My Department Stores Social Media Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

My Department Stores is committed to engaging with customers and the broader public in a friendly, professional and authentic way on social media.

Appropriateness of content and conduct

MDS is committed to creating inclusive and respectful spaces online. MDS staff and social media presence must role model appropriate and professional conduct at all times and user engagement must be moderated to ensure that the communications on MDS social media are appropriate.

In addition to ensuring communication is appropriate, MDS also avoids language and topics which could be off-putting to some portions of the public (even when they are well accepted by other groups, such as swearing) to avoid limiting its reach and market.

The following behaviour is not permitted:

- (by MDS) swearing
- (by MDS) discussing controversial topics
- derogatory language
- name calling
- spamming (repeated, almost instantaneous commenting)

Style and tone

In the context of writing document, style and tone are expressed through the level of formality, syntax and structure within the writing.

MDSs uses the following descriptors to define its brand tone:

- Authentic
- Inclusive
- Empowering
- Friendly
- Professional

MDS staff must use a style that communicates the brand tone in posts and other online communications, such as commenting and direct messaging.

Media quality

Any images and videos used on MDS's social media platforms must be of high quality and represent MDS professionally.

- Images must have a high resolution and contain no distortion or pixilation

- Videos must be high definition (HD) with a resolution of at least 720p.
- Closed captions should be created for videos filmed by MDs (such as product profiles and advertisements). Automatically generated closed captions should be turned on for all other video (when this is an option on the social media platform).

Copyright and licencing

Any content that is published on social media must be created by MDS or be licenced.
Staff preparing content should review the product images available from the marketing team. Other photography and new illustration may also be requested from the marketing team.
Other images, video and other media can be sourced from:

- Free image platforms, such as Wikimedia Commons, Unsplash, Pixabay and Pexels
- Other stock image platforms that MDS has a paid licence for (contact the marketing team).

Media from free sources must be referenced as follows:

- [Image name – hyperlinked to the image source] by [Author name] from [Source].

For example:



Photo by Mike Petrucci on Unsplash

Quotations and referenced text from other sources must be attributed with a hyperlink to the original source or APA7 referencing at the bottom of articles (and similar long posts).

Customer images

Photographs of customers may only be published when MDS has written consent. Staff may have customers give consent using the link mds.com/consent-to-publish-images.

Social Media Content Development Process

The following steps should be completed to monitor social media:

1. Identify the topic of the content, audience and objectives of the social media campaign that it is for.
2. Source information from MDS or external sources to use in the content.

3. Draft the content using the My Department Stores Social Media Post Template.
4. Review the draft to check its accuracy, currency, spelling, grammar and relevance to the social media campaign objectives.
5. Submit the content to the Social Media Manager for approval.

Account and activity management

MDS staff must proactively monitor all social media platforms and respond to all customer and other user communication promptly.

Account settings

MDS social media accounts should be set as public accounts that allow comments on all content posted. Occasionally MDS may choose to publish a specific item of content with comments disabled (when advised by the Public Relations Manager).

Privacy

MDS staff must comply with privacy legislation in the same manner in online spaces as they are required to during all other customer service. Customer's (or other's) private information, such as phone numbers, email addresses, last names or dates of birth must not be shared on social media.

In addition staff may not share any confidential business information, such as financials or information about products that are in development.

Monitoring social media

All social media platforms must be monitored daily by social media staff.
Notifications should be activated for all social media accounts to allow staff to respond to interactions from users immediately. Staff should proactively check any social media accounts for which they have not received notifications from in a period of 3 hours or more.

In addition, staff must check the analytics for each platform daily and track progress and change over time. Social media analytics should be reported on the MDS Social media presence report which is submitted to the Board monthly.

Social Media Monitoring Process

The following steps should be completed to monitor social media:

1. Watch notifications and emails for alerts.
2. Open any notifications or emails immediately (or following completion of any tasks already being completed to respond to other social media users).
3. Read notifications or emails and click on the links they provide to go to the original comments or other interaction.
4. Review the context of the comment (particularly when MDS has been tagged on another page or a comment is within a longer discussion).
5. Prepare a response applying the brand values and using any standard responses that are applicable.

6. Post the response on social media.
7. Note the interaction to check later (24 hours later if no further notifications are received).

Online customer service

MDS views all interactions on social media as an opportunity to provide customer service to promote the reputation of the brand, answer questions and provide information about products and services and respond to any concerns, negative feedback or complaints.

During all social media interactions, staff must:

- respond promptly to all comments, tags and replies (within 1 hour during business hours)
- communicate politely and respectfully
- demonstrate the brand's values within all communications
- ensure any information provided, such as in response to questions, is accurate

Standard Responses
Staff should customise the standardised responses in the following table to respond to concerns or issues that customers raise. Staff should avoid repeatedly using exactly the same wording, but still aim to be consistent in their approach to concerns or issues.

When to use them	Common standard responses
When customers request information about a product.	*May be available in the social media plan.*
When customers ask the common frequently asked questions.	*Refer customers to the MDS website FAQs page (when applicable).*
When customers say directly that they want a refund/exchange or make comments that indicate this.	**MDS products that are ordered online can be returned in new condition for a full refund in 30 days (receipt required).**
Information about making complaints • When customers give general indications they would like to make a complaint	**We're so sorry to hear you had a negative experience. We'd love to learn more about** [issue] **and see how we can improve our** [topic of issue, e.g. products/customer service]. **If you're willing to share your thoughts with us you can let us know at mds.com/customer-feedback**
• When customers directly request to make complaints.	**Thank you for being willing to talk to us about the problem. MDS welcome complaints which can be made at mds.com/complaints. Alternatively if you direct**

	message your phone number our team can call you.

Complaints and negative feedbacks
Complaints on social media are particularly important to manage well due to their public nature and the risk of them being taken out of context. When responding to complaints, or any negative feedback that could escalate to a complaint, staff should:

- respond quickly (maximum of 1 hour)
- stay calm and maintain professional and respectful communication
- acknowledge the negative feedback or complaint
- acknowledge any mistakes that MDS has made and apologies
- move the discussion offline for resolution (such as to the MDS complaints form on the website, phone or email)

Complaints which cannot be managed should be escalated to the Social Media Manager immediately for intervention. All complaints and actionable negative feedback should be referred to the Social Media Manager by email weekly for review.

Complaints and Negative Feedback Referral Process
The following steps should be completed when referring complaints and negative feedbacks:

1. Send a summary of the complaints and any negative feedback that can be actioned to the Social Media Manager, including:
    - A summary of the complaint
    - The actions taken so far
    - Any recommendations for resolution or improvements