

# Commercial Risk Advisor

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*To avoid major losses, it's not only important for employers to secure the right coverage for every individual risk, but to also have a thorough understanding of common holiday party exposures.*

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## Reduce Your Exposures During Work Events

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Businesses host parties for a variety of reasons, including the holidays and organizational accomplishments. While these events are fun, they can create a number of risks for the hosting company. If an employee is injured at the party or causes property damage, the employer is usually the one held responsible. This can lead to costly litigation and reputational harm that can affect a company for years.

To reduce those risks, employers should secure the right insurance coverage and understand common party exposures, such as:

- **Alcohol consumption**—A social host may be responsible for the acts of their guests should their conduct create harm, meaning that employers may be liable for damages following a drunken driving accident or similar incident.
- **Drug consumption**—It's important to make clear rules for drug use at your party. Remind employees that, although they are at a social event, they are attending a work function and workplace policies still apply.
- **Workplace harassment and discrimination**—To help keep employees safe at company parties, ensure all harassment, violence, discrimination and code of conduct policies account for company-sponsored events and are specific as to what is not tolerated.
- **Food exposures**—It's important to be wary of potential food allergies. Consider specifying ingredients in every food item and asking guests to disclose any allergies. Employers should also promote safe food preparation and handling practices.
- **Property damage**—As the host, it's your job to ensure your guests remain safe, behave appropriately and respect the venue and its contents.

Even if you take all the appropriate precautions, incidents can still occur. Contact Risk Strategy Solutions to learn about coverage options when hosting a party.



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According to a Grant Thornton survey,

**71% of companies**

are concerned about possible risks posed by social media, but only

**36%**

reported having

**social media training.**



## Managing Social Media Risks

Organizations continue to leverage social media channels to engage and interact with customers on a more personal level. Social media remains a great opportunity for businesses to connect with customers, job candidates and other stakeholders. However, before fully involving your business in social media, it's important to understand the associated risks.

Negative content, such as bad customer reviews or unfavorable comments, may appear on your company's social media sites. While social media allows a company to directly interact with customers—which can be very beneficial—expect that customers can and will use your site to air grievances. It's also important to be aware that incidents—especially negative incidents—travel globally in a matter of hours on social media, having the potential to lead to disaster.

Consider the following tips to mitigate social media risks:

- **Create, implement and enforce a social media policy.** This policy sets the rules for how your employees should use social media on the company's behalf. It is important that you train employees on your policy and security threats, and enforce it once it's been implemented.
- **Assign a community manager.** This could be one employee or a team who are trained on social media and are responsible for all of the company's social media accounts.
- **Devise a response plan.** This is your company's monitoring and response strategy in the case that a reputational crisis occurs through social media channels and third-party websites. Along with negative incidents, the plan should address responding to positive and neutral content.
- **Involve your legal department at the beginning of social media planning.** As social media is incorporated into your marketing strategy, there are several legal consequences to consider. A legal expert can advise on implications such as false advertising, infringement, fair use and copyright.

The use of social media among businesses is increasing exponentially; however, there still remains uncharted territory in terms of which laws and business practices are evolving to meet the challenges that arise. To stay on top of modern-day risks, contact Risk Strategy Solutions to learn more about our risk management resources and insurance solutions.