

Book Reviews

Best Practice in Social Media Governance

D. Lindsay, *Best Practice in Social Media Governance*, 76pp, 2012, ISBN 978-1-908640-23-9, £295 paperback, available from www.ark-group.com/bookshop

Ark Group is a well-known conference-organising and publishing company, which at the moment specialises in publications and events relevant to social media and knowledge management. This report, written primarily by Dion Lindsay, a well-known consultant (who also happens to be on UKeIG Committee), with some bits of chapters contributed by others, complements the range of books published by Ark.

The book comprises seven chapters, covering what social media is, why social media should be governed, the legal (intellectual property) context, governance structures and documentation, creating a social media policy, managing staff participation, and managing social media impact. These chapters are followed by four brief case studies, and then three sample policies, developed by the BBC, the American Institute of

Architects, and IBM. It is noted that these are copyright of the respective organisations, and it is certainly not made explicit that readers can pick the best bits of these model policies for their own use. The book ends with a very simple index.

The work starts with an “executive summary” (in reality, more an extended abstract). Each chapter is supported by a small number of references for further reading. However, these tend to be specific reports and articles rather than general textbooks. I found the chapters on governance structures, creating a policy, managing participation and on measuring impact sensible, well-written and persuasive. Without doubt these are both the core of the book, and the best part of it. However, I do have criticisms of the book. Firstly, the examples are somewhat skewed - Twitter is the focus, whereas Facebook is ignored, and the focus (in terms of examples given) clearly is on private-sector organisations rather than public sector ones, though public-sector organisations need to take as much care about staff use of social media as do private-sector organisations. Some key risk areas, such as harassment, unauthorised use of trademarks, defamation and data

protection are given cursory or zero treatment. The chapter on intellectual property is primarily about copyright, and even then is somewhat confused in places. It also mentions data protection, which isn't an IP issue, and in any case is given too brief a treatment here. The first of the URLs given on page 21 of the report is incorrect.

However, my real complaint is the price of the book. Much as I would like to recommend this work, it does not represent value for money. If this is a topic that concerns or interests you, try instead P.R. Scott and J.M. Jacka, *Auditing Social Media: A Governance and Risk Guide* (Wiley, 2011), which at £29 and more than double the

length, is much better value for money, or R. Wollan, N. Smith and C. Zhou, *The Social Media Management Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Get Social Media Working in Your Business* (Wiley 2011) at £13. For a more legal approach, try instead G. Gilmore, *Social Media Law for Business: A Practical Guide for Using Facebook, Twitter, Google +, and Blogs Without Stepping on Legal Landmines* (McGraw Hill 2012), again much better value at £22.

Professor Charles Oppenheim

June 2012