

Appendix 1

Defining Social Media and SNSs

The time frame over which social media have developed is relatively short, with the first social network site launched in 1997 (boyd and Ellison 2007). However there is a growing field of study in this area which is notably interdisciplinary, reflecting the pervasive reach of social media into many arenas of life. Depending on the approach taken, social media have been defined very differently. They have been conceived of as ‘technologies’, ‘tools’, ‘applications’, ‘sites’, ‘services’, ‘software’, ‘businesses’ and more - and these descriptors are often used interchangeably with little consideration or discussion of the differences in meaning they imply. The ambiguity of the term coupled with its ubiquitous use poses challenges for research which takes social media as a focus for analysis.

In communications, the term “social media” is often used to describe a collection of digital and networked communication technologies which share certain key characteristics regarding the way they allow users to interact, communicate, form/display social ties as well as store and transmit information. But this requires further explanation. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein’s definition presents a good starting point for building a working definition for this thesis - it states: "Social media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User-Generated Content" (2010: 61). They propose a six-category classification of social media related to their affordances: collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g. Twitter), content communities (e.g. YouTube), social networking sites (SNSs) (e.g. Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft), and virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life). In this schema, Twitter and Facebook fall under different categories - Twitter being a microblog and Facebook a social networking site - however this does not highlight the imbricated nature of these categories. In line with other recent studies (boyd 2010, Jones 2013, van Dijck 2013) it is argued here that it is more useful to see both Facebook and Twitter (and other microblogs with networking affordances such as Tumblr, Jaiku etc.,) as SNSs. Although Kaplan and Haenlein’s definition is rather broad and at the same time pigeonholes social media as “applications”, (limiting conceptualisation of them in their roles as websites, services, spaces, businesses, commodities etc.), this definition effectively grounds social media in the Web 2.0 stage of Internet development and highlights the centrality of user-generated content to their composition. Web 2.0 can be

conceived of as a socio-technical assemblage, composed of (dynamic) arrangements of technologies (devices, hardware, software, applications, techniques etc.) and people (individual and aggregate), which create networked social spaces and information flows on the Internet. Web 2.0 has been viewed as more than just a set of technological developments – it can be seen as a cultural phenomenon (Jenkins 2006) in which users become engaged in the process of production and become what Bruns describes as “producers” (2008) through their generation of user-generated content (UGC). The functioning and viability of all social media is premised on their ability to afford digitally mediated social interaction and harness the UGC it creates. In this research, UGC is defined as: i) content made publicly available over the Internet, ii) which reflects a certain amount of creative effort, and iii) which is created outside of professional routines and practices (OECD 2007). UGC is considered to be any type of content created by Internet users and can be in the form of text (conversations, comments, stories etc.), images (photographs, video, graphics, memes, gifs etc.), audio (podcasts, music files etc.) and some forms of automated data (‘likes’ on Facebook) and metadata generated as a by-product.

In the Web 2.0 environment underpinning social media, the user is a producer of content as well as a consumer - a ‘prosumer’ (from ‘proactive consumer’ originally used by Toffler in a somewhat different context in 1980) or ‘producer’ (from producer, a term traditionally allied with ‘professional’ creator and user, of for example journalism/technology – see Bruns 2008). It has been argued that these technologies can enable and encourage certain ways of working and particular values. For instance they have been associated with interactivity, participation and collaboration (Lewis 2012: 840) and values such as openness, transparency and sociality. Van Dijck (2013) however deliberately avoids the implicit connotations of the term “social” media, opting instead for the term “connective” media, which foregrounds the mediated forms of sociality they enable as automated socio-technical systems rather than emphasising the ‘social’. Connectivity is configured out of the socio-technical affordances of social media, i.e. their capacity for supporting and visualising digitally re/mediated social connections and relationships (Jones 2013). The ways in which social media technologies structure interaction and communication through specific affordances, shapes the relationship between those who interact on and through them, introducing new dynamics which importantly for this research, shape news production and journalism.

There are an abundance of social media around the world operating in numerous languages and with varying levels of reach within and beyond national borders. Of these, Twitter and Facebook have the highest global subscription rates - Facebook had 901m

active monthly in April 2012 (Ebersman, 2012) and Twitter had 140m active users in March 2012 (Twitter.com 2012). As an indicator of scale, in 2014 Facebook's user-base surpassed the population of India (Petronzio 2014) and like many social media organisations, turns a competitive annual profit (Van Dijck 2013). This indicates their importance in the day-to-day lives of many people but also in the commercial sphere.

Twitter is commonly referred to as a 'micro-blogging' SNS. It was created in March then launched in July 2006 by Jack Dorsey in San Francisco. It is a type of social network that can be accessed through a web page or desktop/mobile software applications and is based on 1) a short messaging service built on a restricted set of features including (variably) public timeline posts or messages displayed in reverse chronological order, messages directed at other users, and private direct messages, 2) a public display of connection with other users which is organised through the 'follow' function, which allows users to receive in their home feed the posts of those users that they follow and to contact other users in various ways (see above) depending on whether they have a one-way or two-way connection. These largely text-based posts known as "tweets" are capped at 140 characters and embedded hyperlinks are automatically shortened to facilitate their inclusion. Tweets also support still images and short videos of 6 seconds (or less) using the Vine application. Unlike many other social network sites (such as Facebook or MySpace), the following/follower relationship requires no reciprocation. Since launching in 2006, Twitter has been gaining popularity worldwide and user innovation has significantly contributed to the evolution of the technology - e.g. incorporating the retweet (RT), reply (@), and hashtag (#) as a result of community behaviour. The hashtag allows users to search for content grouped around a particular term, whilst the retweet allows users to pass on another user's tweet to their followers. Zhang and Wang (2010) refer to Twitter as an "interest-oriented SNS" as opposed to a "relationship-oriented SNS" such as Facebook, which is described below.

Facebook is a social network site set up in February 2004 which was originally built on location-based shared educational experience (drawing inspiration from the yearbook concept) but which quickly evolved beyond an educational setting to a service connecting what their design language terms 'friends' - potentially any two users but more often users with shared experience and/or physical location. It is accessed through a web page or desktop/mobile software applications and allows users to create a profile and view other users' profiles (to varying degrees based on gradated friend/friend-of-friend/non-friend status) as well as message other users both publicly and privately. Users can post information on their own timeline (a part of their profile) or on other users' timelines, which through the service's algorithms generates user-specific news feeds about people's

interactions and activities. In order to make a direct connection on Facebook, the relationship must be reciprocated however the service has over time developed new ways to allow messaging and profile and activity viewing of users beyond the friend network.

Appendix 2

Illustration of Theoretical Framework



Appendix 3

Account of Development of Methodology

Beginning from the premise that the research would investigate contemporary news production practices at global news agencies, an exploratory position was initially adopted due to a lack of documented evidence and discussion of the topic which necessitated an initially inductive approach to data collection (both empirical and secondary). The inductive approach chosen was not explicitly allied to any of the specific traditions of qualitative research, such as grounded theory, phenomenology, discourse analysis, or narrative analysis, amongst others. The broad approach was used in order to allow findings to emerge from what the researcher considered to be the frequent, significant, and dominant themes found in the raw data, without constraining the process by applying pre-determined concepts or theories. Deductive approaches (often based on hypothesis testing) allow preconceptions to deliberately and directly influence data collection and analysis and thus run the risk of precluding key themes or reframing them to fit existing categories, which would have been detrimental to the exploratory aims of this research. The approach aimed to document news production practices as they are understood by the newswriters under investigation, tracing regularities in the evolution of significant forms of behaviour rather than looking to contribute to predictive theory.

An initial literature review highlighted two major gaps in journalism research concerning a) contemporary journalistic practice in global news agencies and b) use of new digitally-networked technologies in news production, which guided the focus of the research project toward journalists' use and understandings of digitally-networked technologies in the production of news at global news agencies. Several factors became evident during the initial data collection period which significantly refined the topic and focus of research: firstly it became increasingly apparent that the existing body of literature on global news agencies, their professional practice, routines and culture, was largely out of date and that shedding light on changes in the nature of their journalistic work would form a fundamental part of this research; secondly, it was clear that with regard to 'digitally-networked technologies' in the newsroom, three concepts or areas of research were of particular significance - social media, user-generated content (UGC) and multimedia. Exploratory interviews combined with further literature analysis confirmed that social media and UGC were high on the agenda of both the practitioner community under investigation and the relevant academic communities and that UGC was highly linked to social media; therefore the research focus was narrowed to investigating the use

and understandings of social media technologies in GNA news production. At this point it became clear that there were important similarities in context between the agencies and that a theoretical perspective which takes account of this shared culture in the shaping and use of social media technology was required in order to fruitfully analyse and interpret the data. Thus key issues, themes and nascent theory that were emerging in the social media research field were combined with insights from journalism studies and developed into a unique framework for analysis (see Chapter 3). This iterative approach continued to inform the research strategy throughout the research process.

