional components are included due to their relevance to social media and importance in its implementation based on participant feedback and lessons learned in Section 2.

Table 2 describes each component in detail, and highlights the related parties who influence, or are influenced by, the policy development. Each framework component plays a specific role in the development of social media policy. Further, successful policy development requires the related parties to work together. A policy champion or the policy creator, who is usually part of the senior management group, is considered essential for successful policy development (Fenwick et al. 2010). Similar to a project champion, the policy champion usually has the responsibility for ensuring that each component is enacted.
The five components are considered essential elements for an organisation which is developing a new social media policy. Each component is based on the combination of the standard communication policy development (David 2002; Flynn & Kahn 2003; von Solms & von Solms 2004) applied to the analysis of the elements that are necessary for organisation to reap benefits from social media (Quilty 2009). Some of the feedback from our initial data gathering from participants in organisations played a role in selecting the appropriate components for the SOMEOP model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOMEOP Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Related Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal obligations</td>
<td>As with all policies, the need to observe and highlight legal issues that might exist is essential for any organisation (Flynn &amp; Kahn 2003; Grensing-Pophal 2010). These include as impacts of an action, misrepresentation, rights of the organisation as well as the employees.</td>
<td>All levels of management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different levels of management</td>
<td>One of the main security issues when it comes to adhering to policies are people (von Solms &amp; von Solms 2004). By ensuring that view points from different management levels are taken into account, it would help the organisation to develop a more effective policy instead of focusing solely on the technology.</td>
<td>All levels of management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and concise statements</td>
<td>Statements used within most policies are usually very complex and highly professional which is understandable (Moule &amp; Giavara 1995; von Solms &amp; von Solms 2004) but using a conversational tone is more effective in the long run (Flynn &amp; Kahn 2003 p. 36). This is due to the fact that a friendly tone is more likely to be accepted by employees especially in regards to policies or guidelines. With any new technology, policies tend to overuse technical overtones which confuse the reader (David 2002). The policy should act as a reinforcing medium between senior management and employees.</td>
<td>Policy champion, Human Resources, Legal department,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media etiquette</td>
<td>This is one of the main components for a social media policy. There is the tendency to define clearly every single action as in other communication policies, but this is not preferable for social media. By providing general yet sensible statements, the organisation would not be impairing both their employees’ abilities to work in social media communities, but also their abilities to be competitive in their business areas (Fenwick et al. 2010).</td>
<td>Policy champion, Human Resources, Legal department, Social media users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification and standardisation</td>
<td>David (2002) considers that many organisations notify their employees of policy changes via email without requiring acknowledgement of receipt or indication of understanding. Notifications sent out via mass email are often overlooked or privileged (screened) by employees. Using the implemented social media channels (microblogs, RSS feeds, news feed, etc), notification on new policies could be highlighted more easily and effectively for the employees. Training is necessary to maintain a level of standardisation, and should include any new communication policy that has been developed to create awareness.</td>
<td>Policy champion, Human Resources, Legal department,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. **SOMEOP Component Description**

When the components are placed within the framework, the organisation is given the flexibility to start developing the policy in a way that best suits their organisation. Further analysis reveals that each component can be broken down to various sub-components. Figure 2 demonstrates the original components (from Figure 1) and its relevant sub-components. The breakdown of the sub-components in Figure 2 remind us that policies are perceived by both management and employees as a vehicle to dictate appropriate behaviours and enforce an organisation’s expectations (von Solms & von Solmes, 2004).
However, the implementation of policies has a far-reaching effect, and this is influenced as much by the inherent messages and norms which are part of folklore in the organisation (Schein 1985) as much as the physical content and presentation of the directives in the written documentation. Based on Occam’s razor (Domingos 1999) principle that ‘entities must not be multiplied beyond necessity’ or in other words, ‘keeping it simple’; this framework provides an uncomplicated guide to the components needed when developing a social media policy; as we have included broader issues, such as the ‘spirit’ of the policy, and not merely the content without context. Fenwick et al. (2010) point out that even with an effective social media policy, it is essential for the senior management to show an example of themselves utilising social media tools while adhering to the policy. This assists in building improved relationships with employees while empowering the social media policy and overcoming the attached assumption that the organisation is trying to control through the policy.

Figure 2. Social Media and Organisation Policy (SOMEOP) Framework

6 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As technology use has been increasing in organisations and the diversity of technology tools has broadened, senior management have recognised the need for improved policies to protect both the organisation and its employees. It is evident from our research and analysis that many organisations implement new types of technologies before considering the policy implications in detail. However, traditional policy development models, which are highly structured and inflexible, do not provide the necessary vehicle to assist organisations in policy development for new technologies, such as social media. Our proposed framework can be considered as an initial foray into more socially enhanced policy frameworks that may follow. We highlight the need for organisational culture, understanding of the technology in practice and the need to address the inherent meanings or spirit of the policy, as much as the physical content written in the documentation.

Further, it is important that organisational policies are relevant and able to be updated even if the technology changes rapidly. This would provide a sense of security for the organisation but also allow its employees to be effective in their work, while adhering to much needed guidelines or policies. Currently there is little research identifying the critical aspects of social media and its influences on policy direction. Our framework is a starting point and ongoing research is needed to test our framework in practice. Further research is also needed to determine the broader policy development implications for public policy and the policy directions for social media (or other pervasive technologies) at the strategic levels in both organisations and government.
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