

Personal social media policy

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I like the Christmas holidays. Apart from making me feel like I'm a good parent when I take the kids off to do something **interesting**, it also gives me a chance to reflect on what I have been up to, and what I should perhaps be getting up to.

Kind of a "trees versus forest" discussion with myself. This year's tool of choice for mapping out my thoughts is a product called **VUE** – it's a free visualisation tool from Tufts University in Massachusetts.

But that's not the point of this blog. The point of this article is to tell you where I am going to post the photographs of my holidays, based on my personal social media policy.

You see, a lot of people in organisations are currently discussing their business's social media policies, but don't have a personal one. I think that's a mistake, as with all things emergent from the internet you should have a go before deciding what your plan is.

My policy is based upon what I want to achieve.

Twitter

Twitter is a real time social networking tool optimised for mobile services. It's designed to allow users to connect and share information in short bursts with the world. I use Twitter in two ways. For personal use and for business use. Consequently I have two Twitter accounts.

The first one **@Churchill_Melb** I use to broadcast what's happening at the Churchill Club eg. "Just picked up Doron Ben-Meir as a speaker". I have thousands of followers, but follow no one, as I am using it to broadcast. It also automatically feeds my LinkedIn profile.

The second one, **@One_Sock**, I use for personal observations on the world such as, "Does the Constitution's S.44 disqualify you to be in Parliament if you have 'allegiance... to a foreign power'? #MarkAbib".

I follow everyone who follows me, but disengage (unfollow) quickly if they are not amusing or generating original quality thought. It can be dangerous to automatically follow, as its public who you follow. Which can be embarrassing when it's a known Ku Klux Klan member, as happened to me, or worse. I have around 150 personal connections on Twitter.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn was designed to assist people in advertising their services and finding contacts inside potential clients. Consequently I use LinkedIn in a number of different ways, but all of them are commercial, not personal.

Firstly I use it to find people – like "who is big on Customer Experience in Melbourne?". Secondly I use it to **advertise my services** as a corporate development guy. Thirdly I use it as a scoreboard for how much energy I am putting into networking. I don't like the concept of **Open Networking** (connecting with anybody who asks) as I feel there is little value in having connections that you don't have mindshare with and being proud of the number of records you have in a database is quite frankly ridiculous.

My LinkedIn rule is: "I will only connect with you if we have met or had some type of correspondence". Consequently I am connected to over 800 people, all of whom I know their story, and they know mine.

Facebook

Facebook was designed to connect and engage in a fun way with people you know, it wasn't designed for promoting business. Consequently I mostly use Facebook for doing things such as sharing photos of holidays, sharing images I find hilarious or commenting on my friends amusing situations.

I do not want people attempting to sell to me to know that I have just made sausages with an old friend. My Facebook rule is that "If I'm not happy with you looking at pictures of my kids, I won't be connecting with you."

Consequently I am only connected to around 80 people, all of whom I am comfortable with knowing my private

life. My security is also screwed down. The chances of my information being misused or me being embarrassed are very small.

This personal social media policy means that I don't have to be constantly on guard about what I share online and can get the maximum amount of benefit from social media.

Have a great Christmas holiday.

*Brendan Lewis is a serial technology entrepreneur having founded: Ideas Lighting, Carradale Media, Edion, Verve IT, **The Churchill Club** and **Flinders Pacific**. He has set up businesses for others in Romania, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Vietnam and is the sole Australian representative of the City of London for Foreign Direct Investment. Qualified in IT and Accounting, he has also spent time running an Advertising agency and as a Cavalry Officer with the Australian Army Reserve.*
