

Social media is here - but be alert to the risks

 By [Rosalind Davey](#)

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As more and more companies use social media platforms as marketing and communications tools they need to be aware that it is not without risks.

With the ever-increasing interest in social media platforms, more and more businesses are encouraging their employees to tweet and blog.

The key is to stay connected to your customers, provide them with topical information, and keep them interested in you; while at the same time expressing an interest in them.

The result? More and more employees are tweeting and blogging about and on behalf of their employers. This is a good thing.

But, beware, social media is not without risks, which could be avoided or, at least mitigated, if employers understand that this freedom could have far-reaching and negative reputational implications for the business. A wrong tweet, a misguided comment, an incorrect fact; once out there, it could go viral.

It is essential that employers safeguard against such risks, with the obvious starting point being a social media strategy. Once that is in place, implement a concise and effective social media policy and educate your employees on the responsible use of social media platforms.

Used responsibly, I believe that social media can open up a range of possibilities for the success of a business. Used rashly, however, and it can result in a legal and PR nightmare for a company.

ABOUT ROSALIND DAVEY

Rosalind Davey is a partner at corporate law firm [Bowmans](#) and obtained BA and LLB degrees from the University of Natal and was admitted as an attorney in 2002.
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