



# The Air Force, Social Media, and You

As far as the Air Force is concerned, **social media is a good thing**. The enemy is engaged in the information battlespace, and our Airmen must engage there as well.

On the downside, social media also makes getting into hot water just a few mouse clicks away. Many people have lost their jobs, for example, for things they posted to YouTube or Facebook.

**Remember: All Airmen are on-duty and subject to the UCMJ every day, around the clock.** Any time you engage in social media you are representing the Air Force in the eyes of the public. Steer clear of anything that might reflect poorly on yourself or the Air Force.

## [GUIDELINES]

**Loose lips sink ships.** Never post classified or sensitive information (troop movement, force size, weapons details, etc.). Also, think carefully before divulging personal information. In doubt? Talk to your supervisor or security manager FIRST.

**Replace error with fact, not argument.** When a website or blog makes an error of fact about the Air Force, you may point out the error and correct the facts. Use the same respectful tone you would if you were talking to the person face-to-face – even if they don't! NEVER post any defamatory, libelous, vulgar, obscene, abusive, profane, threatening, racially hateful or otherwise offensive or illegal information or material.

**Respect copyright and trademarks.** When a newspaper, for example, posts an article, it owns those words. Under most circumstances, it is not OK to simply copy and paste the whole article to your website. Instead, consider quoting just a part of the article, then provide a link to the rest. Also, don't use logos or other trademarks without permission.

**No impersonations.** Never pretend to be someone you're not.

**Give Your Opinion.** Yes, tell them what YOU think...just make sure you state that it is your opinion and not that of the organization. Be sure to identify what is your opinion and what is fact. Use a disclaimer to ensure your readers understand that you aren't speaking in an official capacity (something like "The views I express here are my own and don't necessarily represent the views of the Air Force").

**Stay in your lane.** If you're an aircraft mechanic, you're well-suited to communicate messages about aircraft maintenance. If you're an aircraft mechanic blogging about legal issues, you might want to reconsider.

**Use your best judgment.** There are always consequences to what you write. If you're still unsure and the post is about the Air Force, discuss your proposed post with your supervisor. Ultimately, however, you have sole responsibility for what you chose to post to your blog or other social media site.

*Did you know the Air Force has its own YouTube channel – and you're welcome to contribute?*

*Air Force BlueTube is the official Air Force site on YouTube. Through BlueTube, Airmen can share their videos and stories with other Airmen and the public. Informative, humorous, exciting or fun videos are all welcome.*

*YouTube posting guidelines are at [www.youtube.com/t/community\\_guidelines](http://www.youtube.com/t/community_guidelines). Obviously, classified or sensitive information will not be posted. And give thought to the ways your submission might be interpreted by the public. If there is any concern as to how a clip will be interpreted, it will not be posted. Do not cross the line between humor and good taste!*

*The Air Force also maintains several different group blogs. Interested in contributing your insight as a professional warfighter? Contact your Public Affairs office.*