

The online behaviour of teens and tweens: a new white paper from eModeration

Submitted by: Carrot Communications

Friday, 26 June 2009

In its latest white paper: How to moderate teens and tweens, moderation and community management company eModeration examines the psychology and online behaviour of teens and tweens, and what that means for brands engaging with this group online. This is a sequel to the previous whitepaper: An Introduction to Using Community and Interactive Advertising to Engage Tweens & Teens, which is designed to educate brands on the best ways to target tweens and teens via social media.

The paper, authored by Tamara Littleton, CEO of eModeration, is available to download free from eModeration's website at <http://www.emoderation.com/news/How-to-Moderate-Teens-and-Tweens.pdf>. It examines how teenage behaviour differs online from offline, and the trend of 'disinhibition' or 'flaming' that perceived anonymity of the internet affords teens in their communications with each other. It considers the impact that this perceived anonymity has on bullying online, and also the long-term consequences of, for example, the increase in 'sexting'. It also analyses research from other professionals in the field, such as Tanya Byron.

Littleton discusses the positive and negative effects that online role-playing can have on development, and the crucial safety concerns: for example, how children will attempt to share contact or location information that could lead them open to abuse. She also considers the impact of live content and perceived access to celebrities (through media such as Twitter) on teens and tweens.

The role of the moderator is crucial in helping to guide young people through their online development, and in the paper, Littleton gives practical help to brands engaging with teens and tweens and seeking to moderate online behaviour. These guidelines include how to achieve the following:

1. Inhabit their world

- Understand the language used by teens / tweens
- Understand that children are developing and allow them some freedom to do this
- Listen to concerns or questions, and respond quickly
- Avoid being intrusive
- Earn trust and respect
- Keep them engaged and happy online

2. Keep them safe

- Watch out for and deter cyberbullying, peer-to-peer abuse
- Spot and prevent grooming behaviour
- Keep children safe from themselves
- Don't let them be exposed to potentially damaging, offensive or otherwise inappropriate material, uploaded by other users
- Educate them on the consequences of inappropriate behaviour
- Create mechanisms to report abusive behaviour, or give feedback, or voice concerns

Littleton says: "Adults have a clear responsibility to help steer children through their online

environments, and it is a world that can seem baffling to some. Teens and tweens are finding their voices as their brains develop, and in these days of instant communication, sometimes they may later regret online behaviour. Moderation has a role in helping to guide them as well as keeping them safe.”

- ends -

Tamara Littleton is speaking at the Kids in Games & Virtual Social Spaces Forum on 17 July in London <http://www.kidsvirtualspaces.com>. To speak to Tamara about moderating the online behaviour of teens and tweens, please contact:

Kate Hartley

Carrot Communications

Tel: +44 (0)771 406 5233

E: emoderation@carrotcomms.co.uk

About eModeration

Founded in 2002, eModeration Limited is an international, specialist user-generated content moderation company. It provides 24-hour community management and content moderation to clients in the entertainment and digital publishing industry and major corporate clients hosting online communities and consumer-driven projects.

eModeration's CEO and founder, Tamara Littleton, has an established background in editorial quality control, fault escalation and process management gained from previous work as the Product Delivery Director for Chello Broadband and Online Operations Manager for BBC Online, where she managed the world's first ISO 9000-accredited team for digital publishing management and monitored over 400 BBC websites. Tamara Littleton is a member of the Home Office Internet Taskforce for Child Protection on the Internet which brings together government, law enforcement, children's agencies and the internet industry, who are all working to ensure that children can use the internet in safety. She was also the Chair of e-mint, the online community for community professionals from 2006-2007.

eModeration's team of moderators and staff are the key to eModeration's success and excellent client list. eModeration draws on the expertise of carefully recruited and trained moderators located mainly in the US and Europe with specialist editorial and community moderation skills, which are matched uniquely to the client. The company can moderate 24/7 in more than 30 languages. All its moderators are managed online from eModeration's headquarters in London, United Kingdom.