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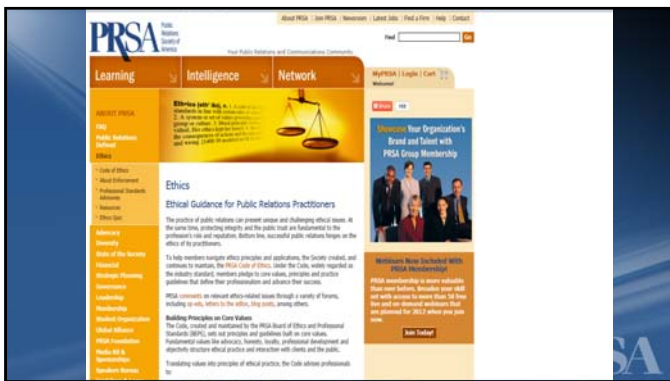
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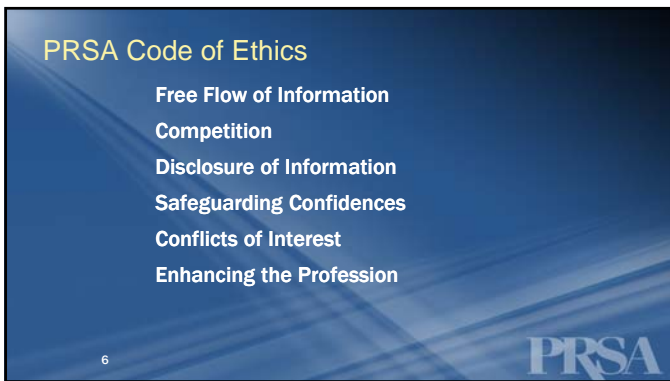
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What It All Boils Down To:

Tell the truth ... everyday  
 Full disclosure ... everyday  
 Honor the FOIA laws ... everyday  
 Remember the First Amendment ... Everyday  
 Be the ethics soul of your organization!




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Dealing With Ethical Dilemmas

1. Identify the ethical issues and/or conflicts.
2. Determine internal/external factors likely to influence your decision.
3. Choose key values and provisions from the PRSA Code of Ethics that apply.
4. Consider parties who will be affected by your decision and evaluate the public relations professional's obligation to each one.
5. Select ethical principles to guide your decision-making.
6. Make a decision and offer a brief rationale.

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Social Media: A Fact of Life

Journalists rely on it  
 78% use it every day  
 Over half call their main source of information  
 60% consider it more reliable than an official statement from the same organization (Ouch!)  
 Only 20% always check facts before using  
 60% feel "less bound by journalistic rules" when using social media

Impact of Social Media on News, #aming14, from ING Group




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## Social Media: A Fact of Life

- PR professionals use it
- 85% of us use it every day
- 81% feel social media have a faster impact than traditional media
- 56% believe social media reduce the importance of traditional media

[Impact of Social Media on News, #sming14, from ING Group](#)

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PR PROFESSIONAL	VS	JOURNALIST
Percentage that agrees with the statement		
Social media are <b>important</b> for the performance of daily activities. <b>78%</b>		Social media are <b>important</b> for the performance of daily activities. <b>72%</b>
PR can <b>no longer operate</b> without social media. <b>81%</b>		Journalism can <b>no longer operate</b> without social media. <b>68%</b>
The <b>quality of the reach</b> is higher via social media than via traditional media. <b>49%</b>		The <b>quality of the reach</b> is higher via social media than via traditional media. <b>62%</b>

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### Ethical Standards Advisories

Ethical Standards Advisories  
Introduction and Summaries

**Explanation**

Ethical Standards Advisories (ESAs) are considered direct extensions of the PRSA Code and have the same force and effect as any provision within the PRSA Code. In 2004, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Board of Directors adopted the creation of ESAs. Designed to keep the PRSA Code timely through a formal process, ESAs provide practitioners specific current guidance to deal with new situations and circumstances as they arise in the daily practice of public relations, thus keeping the Code intact as a basic instrument of practice guidance.

Each ESA is designed to address a specific, highly focused area or issue of public relations practice. The format of each ESA includes an explanation of the topic, background information, examples of unethical practices, as well as recommended best practices. Many ESAs contain links or references to additional information an individual practitioner might find helpful when confronted with an ethical dilemma or decision. SEPS welcomes suggestions for future ESAs from practitioners. Please send your ESA suggestions to PRSA's Board of Ethics and Professional Standards.

Ethical Standards Advisory ESA-20 (September 2014)

**Ethics and Social Media**

**ISSUE:** Social media, and its varying channels, is a defining element in today's culture, now intricately woven into everyday society. With billions of regular users and new programs emerging often, social media platforms operating as multi-directional communication tools offer an exchange of information in an open system - one which, if not strategically approached, has the ability to quickly amplify ethical mistakes.

**BACKGROUND:** Social media platforms and various management tools will continue to evolve in the communication marketplace. Despite its dynamic nature, core concepts from the PRSA Code of Ethics (Code) should guide professionals in their responsible use of social media to best serve their clients, organizations and the public's interests.

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**PRSA Code of Ethics and Social Media**

**Professional Values**

**Honesty:** "highest standards of accuracy and truth"

**Advocacy:** "We best support the marketplace of ideas, facts and viewpoints ... when authors or sponsors are fully disclosed and transparent"

**Fairness:** "We support free expression and deal fairly ... when we fully disclose authors and sponsors of content and relationship to content to ensure transparency in social media activities"

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**5 Key Code of Ethics Provisions**

➤ **Conflicts of Interest**

- When creating content as a tactic for branding others as subject matter experts, disclose conflicts of interest
- When providing samples to social media influencers, provide (FTC) disclosure
- Any gifts must be nominal, legal, infrequent

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**5 Key Code of Ethics Provisions**

➤ **Free flow of information**

- Make sure consumers can easily tell the difference between sponsored content, news reporting, and editorial content

➤ **Enhancing the Profession**

- Author transparency is essential
- Use social media to educate consumers about issues involving the PR profession

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To Summarize...

Social media is here to stay for us and all our publics, including journalists

The PRSA Code of Ethics provides the values needed for ethical use of social AND traditional media

Ethical Standards Advisory 20 provides specific guidance for social media behavior



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