Appendix 4

New Sites of News Production Research: Beyond the Newsroom

The newsroom is a physically shared workspace provided by a news organisation for newswriters to engage in news production. Newsrooms have been strategically placed at the centre of news production studies due to their centrality in the production process and characterised the classic newsroom ethnographies of the 1970s and 1980s. Nerone and Barnhurst contend that the conception of the press as an institution with the newsroom as the hub of activity means that: “The newsroom thus receives scrutiny as a work zone that leaves its tracks in the form and content of newspapers and in the conditions of reception for the audience” (2003: 435). The global news agency bureau structure consists of different types of newsroom – they have organisational headquarters, which are usually the largest newsrooms, large central hubs that are the focus for a region, and the numerous bureaus dotted around the world. The newsroom is certainly an important site for study because it is the main location of the socio-technical arrangement of the news production environment in traditional news organisations such as GNAs. Despite the increasing use of digital networks for communication, data-sharing, and content production, which allows for a geographically dispersed workforce, newsrooms remain the physical locations where many key production staff reside. This includes a large number of editorial, technical and management staff, who co-ordinate activity and make important decisions regarding coverage. It is also where most of the core technological hardware is housed, making it the social, technological and symbolic hub of the GNA organisational network.

All agencies have UK-based newsrooms in London which provided an ideal site for conducting interviews and observation for this project as they were a) within reach both geographically and financially for the researcher; b) housed a variety of newswriters with diverse roles and c) were regarded as a suitable site by the ‘gatekeepers’ who granted access to the researcher, perhaps due to the knowledge that in the newsroom environment they can monitor the researcher and oversee their activities. It must be noted that each agency’s London newsroom was different in nature and thus not directly comparable: for Reuters London is the central headquarters; for AP it is the headquarters for their television arm (APTV/N) (New York is its central HQ); whilst for AFP, London is the location of their UK bureau (Paris is its central HQ). Twenty-four of the interviews were conducted face-to-face in the newsroom, where newswriters could also demonstrate technology and practices.

Though newsroom-focused research has yielded myriad illuminating studies, it has also restricted the scope of news production research. Zelizer has argued that in the contemporary production environment there is “a far more diverse set of venues... (that) should not be left out of the picture,” including ‘in-the-field’ and Internet and telephone exchanges (2004: 68). This is not to say that newsrooms are no longer worthy of study, only that other arenas of activity and interaction in production should also be considered, especially as digital communication technologies are opening up the possibility of more geographically dispersed networks in news work. Wahl-Jorgensen assesses the consequences of ‘newsroom-centricity’ as a key methodological feature in ethnography of news production, suggesting that researchers would benefit from being reflexive about the power relations that shape their approaches and paradigms (2009). She highlights the resulting emphasis on certain types and categories of news work such as central operations and prestigious locations that are spatially delimited as a result of the process of determining a “field” which involves an (artificial) conceptual segmentation of the world (ibid: 23). One of the more under-researched areas of news agency work is that which occurs ‘in-the-field’ - the process of on-site gathering of original news content. Although much of the time spent researching and gathering information for inclusion in news reports (especially textual content, although the same is true for preparing audio and video content) is done from the desktop, through internal and external communication from the newsroom, ‘in-the-field’ newsgathering represents a fundamental stage in news production. As such, an effort was made to contact and interview (via email and Skype) newsgatherers with a non-bureau-based role: nine interviewees came under this category.

An as yet underdeveloped area of news production studies suggests that digital possibilities have altered the composition of newswork and of news organisations but there has been no consensus as to whether this has diminished the role of the newsroom as a defining site for investigation. Considering that the focus of this research is on use of digitally-networked technology in news production, concentrating solely on the newsroom as a location for data collection was thus considered to be limiting. Although it provided an appropriate site for obtaining insight into a core hub of production activity through observation and interview, it restricted the researcher’s gaze to a physically defined research environment. Structuring the research around social media technologies in news production has significant consequences for the issue of sites for data collection. Digital technology - which underpins social media technology - makes use of the transmission of data using binary code and does not require a physically constituted link between devices. In the case of news production this allows for mobility, with communication and production taking place in more spatially diverse settings. Key

elements of news production, i.e. transmitting, accessing and manipulating content, can be performed on increasingly compact and mobile devices (laptops, mobile phones etc.) and data can be sent almost immediately through Internet and satellite communication facilities (where they are available). Moreover, when work is being accomplished simultaneously from numerous locations and 'on-the-go', by numerous people - as is common with news organisations' social media activity - researching newswriters as they engage in social media practice becomes difficult for the researcher. As such, the digital traces that are left by their social media practice become a crucial site for analysis. It is this change that informed the decision to include complementary analysis of organisational social network site activity and interaction. Moreover, the newsroom was not a necessary research site to gain access to the extensive online organisational infrastructure that supports newswriters and the production process. Social media guidelines for instance were posted and archived online and available for download, making them accessible and relevant beyond the newsroom.

Appendix 5a

Template of Framing Devices

Coding Template for First Round:

Headings:

Sub headers:

Images:

Statistics and charts:

Keywords:

Introductory statements:

Concluding statements:

Quotes:

Metaphors:

Exemplars:

Sources of information:

[This selection of framing devices was constructed from the previous framing studies of Tankard (2001: 101): headlines, subheads, images (photos, photo captions, logos,) charts, concluding statements; and Gamson and Modigliani (1989): metaphors and exemplars. The rest were added by the researcher]

Appendix 5b

Template for Coding: Problem-Cause-Solution

Coding Template for Second Round:

Arguments:

Defining a problem:

Identifying causes:

Making a moral judgement:

Suggesting a remedy/ Call for action:

Descriptions of: *Journalism;*

The GNA;

GNA Newswriters;

Descriptions of: *Social Media;*

[This selection of framing elements was constructed from the previous framing studies of Entman 1993 and Verloo 2005: Defining a problem, Identifying causes, Making a moral judgement, Suggesting a remedy/Call for action. It was supplemented with the researcher's own additions]

Appendix 6a

Example of Completed Framing Coding Tables (for Reuters)

Headings:

Section 1

Title: Using Social Media

Social Media: Basic Principles

Sub headers: None **Images:** None **Statistics and charts:** None

Section 2

Title: Picking up from Twitter and social media

Sub headers: None **Images:** None **Statistics and charts:** None

Keywords: Twitter, social networks, social media

Introductory statements:

Section 1

We want to encourage you to use social media approaches in your journalism but we also need to make sure that you are fully aware of the risks -- especially those that threaten our hard-earned reputation for independence and freedom from bias or our brand.

Section 2

Social networking and micro-blogging sites on the Internet, such as Twitter, are virtual venues where users around the world may sometimes post information and images of great interest to our clients that are not available elsewhere.

Concluding statements:

Section 1

In other words, be careful. By all means, explore ways in which social media can help you do your job. But before you tweet or post, consider how what you're doing will reflect on your professionalism and our collective reputation. When in doubt, talk to colleagues, your editor or your supervisor.

Section 2

- Depending on what we can confirm, we may either move a story saying the price moved because of an item posted on Twitter by xxx about xyz which we have been unable to independently confirm; or move a story confirming what the original item said; or move a story shooting down what the original item said.

Quotes: None

Metaphors: "avoid flame wars" (i.e. heated argument that results in those involved posting personal attacks during or instead of debating the topic at hand.) "not to muzzle anyone"; "we are flying without a net", "win the play", "fanning the flames"

Exemplars: None

Sources of information: Not given

Appendix 6b

AFP Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

1 **Guidelines on the use of content from social networks**

2 **General guidelines**

3 Content sharing and social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube are
4 important tools for reporters and editors; they may provide a first tip-off to breaking news
5 events and statements or be the source of otherwise unobtainable photographs and videos.

6 Under most circumstances, common sense and normal practice as outlined in our
7 Stylebook guarantees proper usage of material posted on the networks.

8 However, because of the openness of the internet, use of this material carries significant
9 risks to the agency's reputation for reliability and accuracy, notwithstanding any legal
10 issues. These guidelines, drawn up from our experience, are aimed at minimizing the risks
11 to the agency by ensuring as far as possible the authenticity of the material, our rights to
12 use the material, and that we have provided all the necessary context for clients.

13 **Guidelines for text**

14 Reporters and editors should monitor Twitter, Facebook, etc. just as they do other sites.
15 They apply the same checks to reports from these networks as to news any other sources
16 and they must ensure that the agency has the right to publish or distribute information
17 integrated into their work.

