

Boost productivity – curb employees' use of social media

Submitted by: Changeworks Communications

Friday, 17 August 2012

Far too many companies still have problems with employees who are continually 'distracted' by social communication during the working day, the employment law specialist (<http://www.bibbycas.com>) Bibby Consulting & Support has warned.

While the debate continues on just how much it costs companies when employees use social media sites – a firm with 100 staff could lose over 16 working hours every day if each person checked texts and Facebook posts for just 10 minutes – Bibby Consulting & Support said this was only part of the problem.

In fact, the company believes the main issue is that through the growth of social media applications, employees are constantly aware of personal issues as a result of status updates and Tweets – so they are more distracted from their jobs than ever before.

But, says Bibby Consulting & Support's Managing Director Michael Slade, businesses have an extremely simple solution to hand – they can create and implement a social media and IT policy.

This includes telling staff that they are not allowed to use their mobiles during office hours and can only turn them on at agreed breaks. They certainly should not use their mobiles while at their desks and could face disciplinary action if they do. Also, employers should make it clear to staff that all online activity must be work-related and that it will be monitored.

Slade is surprised that many prospects he talks to still don't have any sort of IT/social media policy and a recent survey showed this to be the case in 52 per cent of companies. At the same time, analysis has revealed that the peak time for social media traffic is during working hours.

"There is a serious problem here," says Slade. "These aren't just marketing statistics used by software companies to help sell their content filtering products, these are very real issues for businesses who are fed up with employees downing tools and simply messing around on the web."

He concludes, "Companies need to get tough and implement a strict policy. Having a comprehensive set of rules will help staff remain focused and so will drive up productivity. The good news here is that this can be achieved incredibly quickly and at zero cost to businesses."