

Social Networking For Talent and Reporters

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ESPN regards social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, message boards, conversation pages and other social sites as important venues for content distribution, user engagement, newsgathering, transparency and the amplification of talent voices. As such, we will hold all talent who participate in social networking to the same standards we hold for interaction with our audiences across TV, radio and our digital platforms. These guidelines apply to all ESPN talent, anchors, play-by-play, hosts, analysts, commentators, reporters and writers who participate in any form of personal social networking that contain sports-related content.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- **Think before your tweet.** Understand that at all times you are representing ESPN, and Twitter (as with other social sites) offers the equivalent of a live microphone. Simple rule: If you wouldn't say it on the air or write it in a column, don't post it on any social network.
- **Think before you re-tweet.** Intended or not, the dissemination of others' tweets under your name represents an endorsement of that content – and can even be interpreted as information you personally are reporting. If you re-tweet inaccurate or inappropriate content, it can tarnish your credibility and that of ESPN.
- **Do not break news on Twitter.** We want to serve fans in the social sphere, but the first priority is to ESPN news and information efforts. Public news (i.e. announced in news conferences) can be distributed without vetting. However, sourced or proprietary news must be vetted by the TV or Digital news desks. Once reported on an ESPN platform, that news can (and should) be distributed on Twitter and other social sites.
- All posted content **must be consistent** with ESPN's employee policies and Editorial Guidelines for Standards & Practices. This includes the existing Commentary and Media Criticism guidelines, and posts should not include any references to personal endorsements, promotions or business relationships.
- Prior to engaging in any form of social networking dealing with sports, you must **receive permission** from your supervisor. Personal Web sites and blogs that contain sports content or ESPN marks are not permitted.
- In most cases, content you tweet will **also appear on ESPN.com**. Editors will choose the social content to be posted, and ESPN.com will "simulcast" those sports-related tweets on sport, contributor and team pages.
- If ESPN.com opts not to post social content created by ESPN talent, those individuals **are not permitted** to report, speculate, discuss or give opinions on sports related topics on personal platforms.
- At all times, **exercise discretion**, thoughtfulness and respect for colleagues, business associates and fans.
- **Keep internal deliberations confidential.** Do not discuss how a story or feature was reported, written, edited or produced; stories or features in progress; interviews conducted; or any future coverage plans.
- Do not post any **confidential or proprietary** company information, references to ESPN policies or similar information of third parties who have shared such information with ESPN.

We realize this is a fast moving space and these guidelines will be amended as warranted. Any violation of these guidelines could result in a range of consequences, including, but not limited to, suspension or dismissal.