18 **What we can do**

19 **1. Monitor statements by personalities, politicians**

20 Reporters should build up a network on Twitter and Facebook of trusted accounts relevant
21 to their beat, whether politicians, personalities, contacts or the competition. Otherwise, we
22 risk missing important statements and news alerts. There is no need to verify authenticated
23 Twitter or Facebook accounts. For example when Egyptian opposition figure Mohamed
24 ElBaradei returned home on January 27 we used his brother as a direct source but we also
25 used a message ElBaradei himself posted on Twitter.

26 **2. Provide reactions to events**

27 We may use Facebook, Twitter etc. for evidence of reactions within social networking sites
28 to soft news events, such as the death of a celebrity. However, we could not use those
29 statements as a source for the event itself.

30 **3. Search for people in the news, contacts**

31 Social networking and content sharing sites can be valuable research tools, too. For
32 example when French broker Jerome Kerviel was accused of a five-billion-euro trading
33 scandal at Societe Generale, we were able to see co-workers he had listed on his Facebook
34 site, and then to contact them for comment through a search in the White Pages.

Appendix 6b AFP Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

35 We can also use official Facebook pages to appeal for witnesses.

36 **4. Use as an alert to news breaks relevant to an event**

37 Reporters may use Twitter as an alert by following key contacts and the competition and
38 by tracking key words directly related to specific events such as a conference. On May 1,
39 the death of bin Laden surfaced first on Twitter an hour before the official announcement
40 by President Barack Obama via the account of @Keith Urban, who had worked with ex-
41 defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

42 Such monitoring is an integral part of news-gathering which is our priority.

43 **What we can't do**

44 **An unverified statement on a social networking site may not be used as the source for**
45 **a news break, nor for a description of unfolding events unless we are sure of the**
46 **authenticity of the account .**

47 We have been caught out in the past, for example by a fake Twitter account in which the
48 British foreign secretary supposedly sent a message of condolence after the death of
49 Michael Jackson ending with the words: "RIP, Michael."

50 Statements and breaking news on the social networks must always be verified with the
51 person involved or their representatives. Be wary of totally fabricated stories online.

52 In September 2009, for example, DPA ran a story that a German rap group, the Berlin
53 Boys, had mounted a suicide attack on a small town called Bluewater in the United States.
54 The story was backed up by the group's Internet site, the KVPK television news site and a
55 page in Wikipedia. It was later discovered that neither the town, nor the group, nor the
56 television company existed. DPA called a press conference to apologise.

57 **AFP journalists must be scrupulous and careful when picking up comments**
58 **published on the social network or internet.**

59 Jokes (LOL) and the free and easy language which characterize the networks should not
60 cause us to forget the basic rules: don't quote from anonymous accounts, don't publish
61 comment that is smutty, libelous, racist, sexist etc. We apply the same standards to such
62 comments as to those gathered during standard reporting.

63 Use of Wikipedia as a documentary source is banned. Don't quote Wikipedia, it does not
64 meet our standards of reliability.

65 **Guidelines for video and photo**

66 We may on occasion use video and photos posted on sites such as Twitter, Facebook and
67 YouTube. This may be unavoidable, for example, when professional media are excluded
68 from an event by the authorities; when a witness has posted exclusive or extraordinary

Appendix 6b

AFP Social Media Guidelines

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69 shots of a news event; when the only available photo of a person in the news is on a site
70 such as Facebook; or when a posted video or photo becomes a story in itself.

71 Because of the potential risks to the agency's reputation, images from social networking
72 sites may not be used without regional or central redchef approval. In the most sensitive
73 cases approval must be sought from the global editorial management, in liaison with the
74 photo management in Paris.

75 There are three key questions to consider before publishing:

76 1. Does the material have a news value that justifies its use given the risks?

77 2. Have we verified the content, origin and ownership?

78 3. Have we provided the proper context to our clients?

79 Once a decision is made that the news value justifies its use, as in the Iranian post-election
80 protests of 2009 or Syrian opposition demonstrations in 2011, the major challenge is to
81 verify the content, origin and ownership rights.

82 Checking content, origin and ownership

83 Check if the image rings true

84 Does a photo or video show a scene that does not abide by the laws of light and shadow or
85 that seems out of place given the context?

86 Always speak to the AFP journalist closest to the story to get an informed opinion. For
87 example, before using YouTube videos from Iran, we asked the Tehran bureau to verify
88 that the images had indeed been shot in the cities stated and that the scenes depicted tallied
89 with reality. We have done the same with Libya, systematically referring to our
90 correspondent in Tripoli who has authenticated some footage. Other locations have been
91 confirmed from still photos posted on official sites before unrest erupted.

92 **Verify five basic elements**

93 **Check these basic elements of posted images:**

94 **1. Location: Does the image show the location that the source claims it does?**

95 **2. Time: Does the video or photo correspond to the date and time claimed?**

96 **3. Source: Is the source's identity and authorship confirmed?**

97 **4. Publication: Has the photo or video already been published or is it exclusive?**

98 **5. Copyright: Is the image protected and if so what are the specific legal terms?**

Appendix 6b AFP Social Media Guidelines

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99 **Check with the source**

100 We must make every possible effort to verify the image and ownership with the author or
101 the subject of the material.

102 Photos and videos posted online have generally been stripped of 'metadata' which would
103 otherwise provide important corroborative information such as the date and time.

104 If we are able to contact the source, therefore, we should ask for the original images which
105 contain this metadata. These images are also usually of higher quality.

106 **Check online**

107 We can gain important evidence as to the authenticity of a photo or video by:

108 **1. Searching for the same or similar images online;**

109 **2. Checking for links to the image;**

110 **3. Searching for the metadata and checking the format of the video or photo.**

111 **4. Finding the country in which a related Internet site is based.**

112 These searches may serve to confirm or refute the claimed content, date, origin and
113 ownership of the material. See 'Authenticity checks' in the 'Online techniques' section
114 below.

115 The hashtag "fake" can also be used to search and monitor Twitter.

116 If the authenticity of an image on the social networks is in doubt we can also call on the
117 expertise of our subsidiary Citizenside.

118 **Providing context**

119 Whatever the medium, provide clients with the information necessary to judge the
120 authenticity and reliability of the image.

121 In exceptional circumstances we may decide to use a photo or video even when we are
122 unable to verify the source, providing other checks have convinced us that the material is
123 genuine and of such importance that it should be provided to editors with the proper
124 context.

125 If we are unable to verify specific elements we should specify this in a disclaimer.

126 If we are unable to find the source we should identify the site carrying the material
127 YouTube, Flickr etc. – but otherwise there is no need to do so.

Appendix 6b AFP Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

128 Global News Director

129 5/31/11

130 07.17.2013

131 **GUIDELINES FOR USING SOCIAL MEDIA**

132 Updated – July 2013

133 **OVERVIEW**

134 Social media networks have become a primary source of information and an integral part
135 of daily life for billions of people the world over.

136 The management strongly encourages AFP journalists to open accounts with popular social
137 networking sites. Twitter and Facebook remain the most important among these, but others
138 such as Google Plus, LinkedIn and Tumblr are growing in influence. Active participation
139 in social media has become a vital tool for building contacts and finding new sources, as
140 well as monitoring and reporting the news.

141 This guide provides an overview of how to do this and outlines AFP's rules on the use of
142 social networks. These guidelines will be regularly updated to stay abreast of evolving
143 trends on the Internet.

144 The presence of AFP journalists on social networks helps build the agency's credibility
145 across the Internet and shows that AFP has a solid presence across the spectrum of digital
146 and traditional media.

147 These networks bring together a global mass of web users, who are often at the forefront of
148 current events as witnesses or experts, and news organisations keen to build up their brand
149 and credibility.

150 AFP journalists are encouraged to be part of this process and to be active on social media,
151 using the networks in a measured and credible way in keeping with the agency's strong
152 and historical journalistic traditions. Many journalists active on social networks, especially
153 Twitter, have built strong followings and boosted their own visibility and clout. At the
154 same time, social networks pose new challenges for agency journalists because they allow
155 us to interact directly with the public without the filter of an editor or a client.

156 **HOW?**

157 AFP journalists can play a vital role in protecting the credibility of the agency's work and
158 championing the quality of our journalism. Twitter, for example, allows journalists to
159 quickly spot and address false information or unfair criticism online. By building up
160 networks on Twitter, AFP journalists not only develop useful sources of information, they
161 also help to gain visibility for AFP's journalism across the Internet.

Appendix 6b

AFP Social Media Guidelines

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162 Journalists on social networks should be mindful of the agency's image and principles. All
163 information posted online – whether on Twitter, Facebook or any other social network – is
164 or can easily become public, even if it originates from a personal account.

165 As a result, two overarching principles should govern online activity by AFP journalists,
166 whether on social networks or other online forums, even if personal accounts are being
167 used. All content should:

- 168 • Broadly conform to the spirit of the AFP stylebook, the ethical values of the
169 agency, and its guiding principles of fairness and balance. Even if a freer tone is
170 encouraged on social networking sites, no one should use insults or
171 profane/offensive language.
- 172 • Respect the independence and impartiality of AFP.

