

Tip of the Month – July 2011

Tips for Social Networking

Social Networking is a means of communicating with friends, family and acquaintances that has taken the world like a storm. There are many websites to choose from and some of the more popular ones include:- FaceBook, Bebo, hi5, MySpace, Ning, LinkedIn, Flickr, Twitter, Digg, StumbleUpon and YouTube, just to name a few.

Bahamians are adventurous and no doubt, many of the above websites are frequented by our citizens. However, what is popular may not always be the right choice for you and the comments that follow are meant to give some useful tips for healthy social networking.

- 1. Choose Your Networks Wisely.** You should decide which websites are more suited to your needs. Do a little research then choose one or two sites only to make the best use of your time. Don't spread yourself too thin by trying to join too many sites.
- 2. Know the Privacy Policy and Settings to the Social Networking Sites you use.** This would help you to protect your personal information to best advantage.
- 3. Give Character to your Profiles,** but think about the information you share and how it's being used: for example, what might a future employer or partner think if they read it?
- 4. Be Consistent.** Use the same photo and the same screen name on all of your profiles. Bits of different information on different profiles will aid people in finding out more about you than was intended.
- 5. Birds of a Feather Flock Together.** Only add friends who you are comfortable with i.e. same interests, values etc.
- 6. Don't accept "friend" requests from people you don't know**
- 7. Before you Post and Tag pictures of someone else,** ask for their consent – and request that they do the same to you.
- 8. Set up "friend" groups** to control the access different people in your circle have to your personal information.
- 9. Submit Quality Content.** Make sure you post things that make sense. The better material you submit, the more people will follow you and be interested in seeing what you will submit next.
- 10. Nobody Likes a Spammer.** Don't overload your friends with messages, comments and contents. People will soon mark you as a "Spammer" and avoid you. Stick to sending relevant, quality content that friends will get something out of.
- 11. Location based check-ins can be risky.** Do you really want everyone to know that no-one's at home? Don't post your whereabouts for the world to see!

Social Networking should be a positive experience. But remember “**Privacy is the Best Policy.**”

For more information about this or any other aspect of Data Protection feel free to contact us at dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs or visit our website www.bahamas.gov.bs/dataprotection to learn more about our mandate to protect the privacy rights of individuals.