173 These rules apply to social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as blogs and
174 other online forums. The agency's presence on social networks and the application of these
175 guidelines will be reviewed and updated each year in the agency's annual report.

176 MANAGING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA IDENTITY

- 177 • If AFP journalists are using social media such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or
178 Tumblr in a professional capacity, it is essential they are clearly identified as AFP
179 journalists.
- 180 • Journalists should include a disclaimer on their Twitter profiles such as: "The views
181 expressed here are my own. Links and re-tweets are not endorsements" or "On
182 Twitter I speak only for myself."
- 183 • A journalist who wants to be active on a social network beyond simply monitoring
184 other people's posts should inform his or her manager.
- 185 • If you feel strongly about having a personal social media presence, then open
186 separate work and private social media accounts. The private account should make
187 no reference to your role as a journalist at AFP.
- 188 • Journalists who've already opened professional accounts under a pseudonym
189 should modify these to clearly state their name and role within the agency.
- 190 • Individual services and bureaus are also welcome to open accounts, such as
191 @AFPTokyo and @AFP Rennes. Please let the social media team in Paris and
192 redchef know before you launch.
- 193 • Be security conscious: Choose strong passwords that are at least eight characters
194 long and include a mixture of upper and lower case letters, as well as symbols and
195 numbers. Change your passwords regularly, and don't store these in an easily
196 accessible file. Watch out for phishing attacks and fraudulent emails. Please contact
197 the social media team or the main technical department if you have any questions.
- 198 • AFP will keep a list of the professional social media accounts of all staff.

199 GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

- 200 • Avoid all vulgar or overtly opinionated comment.

Appendix 6b

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- 201 • Conversations can sometimes include very lively exchanges and journalists often
202 receive criticism over reports or observations. If this is the case, refrain from
203 reacting in the heat of the moment; take time to write a considered cool-headed
204 post.
- 205 • Before Tweeting or posting comments, bear in mind that your words will be public
206 and will be archived and referenced by search engines. Breaking news stories often
207 attract tweets that are speculative in nature, contain unverified information or are
208 just plain wrong. Journalists should bear this in mind and avoid retweeting any
209 information that could turn out to be problematic. However, if a journalist sees a
210 tweet they know to be wrong and that runs counter to verified information that is
211 already on the wire, they can point this out.
- 212 • Respect the user rules for each individual site.
- 213 • If an AFP journalist sees the agency challenged or criticised on a social network, he
214 or she should immediately alert the social media team, as well as a senior editorial
215 manager such as a bureau chief, desk chief or redchef.

216 **WHAT TO POST ONLINE?**

- 217 • Do not post any internal AFP correspondence.
- 218 • You should not post online any exclusive information gained in the course of your
219 work for AFP. This sort of material is proprietary, and belongs first on the wire or
220 with the web & mobile department.
- 221 • Journalists can, however, post any observations, colour or anecdotes which will
222 help them to build up a network of followers. Journalists commenting on a subject
223 outside their normal beat should be mindful that the topic may well be covered an
224 AFP colleague.
- 225 • Journalists are encouraged to use their smartphones to take photos and short videos,
226 and to include these in their tweets. To distinguish between these and official AFP
227 photos, journalists are encouraged to use filters, such as those found in the Twitter
228 mobile app, Instagram, Hipstamatic, etc.
- 229 • Avoid criticising other media, regardless of whether they are clients or not.
- 230 • Remain neutral when commenting on the regions, countries or governments you
231 cover. You should also refrain from any comments that could harm the agency's
232 image of impartiality.
- 233 • Recommending or re-tweeting links is an essential part of the social network
234 experience and is encouraged. However, it is important this process is done with
235 care. A retweet or link is often considered a sympathetic recommendation.
- 236 • AFP journalists shouldn't post or tweet alerts, exclusive news or major breaking
237 news without first checking with the regional or central redchef. It is important for
238 AFP to have a social media presence on many news stories, but management needs
239 to make sure there are enough reporters on the ground to ensure the quality of
240 coverage and to ensure information is prioritised for the wire or Live Reports.
- 241 • Corrections: Mistakes happen in tweets and social media postings. As soon as you
242 realise you've published something incorrect, send out another posting on the same
243 platform that describes the mistake and contains the correct information. Do not
244 delete a tweet or posting without first sending a corrected version. For serious

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AFP Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

245 errors or messages that have already been widely shared, please contact the social
246 media team or redchef before deleting anything.

247 4) POSTING OR TWEETING AFP CONTENT

- 248 • Avoid tweeting AFP alerts or breaking news on social networks. Alerts are an
249 important part of AFP business, so it's vital not to disseminate them too freely.
250 Journalists should only retweet alerts that have been tweeted from the company's
251 @AFP account or published by an AFP client.
- 252 • Journalists are strongly encouraged to disseminate information that has already
253 been posted on the company's social media accounts, including Facebook,
254 Google+, Tumblr, LinkedIn, YouTube and Dailymotion, and to retweet posts on
255 @AFP (or other agency accounts such as @AFPphoto, @afpfr, @AFPespanol etc.)
- 256 • Journalists should try to link to articles, photos, videos, infographics and other
257 products hosted on client sites.
- 258 • Include @AFP or #AFP in every tweet containing agency information. This serves
259 a dual purpose: It flags your tweet to social media editors, so will more likely be
260 retweeted on @AFP, and it increases brand recognition.
- 261 • Journalists should refrain from posting AFP content culled directly from the wires
262 or platforms such as ImageForum. This can be done in a very limited way in
263 exceptional circumstances (such as a photographer using a low-resolution version
264 of an image on a personal blog).

265 5) LEGAL ISSUES

266 Journalists should remember that social networks such as Twitter and Facebook are hosting
267 sites which essentially give space to users to express themselves under their own
268 responsibility. Journalists should understand they are responsible for the information on
269 their Facebook page or Twitter account, and can be held legally accountable for any issues
270 arising from that information.

271 If information is posted while the journalist is carrying out official AFP business, AFP
272 could also face legal ramifications. As a result it is essential that journalists respect the
273 agency's social media guidelines, the principles laid out in the AFP stylebook and laws
274 relating to the freedom of information.

275 07/17/2013 - Direction de l'Information

Appendix 6c

AP Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

1 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR AP EMPLOYEES

2 REVISED MAY 2013

3 AP's Social Media Guidelines are based on our Statement of News Values and Principles.
4 The guidelines below apply these long-tested principles to the social media space. The
5 Social Media Guidelines are designed to advance the AP's brand and staffers' personal
6 brands on social networks. They encourage staffers to be active participants in social
7 networks while upholding our fundamental value that staffers should not express personal
8 opinions on controversial issues of the day.

9 Any exceptions to the guidelines below must be approved by a senior AP manager.
10 Nothing in this policy is intended to abridge any rights provided by the National Labor
11 Relations Act.

12 ACCOUNTS

13 All AP journalists are encouraged to have accounts on social networks. They have become
14 an essential tool for AP reporters to gather news and share links to our published work. We
15 recommend having one account per network that you use both personally and
16 professionally.

17 Many AP journalists have had great success with this strategy.

18 Employees must identify themselves as being from AP if they are using their accounts for
19 work in any way. You don't have to include AP in your Twitter or other usernames, and
20 you should use a personal image (not an AP logo) for the profile photo. But you should
21 identify yourself in your profile as an AP staffer.

22 Posting AP proprietary or confidential material is prohibited.

23 Employees may not include political affiliations in their profiles and should not make any
24 postings that express political views.

25 OPINION

26 AP staffers must be aware that opinions they express may damage the AP's reputation as
27 an unbiased source of news. AP employees must refrain from declaring their views on
28 contentious public issues in any public forum and must not take part in organized action in
29 support of causes or movements.

30 Sometimes AP staffers ask if they're free to comment in social media on matters like
31 sports and entertainment. The answer is yes, but there are some important things to keep in
32 mind:

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33 First, trash-talking about anyone (including a team, company or celebrity) reflects badly on
34 staffers and the AP. Assume your tweet will be seen by the target of your comment. The
35 person or organization you're deriding may be one that an AP colleague is trying to
36 develop as a source.

37 Second, if you or your department covers a subject — or you supervise people who do —
38 you have a special obligation to be even-handed in your tweets. Whenever possible, link to
39 AP copy, where we have the space to represent all points of view.

40 Posts and tweets aimed at gathering opinions for a story must make clear that we are
41 looking for voices on all sides of an issue.

42 **PRIVACY**

43 Employees should be mindful that any opinions or personal information they disclose
44 about themselves or colleagues may be linked to the AP's name. That's true even if staffers
45 restrict their pages to viewing only by friends.

46 We recommend customizing your privacy settings on Facebook to determine what you
47 share and with whom.

48 However, as multitudes of people have learned all too well, virtually nothing is truly
49 private on the Internet. It's all too easy for someone to copy material out of restricted pages
50 and redirect it elsewhere for wider viewing.

51 **FRIENDING/FOLLOWING**

52 It is acceptable to extend and accept Facebook friend requests from sources, politicians and
53 newsmakers if necessary for reporting purposes, and to follow them on Twitter.

54 However, friending and "liking" political candidates or causes may create a perception
55 among people unfamiliar with the protocol of social networks that AP staffers are
56 advocates. Therefore, staffers should try to make this kind of contact with figures on both
57 sides of controversial issues.

58 We should avoid interacting with newsmakers on their public pages – for instance,
59 commenting on their posts.

60 AP managers should not issue friend requests to subordinates. It's fine if employees want
61 to initiate the friend process with their bosses or other managers.

62 **PUBLISHING**

63 AP staff are encouraged to link to AP content in all formats. They can also link to content
64 from other media organizations, except if the material spreads rumors or is otherwise
65 inappropriate. Staffers should always refrain from spreading unconfirmed rumors online,

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66 regardless of whether other journalists or news outlets have shared the reports; because of
67 staffers' affiliation with AP, doing so could lend credence to reports that may well be
68 incorrect.

69 Be mindful of competitive and corporate issues as you post links. And while we compete
70 vigorously with other news organizations, you should think twice before you tweet or post
71 anything that disparages them. This may affect perceptions of your objectivity.

72 Staffers should link to content that has been published online, rather than directly
73 uploading or copying and pasting the material.

74 AP journalists have live-tweeted news events on several occasions with great success. Here
75 are some guidelines on live-tweeting:

- 76 • News events (press conferences, sports events, etc.) that are being broadcast live:
77 AP staffers are welcome to live-tweet these events. However, when major news
78 breaks, a staffer's first obligation is to provide full details to the appropriate news
79 desk for use in AP services if the desk isn't tuned in already. After providing this
80 information and handling any other immediate AP work, the staffer is then free to
81 tweet or post information about the news development.
- 82 • Exclusive material: AP news services must have the opportunity to publish
83 exclusive text, photo and video material before it appears on social networks. Once
84 that material has been published, staffers are welcome to tweet and post a link to it
85 on AP or subscriber platforms.
- 86 • Incremental reporting threads: AP staffers should never share on social networks
87 incremental information that, if closely held, could lead to important, exclusive
88 content.
- 89 • Other content: Other material you have gathered may be shared on social networks.
90 This includes material we commonly refer to as "cutting room floor" content —
91 material that is not needed for a specific AP product.

92 A note about the safety of AP staff: Staffers must not post on social networks any
93 information that could jeopardize the safety of AP staff — for example, the exact location
94 of staffers reporting from a place where journalists may be kidnapped or attacked. This
95 also applies to reports of the arrest or disappearance of staffers. In some cases, publicity
96 may in fact help a staffer, but this determination must be made by AP managers handling
97 the situation.

98 **RETWEETING**

99 Retweets, like tweets, should not be written in a way that looks like you're expressing a
100 personal opinion on the issues of the day. A retweet with no comment of your own can
101 easily be seen as a sign of approval of what you're relaying.

102 Examples of retweets that can cause problems:

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- 103 1. RT @jonescampaign: Smith's policies would destroy our schools.
- 104 2. RT @dailyeuropean: At last, a euro plan that works.
- 105 These kinds of unadorned retweets must be avoided.
- 106 However, we can judiciously retweet opinionated material if we make clear we're simply
107 reporting it, much as we would quote it in a story. Introductory words help make the
108 distinction.
- 109 Examples:
- 110 1. Jones campaign now denouncing Smith on education. RT @jonescampaign: Smith's
111 policies would destroy our schools.
- 112 2. Big European paper praises euro plan. RT @dailyeuropean: At last, a euro plan that
113 works.
- 114 These cautions apply even if you say on your Twitter profile that retweets do not constitute
115 endorsements. Many people who see your tweets and retweets will never look at your
116 Twitter bio.
- 117 Staffers should steer clear of retweeting rumors and hearsay. They can, however, feel free
118 to reply to such tweets in order to seek further information, as long as they're careful to
119 avoid repeating the questionable reports.
- 120 When a newsmaker breaks significant news on a social network, a staffer who sees this
121 should report it to the appropriate AP news desk and do any related reporting work asked
122 of him or her. The staffer can then feel free to retweet or share the original tweet or post, if
123 the newsmaker account is judged to be authentic. Policies and best practices on verifying
124 accounts are outlined in more detail below.
- 125 **SHOWCASING AP WORK ON PERSONAL SITES, BLOGS AND SOCIAL**
126 **NETWORKS**
- 127 AP staffers may wish to share their work on their personal websites and blogs. Staffers
128 may post a sampling of their text stories, photos, videos or interactives once they have
129 been published by AP. The material must be clearly identified as AP content.
- 130 When highlighting their work on social networks or other sites and services that are
131 focused on the sharing of content among users, staffers must link to the content rather than
132 uploading it directly.
- 133 Non-AP content created by AP staffers, such as personal photos, videos and writings, can
134 be shared on personal websites, blogs and social networks. All postings must be consistent
135 with the rules in the AP News Values and Principles and Social Media Guidelines,

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136 including those on expressing opinions on contentious public issues. Staffers working in a
137 hostile or otherwise sensitive environment should be mindful of security issues, as well as
138 the impact on AP's ability to gather the news, when deciding what personal content to
139 share online.

140 **SOURCING**

141 It can be difficult to verify the identity of sources found on social networks. Sources
142 discovered there should be vetted in the same way as those found by any other means. If a
143 source you encounter on a social network claims to be an official from a company,
144 organization or government agency, call the place of business to confirm the identity, just
145 as you would if a source called on the phone.

146 You must never simply lift quotes, photos or video from social networking sites and
147 attribute them to the name on the profile or feed where you found the material. Most social
148 media sites offer a way to send a message to a user; use this to establish direct contact,
149 over email or by phone, so you can get more detailed information about the source.

150 Use particular caution if you find a social networking account that appears to belong to a
151 person who is central to a story, especially if you can't get confirmation from that person.
152 Fake accounts are rampant in the social media world and can appear online within minutes
153 of a new name appearing in the news. Examine the details to determine whether the page
154 could have just as easily been created by somebody else.

155 Many athletes, celebrities and politicians have verified Twitter accounts, identified by a
156 white-on-blue check mark on the profile page, which means Twitter has determined that
157 the account really does belong to that person. However, Twitter's verification process has
158 been fooled, meaning we should still do our own checking with the newsmaker. The same
159 goes for verified Google Plus pages, which have a check mark — we need to verify the
160 page through our own reporting.

161 Also, before you quote from newsmaker's tweets or posts, confirm who is managing the
162 account. Is it the famous person? His or her handlers? A combination? Knowing the source
163 of the information will help you determine just how newsworthy the tweet or post is and
164 how to characterize it.

165 To include photos, videos or other multimedia content from social networks in our news
166 report, we must determine who controls the copyright to the material and get permission
167 from that person or organization to use it. Any exceptions must be discussed with the
168 Nerve Center and Legal. The authenticity of the content also needs to be verified to AP's
169 standards.

170 Staffers should take a sensitive and thoughtful approach when using social networks to
171 pursue information or user-generated content from people in dangerous situations or from
172 those who have suffered a significant personal loss. They should never ask members of the
173 public to put themselves in danger, and in fact should remind them to stay safe when

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174 conditions are hazardous. Staffers should use their journalistic instincts to determine
175 whether inquiring through social media is appropriate at all given the source's difficult
176 circumstances, and should consult with a manager in making this decision. For more
177 details on how to handle this situation, see the broader memo that was distributed to AP
178 staff.

179 **INTERACTING WITH USERS**

180 AP is strongly in favor of engaging with those who consume our content. Staffers should
181 feel free to ask their followers on social networks for their opinions on news stories, or to
182 put out a call for witnesses and other sources, including people who have captured photos
183 or video that AP might want to authenticate and use. They're also encouraged to answer
184 questions about their areas of coverage that are directed their way on social media, as long
185 as they answer in a way that's consistent with AP's News Values and Principles and Social
186 Media Guidelines.

187 Most feedback we receive is constructive, and any substantive criticism of our content
188 should be taken seriously, however it may be phrased.

189 AP's News Values and Principles say, "Staffers must notify supervisory editors as soon as
190 possible of errors or potential errors, whether in their work or that of a colleague." Beyond
191 that, responses to our audience can largely be guided by the nature of the comments that
192 come in.

193 A thoughtful note from a reader or viewer that leads to a correction by us deserves an
194 email or tweet of thanks (try to avoid repeating the original error). If someone offers a
195 businesslike criticism of a story or image but has their facts wrong, it's good to reply, time
196 permitting, to clarify the facts.

197 However, it's best to avoid protracted back-and-forth exchanges with angry people that
198 become less constructive with each new round. Abusive, bigoted, obscene and/or racist
199 comments should be flagged to the Nerve Center immediately and, if appropriate, to AP
200 Global Security (contact dspriggs@ap.org).

201 **OTHER THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:**

202 I. Any response we make to a reader or viewer could go public. Email, Facebook messages
203 and Twitter direct messages may feel like private communications, but may easily find
204 their way to blogs and political pressure groups, attorneys and others. In the case of a story
205 or image that stirs significant controversy, the editor is likely the best person to reply,
206 rather than the person who created the content. The Standards Center can also reply.

207 II. Any incoming message that raises the possibility of legal action should be reviewed by
208 an AP attorney before a response is made

209 **INTERACTING WITH AP ACCOUNTS**

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210 Staff are welcome to retweet and share material posted by official AP-branded accounts on
211 social networking sites (e.g. @AP or an AP Facebook or Google Plus page). We ask that
212 AP staff refrain from liking or commenting on official AP-branded Facebook or Google
213 Plus posts and chats. These accounts are official, public-facing channels of
214 communication, and we want to reserve the comments and interactions for the public, not
215 for journalists talking among themselves in a public-facing spot. It can be off-putting for
216 an average Facebook user to click on a post and see conversations between colleagues or
217 virtual insider pals on the back.

218 **DELETING TWEETS**

219 Twitter.com allows us to delete tweets we've sent. Deletion, however, removes the tweet
220 only from Twitter.com and perhaps some other Twitter clients. Tweets of ours that have
221 been retweeted or reposted elsewhere will still remain publicly visible. If you believe a
222 tweet should be deleted, contact a Nerve Center manager to discuss the situation.

223 **CORRECTIONS**

224 Erroneous tweets or other social media posts need to be corrected as quickly and
225 transparently as errors in any other AP service. This applies to AP-related tweets or posts
226 on personal accounts as well.

227 The thing to do is to tweet or post that we made a mistake and explain exactly what was
228 wrong.

229 Example:

230 Correction: U.S. Embassy in Nigeria says bombings could happen this week at luxury
231 hotels in Abuja (previously we incorrectly said Lagos): apne.ws/uxr9ph

232 Serious errors need to be brought to the attention of a Nerve Center manager and the appropriate
233 regional or vertical desk.

234 **SOCIAL NEWSGATHERING IN SENSITIVE CIRCUMSTANCES**

235 Using social media to hunt down tips, witnesses and user-generated content is an essential
236 tool in the modern reporting arsenal, and AP journalists have had a lot of success with it in
237 recent years. Recent tragic news events have served as a reminder that reaching out to the
238 public online requires a deft touch, especially in situations where people are in danger or
239 have suffered a terrible personal loss.

240 And so, here's some guidance that we hope will help you navigate the crowd-sourcing
241 waters in a way that will be both sensitive and effective.

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242 **Most importantly, take a moment to consider the crowd-sourcing effort -- and have a**
243 **conversation with your manager, and with the Nerve Center if additional guidance is**
244 **needed -- in any of the following circumstances:**

- 245 • You're reaching out to someone whose own safety may be in danger, whether in a
246 war zone or at the scene of a natural disaster or ongoing crime.
- 247 • You're contacting someone who has suffered a significant personal loss, like the
248 death or disappearance of a loved one.
- 249 • You're reaching out to someone who is not in possession of all the facts or
250 developments of the situation and you may inadvertently be the first source of
251 distressing information.

252 This consultation is key, but here are some general tips to start with:

253 **Acting as an observer**

254 If someone is sharing information from an ongoing situation that could be perceived as
255 hazardous, sometimes it's best to simply monitor their posts and treat them as news tips as
256 you try to tell the story of what's happening. You'll often be able to reach out to them later,
257 when it's safer to do so. Also, they'll be more likely to want to help you later.

258 **Seeking photos or videos**

259 There is a clear difference between seeking permission to use photos or videos that
260 someone has posted and asking someone to create that content for us because of their
261 proximity to a news event. We should avoid asking individuals who are not employed by
262 the AP to create content for us in hazardous situations. The AP does not use UGC without
263 permission, so it is acceptable to seek permission to access content that's already been
264 created.

265 **Reaching out**

266 As a journalist it is perfectly acceptable to seek information, but not at the expense of
267 someone's safety. Individuals should never feel like they are being harassed by AP
268 journalists or pressured to put themselves in danger.

269 Whenever we reach out to members of the public who might be in a dangerous situation,
270 we should remind people to act safely. And try to put yourself in their shoes before you
271 contact them — think about how they might feel about being contacted by a journalist.
272 Remember that people caught up in the middle of a news story may not have as much
273 information as we have access to, so they might worry about the cost of communicating
274 openly with journalists via social media.

275 It is always better to speak to someone on the phone if possible — this prevents people
276 sharing personal details or information on social networks, and it allows you to take a more
277 nuanced, sensitive approach to your interactions. For example, if you are trying to contact

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- 278 someone about a breaking story on Twitter, ask them to direct-message you their phone
279 number or email address so that you can contact them privately and directly.
- 280 You should consider starting a message “If it is safe to do....” or “If you are in a safe
281 place....”
- 282 **Instead of asking, offer**
- 283 There’s something particularly crass about making demands of people who are dealing
284 with difficult circumstances — particularly when you do so in a public forum. Instead of
285 tweeting “Do you have any photos AP can use?” or “I’m an AP reporter — can I talk to
286 you for a story?” consider an approach like this when someone is in danger or aggrieved:
- 287 *“I’m an AP reporter. If you’d like to talk to me about what you’re going through, you can
288 DM me.”*
- 289 Yes, it’s possible you won’t get photos or video if you don’t ask for them directly — but a
290 sensitive approach like this may make this witness more likely to come to you when he or
291 she is ready to talk or share content.
- 292 **Adapting your instincts to digital/social**
- 293 If some of this advice doesn’t sound very concrete, there’s a good reason — a lot of these
294 decisions need to be made on a case-by-case basis, and they require you to call on your
295 journalistic instincts. Many of you have a lot of experience applying these instincts in
296 person or on the phone — you know how to talk to someone who’s dealing with something
297 serious, in a way that makes them more comfortable with you, more likely to share their
298 story, and happier that they decided to do so. You also know the appropriate time to do
299 this.
- 300 The trick, then, is adapting these instincts to the digital world. Twitter, in particular, can
301 present some challenges — with a tight character count and no way to modulate your body
302 language or the volume and tone of your voice, requests that are intended to be sensitive
303 can come across as cold or even demanding. Think about how your tweet would come
304 across if spoken with an angry voice, because that’s just how the recipient may hear it in
305 his head.
- 306 The bottom line: Regardless of whether you have a lot of experience doing this sort of
307 reporting in person or over the phone, craft your tweets and other requests in a way that
308 would come across well if spoken aloud to someone in the person’s current circumstances.
309 Consider even saying it out loud if that helps you arrive at wording that’s appropriately
310 sensitive.
- 311 One approach that can be effective in some situations is to offer people an opportunity to
312 share their story, instead of asking them to give it to you. When addressing someone who’s

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313 dealing with difficult circumstances, it's often better to demonstrate that you're
314 approaching the story with sensitivity than to tell them that you want something specific.

315 Here, for example, is how you might approach someone on Twitter:

316 *I'm sorry about what you went through today and I hope you are safe. If you'd like to*
317 *share your story with @AP, feel free to DM me.*

318 Of course, once again, the situation is different if someone is actively sharing photos and
319 video — it's reasonable to approach them and request permission. Many such people are
320 eager to see their work shared widely. But if someone's in a truly dire situation — where
321 simply stopping to reply to a tweet might be a dangerous move — then wait to ask until the
322 danger appears to have passed.

323 In this situation — and in any other where the best approach isn't entirely clear — pause and talk to
324 your manager about the best way forward. If more help is needed, don't hesitate to involve the
325 Nerve Center in New York or Fergus Bell in London.

Appendix 6d

Reuters Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

1 **Using Social Media**

2 We want to encourage you to use social media approaches in your journalism but we also
3 need to make sure that you are fully aware of the risks – especially those that threaten our
4 hard-earned reputation for independence and freedom from bias or our brand. The
5 recommendations below offer general guidance with more detailed suggestions for
6 managing your presence on the most popular social networks. This is a fast-changing world
7 and you will need to exercise judgment in many areas. In framing this advice we've borne
8 in mind the following principles and encourage you to think about them whenever using
9 social media.

10 **Social Media: Basic Principles**

11 Social networks have been a great boon for the practice of journalism, on stories large and
12 small, and Reuters journalism has been the better for them. Not only have they served as a
13 conduit for primary- and crowd-sourced information, they have also given us new ways to
14 report – finding stories and tipsters on Twitter, using LinkedIn to locate sources, mining
15 Facebook groups for angles and insights, and so on.

16 Social networks also raise important questions for us, especially when we are using them
17 to transmit rather than receive. The issues around what we can and cannot say there are a
18 subject of constant conversation among us, so as this is not our first word on the subject, it
19 will not be the last. The online world is as full of pitfalls as it was when the Handbook was
20 issued, but the issues are more familiar now, so it makes sense to simplify the guidelines.

21 Our wish is for people to benefit safely from social networks, not to muzzle anyone.
22 Journalists are people too, with all the rights of citizens. If we want to tweet or post about a
23 school play, a film or a favorite recipe, we are free to do so. When dealing with matters of
24 public importance and actual or potential subjects of coverage, however, Reuters
25 journalists should be mindful of the impact their publicly expressed opinions can have on
26 their work and on Reuters. In our Twitter and Facebook profiles, for example, we should
27 identify ourselves as Reuters journalists and declare that we speak for ourselves, not for
28 Thomson Reuters.

29 When writing as Reuters journalists, whether for the file or online, we are guided 24 hours
30 a day by the ethics of our organization as embodied in the Code of Conduct and the Trust
31 Principles, which require us to be responsible, fair and impartial. On the one hand, these
32 standards can be compromised whenever we “like” a post or adopt a “badge” or “join” a
33 cause, particularly when the subject is relevant or even tangential to our beat. On the other
34 hand, it might be necessary to “like,” “join” or adopt a “badge” to get the news. It should
35 go without saying that no one may compel or pressure anyone to friend them on Facebook,
36 follow them on Twitter or engage in similar conduct on other social media. One of the
37 distinguishing features of Reuters is the trust invested in the judgment of its journalists –
38 and we will continue to look to our journalists to use their common sense in dealing with
39 these new challenges.

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The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

40 We expect our journalists to reach conclusions through reporting, but they must also
41 demonstrate the intellectual discipline to keep their conclusions susceptible to further
42 reporting, which requires a posture of open-mindedness and enlightened skepticism. This
43 is difficult to demonstrate in the social networks' short forms and under the pressure of
44 thinking-writing-posting in real time. But maintaining this posture is critical to our
45 credibility and reputation as journalists. When in doubt about a post, tweet or other action
46 on social networks, we must enlist a second pair of eyes, even at the cost of some delay.

47 On matters dealing with Thomson Reuters, we must observe our existing obligations of
48 confidentiality and the obvious boundaries of discretion—for example, refraining from the
49 disclosure of inside information, confidential personnel matters, sensitive information from
50 internal meetings (all of which are to be considered “off the record”). But nothing in this
51 paragraph or in this policy should be interpreted as inhibiting the exchange of ideas about
52 matters that deal with our common welfare. Nor is there any prohibition on using social
53 media for speech protected by the National Labor Relations Act, such as candidly
54 discussing wages, hours and working conditions.

55 The tension is clear: Social networks encourage fast, constant, brief communications;
56 journalism calls for communication preceded by fact-finding and thoughtful consideration.
57 Journalism has many “unsend” buttons, including editors. Social networks have none.
58 Everything we say online can be used against us in a court of law, in the minds of subjects
59 and sources and by people who for reasons of their own may want to cast us in a negative
60 light. While, obviously, we cannot control what others may post on our accounts, we must
61 maintain constant awareness when posting to Facebook, Twitter and other online fora that
62 we are flying without a net, and that an indiscretion lasts forever. At all costs, we must
63 avoid flame wars, incendiary rhetoric and loose talk. We should also remember that by
64 friending or following someone, we may be giving out the identity of a source. Everything
65 depends on our keeping trust.

66 In other words, be careful. By all means, explore ways in which social media can help you
67 do your job. But before you tweet or post, consider how what you're doing will reflect on
68 your professionalism and our collective reputation. When in doubt, talk to colleagues, your
69 editor or your supervisor.

70 **Picking up from Twitter and social media**

71 Social networking and micro-blogging sites on the Internet, such as Twitter, are virtual
72 venues where users around the world may sometimes post information and images of great
73 interest to our clients that are not available elsewhere. This is especially true in countries or
74 circumstances where the regular free flow of information is impeded. We will sometimes
75 need to retransmit such material, or refer to it in text stories. Handled correctly, material
76 from such sites can help us enhance our reporting, and our reputation, and this trend should
77 be embraced.

- 78 • It is important to remember that Twitter and similar sites are not sources per se. It is
79 wrong to talk, for example, about “picking up Twitter”. It makes no more sense to
80 source a story to Twitter than to source it to “the Internet” or “an email”.

Appendix 6d

Reuters Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

- 81 • Governments and other institutions are increasingly using Twitter, Facebook and
82 other social networking sites to get official information and news out to journalists
83 and the general public. Journalists using official material from Twitter should
84 mention that the information comes from Twitter (as one does with information
85 from a press conference or press release), especially if Twitter is the only channel
86 used.

- 87 • Verification can be a major issue. Textual, video or photographic material might
88 not be what it purports to be, either due to sloppy information from the person
89 posting it or to deliberate deceit. We should be as wary of information or images
90 posted by Twitter etc users as we are of third-party material reaching us in any
91 other way. Strict criteria should be applied in deciding whether to use it, and if we
92 do so, we must be clear about what we know and don't know about its provenance.
93 Journalists should also be aware of the existence of 'sleeper' or 'shadow' Twitter
94 accounts that look like official sources but are designed to peddle misinformation.
95 Checks should be made to verify that any site is indeed official including a basic
96 Google search to ensure it is unique and/or cross-referenced by other reputable
97 sites.

- 98 • In many cases, information initially coming to our attention via Twitter will serve
99 simply as a tip, allowing us to check out and report the information ourselves in the
100 regular way, quoting more solid sources. This is as true in financial markets
101 coverage as in political and general news coverage.

- 102 • In taking a decision on whether to use citizen material appearing on Twitter, text
103 and visuals editors at HQ and journalists in the field must talk to each other on a
104 constant basis, to ensure we are all on the same page. Among the major factors to
105 consider is the safety of our journalists on the ground and the risk of reprisals
106 against them, especially (but not only) if the material were to prove bogus. In-house
107 counsel should be consulted whenever possible before moving any such images or
108 information from a social networking site. Only senior editors may approve running
109 such material.

- 110 • If we go ahead, we should refer in text stories to "Twitter users said/posted xxx",
111 say how much or how little we know about them and whether we were able to
112 contact them directly. We must be honest in stating that we cannot confirm the
113 veracity of the information. We should also provide hyperlinks to the Twitter page
114 in question.

- 115 • The potential for reputational harm is very real. Each decision to use material from
116 Twitter or similar sites is a calculated risk, pitting newsworthiness against potential
117 reputational harm. We should use common sense and exercise the utmost caution.

- 118 • In terms of visuals, any image should be spiked if it is at all suspicious. We must
119 try to find the source of the visuals and verify the date and location, though on
120 community sites like Twitter or Facebook it is sometimes impossible. We should

Appendix 6d

Reuters Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

- 121 limit our use of the visual material to the minimum, iconic or essential story-telling
122 images which will allow us to win the play.
- 123 • We must be mindful that copyright applies to the Internet. The person posting
124 material might hold copyright, or worse, they might not hold copyright. The
125 material could originate from a private individual, a company or another news
126 organization. Wherever possible, we must seek to find and seek permission from
127 the originator of the material, as we would do for any third-party material accessed
128 in any other way. This can apply to hard news and also lighter material, including
129 funny visual postings that have gone viral and have become stories in their own
130 right.
- 131 • The “news value” of an item we find online may trump the need to get permission
132 from the copyright holder before running it. However, this should be a decision
133 taken by a senior pictures, TV or text editor, if necessary in consultation with legal
134 counsel. Reporters may not make such a determination without consulting a senior
135 editor. We should be inclined not to use any image without permission if we know
136 it to be commercial in origin or if it is not factually and directly linked to the
137 underlying story (e.g. no general illustrations of topics such as obesity etc).
- 138 • To further protect us, we must use the following line on the top of each photo
139 caption when we cannot trace a picture’s origin but we believe we should move
140 them: **Editor’s Note: This photograph is from a social networking website.**
141 **Reuters has not been able to verify the authenticity of the material.** (A similar
142 note should be added to video scripts and shot lists). For pictures, we should also
143 keep our policy of sourcing the picture in the body of the caption. We pay for user-
144 contributed pictures that we use on the wire and we should attempt to do the same
145 with Twitter etc pictures (though this is not going to be possible most of the time,
146 as often the photographer is unknown.)
- 147 • Captions, scripts and text stories referring to images must not contain assumptions
148 by the author about what might have happened, even when a situation seems likely.
149 As ever in Reuters journalism, don’t go beyond what you know.
- 150 • Screen shots of a website should be treated in exactly the same way as a
151 photograph.
- 152 • Information on Twitter etc may move markets. If we are told a price is moving
153 because of something on Twitter, we should apply the same rules we use for
154 handling rumours – on the one hand, establish what exactly the price move is due
155 to, by talking to market participants without fanning the flames or spreading
156 rumours ourselves; on the other hand, simultaneously try to confirm or shoot down
157 the information itself. If it turns out a price is moving because of a particular
158 Twitter post that we are unable to confirm or shoot down, we should say which one
159 it was, give its URL, and also note if possible whether subsequent echoing or re-
160 tweeting of the original post distorted its content.

Appendix 6d

Reuters Social Media Guidelines

The two relevant sections have been combined into one document for analysis

- 161 • Depending on what we can confirm, we may either move a story saying the price
162 moved because of an item posted on Twitter by xxx about xyz which we have been
163 unable to independently confirm; or move a story confirming what the original item
164 said; or move a story shooting down what the original item said.

Appendix 7

Blank Coding Schedule for Analysis of Organisational SNS Activity

FACEBOOK:

Date
Post
Link
Image
Content of post
Content of link
Facebook Link
Other social media link
Link Internal
Link External Proprietary
Link Non-proprietary
Mention Internal
Mention External
Hashtag Internal
Hashtag External
Interaction by Agency
Comments
Category

TWITTER:

Date
Tweet
RT/MT
Headline
Twitter Link
Link Internal
Google Link
Link External Proprietary
Link External Non-proprietary
Mention Internal
Mention External
Hashtag Internal
Hashtag External
Interaction by Agency
Comments
Category
Signature

Appendix 8: Example of Completed Week-long Coding Schedule (AFP on Facebook)

| Date | Post | Link | Image | Content of post | Content of link | Facebook Link | Other social media link | Link Internal AFP | Link External Proprietary | Link Non-proprietary | Mention Internal | Mention External | Hashtag Internal | Hashtag External | Interaction by Agency | Comments | Category | |
|------|------|----------------------|----------|---|---|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|--|---|----------|----------|---|
| 1st | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2nd | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text w 4 photos | | | | yahoo news | | | | | #Iraq #security | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text, credit | | | | | | | | | | #Iur #animalrights #Spain #photography | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text w 3 photos | | | | google news | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | | | #amazon | | | 2 |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text, credit | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text, photo | | | | rawstory.com | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| 3rd | 1 | | 1 | photo, text, credit | | | | | | | | | | #Afghanistan #Taliban #education #child | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text, credit | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text, credit | | | | | | | | | | #RDPWD #RDPD | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | blog | | | 1 | | | | | | #Halyan | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | blog | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| 4th | 1 | | 1 | infographic, text | | | | | | | | | #infographic | | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text, credit | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | blog | | | 1 | | | | | #AFP | #Nigeria | | | 2 | |
| 5th | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | #AFP | | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | #AFP | | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text, 2 photos | | | | yahoo news | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text, photo | | | | yahoo news | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | photo, text, credit, link | photos | | Tumblr (AFP Page) | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 6th | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text, photo | | | | google news | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | infographic, text | | | | | | | | | #infographic | | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | infographic, text | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text, 5 photos | | | | yahoo news | | | | #AFP | #Mandela #Madiba | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | photo, text | | Stevie Wonder's official Facebook Page | | | | | | Stevie Wonder | | | | | 2 | |
| 7th | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | #VIDEO #AFP | | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | | 1 | infographic, text | | | | | | | | | #AFP | #Mandela | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text, 5 photos | | | | yahoo news | | | | #AFP | #Mandela | | | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | blog | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text [headline], link | text, 2 photos | | | | yahoo news | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | text, 1 photo, map | | | | google news | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 7th | 1 | | 1 | photo, text, credit | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | text, link | video | | YouTube (AFP channel) | | | | | | #VIDEO | | | | 2 | |
| | | 23 links, 14 no link | 37 image | 36 with text 10 with photo 4 with infographic | 10 text (each with at least 1 photo) 8 video 4 blog 1 photos only | 1 link to another account on Facebook | 9 YouTube (every video) One Tumblr (for photos only) | 4 Internal links (I.e. going to an AFP site) all blogs | 10 External links (5 Yahoo, 3 google, 1 rawstory.com) add 9 soc me = 19 External | 0 Links to non -AFP content | No mentions of AFP accounts | 1 mention of non-AFP account (a celebrity) | 11 posts with 'internal' hashtags (12 hashtags in all) | 11 posts with 'external' hashtags (20 hashtags in all) | No interaction by the agency with other users | | | |



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Appendix 9

Example Email Interview Schedule

1. What social media does your department use in their day-to-day work and how are they used? (please name all)
 - 1a. Which of these social media are the most important and why?
2. What social media do you personally use in your day-to-day work and how do you use them? (please name all. If the same as above, please describe how you personally use them.)
 - 2a. Which of these social media are the most important for your work and why?
3. Do you use user-generated content in your work? In what ways?
 - 3a. How do you verify this information?
4. Can you explain how you learned to use these social media technologies in a professional capacity?
 - 4a. Have you ever had training from your employer in the use of social media or user-generated content?
5. What devices, technologies, and software do you use to access these social media at work and why?
6. Do you have any routines or use any applications to structure your use of social media?
7. What do you think are the benefits of using social media for your work?
 - 7a.... and the disadvantages?



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8. What have been the challenges of incorporating the use of social media into your work?

9. Can you describe a recent example of when social media were particularly useful for your work?
 - 9a.... and particularly challenging or negative?

10. What procedures/practices do you use to verify information from social media?
 - 10a. Are you required to verify 'official' social media accounts before using them for information? Has this always been the case?

11. Do you refer to social media policy when using social media at work?
 - 11a. Have you had to change the way you use social media in order to adhere to Reuters' policy?

12. Have you seen any development in company policy regarding the use of social media?

Please give examples of changes if you have any.

Finally... Can you suggest any colleagues who might be willing to answer this email interview? (I am looking for a variety of perspectives, so they can be people who do or do not use social media).

Thank you for participating.



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Appendix 10

Information Sheet and Consent Form for Interview and/or Observation

Investigating social media in news production at global news agencies

You are being invited to take part in a research study on the use of social media in news production at global news agencies (Reuters, Agence France Presse and Associated Press). Before you decide, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it involves. Please take time to read the following information and decide if you want to take part or not. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study will be conducted by a PhD research student from Liverpool John Moores University. The aim of the research is to investigate the ways in which social media are used to produce news by global news agency journalists. The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of the contemporary working practices of news agency newswriters, in particular how newswriters interact with the technologies they use.

Do I have to take part?

Involvement in this research project is voluntary. If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign the consent form at the bottom of this information sheet. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw will not affect your rights.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be sent a set of questions via email. Further clarification of responses may be sought via email after the initial interview.



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Are there any risks/benefits involved?

By taking part in this research you will have the opportunity to reflect on your working environment and discuss topics related to your work and professional role and to contribute to research that may be beneficial to the professional and academic community.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All participants will be made anonymous in the study, i.e. their name and personal information will be separated from any information obtained during observation and interview, and not included in any of the research findings. Participants' rank/job role will be included, unless the participant requests that this information also be excluded. All information will be stored on a password protected secure university server. Data relating to the study will be kept securely for five years, as stipulated by LJMU regulations, and will then be securely destroyed. Only the researcher will have access to personal information during and after the study.

Contact Details of Researcher

Bronwyn Jones, Liverpool John Moores University

Email: B.Jones1@2009.ljmu.ac.uk

Work Mobile: +44 (0) 7951352785

Liverpool Screen School, Liverpool Innovation Park,

Baird House, Edge Lane, Liverpool, L7 9NJ

If you wish to talk with an independent person at Liverpool John Moores University please contact:

*Director of Liverpool Screen School, Liverpool Innovation Park, 2nd Floor, Baird House,
Edge Lane, Liverpool L7 9NJ.*

Tel: 0151 231 4834/4745

Thank you for your time



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Please put an X in the boxes to confirm that you understand all the information provided and are willing to take part in the study. You may leave blank boxes relating to any part in which you do not wish to participate.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and that this will not affect my legal rights.

3. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be anonymised and remain confidential.

4. I agree to be interviewed for the above study.

5. I understand that the interview may be audio and/or video recorded and I am happy to proceed. *[Remove for email interview consent form]*

6. I am willing to allow parts of our conversation to be used verbatim in future publications or presentations but that such quotes will be anonymised.

Name of Participant:

Date: Signature

Name of Researcher: Bronwyn Jones

Date: Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bronwyn Jones", is written over a light grey rectangular background.