MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA RECORDS AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN ZIMBABWE

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Abstract

Institutions of higher learning, including universities, are now actively using social media for business activities, which leads to the creation of records on these social media platforms. The study sought to investigate how the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Zimbabwe manages its social media-generated records given its presence on social media platforms and in view of the rapid accumulation of such records and the instability of these social media platforms. The study used a qualitative research methodology and employed a case study design. Data were gathered through face-to-face interviews, content analysis and document study. The findings indicate that the NUST recognises social media-generated records as official records; and it uses its communication policy as guidelines to regulate the posting of social media content. The NUST ICT Acceptable Use Policy was used as a guiding tool on passwords for social media platforms to ensure that the social media records are authentic and reliable. The study also established that the responsibility of posting and control of social media content lies with the Communication and Marketing Office. Although social media-generated records are recognised as official records at the NUST, the study established that the NUST Records Management Policy is silent about managing social media-generated records. The NUST mainly controls records that are created and posted on its social media platforms but does not follow best practices for the capturing and preservation social media records to ensure authenticity of its social media records. In view of the findings and conclusions, the study recommended that the NUST should come up with a social media records policy to guide the generation and control of social media records. The NUST can update its yet to be

implemented current proposed records management policy to incorporate social media records management, and can introduce a viable records management unit that spearheads the management and appreciation of all records at the NUST, including social media records. This would lead to the adoption of best practices and standards for all records management activities at the NUST so that the organisation has reliable and authentic records all the time.

Keywords: digital records; preservation; records management; social media; Zimbabwe

Background to the study

Organisations create and capture records that document operational and business processes and in some cases, these records can exist on websites, social media, and email; this entails a move from the traditional means of recordkeeping where records were mostly in paper format and kept under lock and key in offices (Mosweu & Ngoepe 2019a; 2019b); Kentucky Government 2015). Social media interactions on platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are very common and they have grown to include social media engagements between individuals and governments, giving rise to a need to be actively involved in social media records management for the institutions concerned (Kentucky Government 2015; Evans, Franks & Chen 2018). Rastogi (2014) notes that in the last decade, social media has allowed new ways of interacting, contributing and collaborating between multiple stakeholders, both within and outside various organisations.

Of the social media sites used by both individuals and business entities it has emerged that Facebook is the most commonly used social media platform with the highest number of users (Chaffey 2019). Statistics also show that 65 million businesses have a Facebook page, 88% of these businesses use Twitter for marketing purposes and YouTube reaches more 18-49 year olds than any cable network in the United States of America (McLeod 2017). Africa has refused to lag behind and statistics indicate that mobile internet users, particularly Facebook and other social media platforms, have more than doubled due to its access and affordability (Lanerolle 2013; Nhakura & Mupaikwa 2017; Onsare 2017). These statistics point to the possibility of the enormous amount records that exist on various social media platforms as people conduct business. It is now common practice for organisations to maintain a social media presence on various social media platforms that include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Flickr (Rastogi 2014; Kentucky Government 2015; Evans et al 2018; Chaffey 2019). Such a presence can translate to the creation of records (videos, photos and texts) because just like email, social media can create business records, or electronically

stored information (ESI) (Flynn 2012). The International Standards Organisation (ISO) in ISO (15489-1 2016) views a record as information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of businesses (ISO 2016). The National Archives Act (1986) of Zimbabwe notes that 'a record means any medium in or on which information is recorded'. This definition is broad and as such does not exclude social media records because in the process of interacting on social media platforms, crucial evidence is created.

A visit to the NUST website shows a list of social media platforms where the institution maintains its presence and these include Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Instagram. The NUST uses Instagram to post some photographs and videos that are part of the institution's memory. Twitter is used to post news in brief, for instance, announcements about the Southern Africa Journal of Communication and Information Science (SAJCIS) that the Faculty of Communication and Information Science has introduced, graduation preparations and the correct regalia, among other announcements. Facebook is used to capture the NUST's achievements in pictures, photographs from meetings and conferences that are held and are of interest to stakeholders. The news and pronouncements made on Facebook are a bit more detailed than tweets. The Department of Communication and Marketing uses these social media platforms to inform people and market the university brand. Facebook Twitter and LinkedIn have similar news.

Statement of the problem

Despite the benefits that come with it, social media has occasioned a number of predicaments, which include dilemmas related to the control of generation of such records, issues of authenticity of social media-generated records, accessibility of content and intellectual property, accuracy of information on social media platforms and more (NARA Bulletin 2014; Doran 2015; Kentucky Government 2015; Mosweu & Ngoepe 2019a). Social media platforms are constantly changing, and others have ceased to exist completely (Kentucky Government 2015). Failure to manage social media records at the NUST can result in challenges with customer care and poor service delivery, as observed in other studies (Nhakura & Mupaikwa 2017; Onsare 2017). That the NUST has had to make use of its official social media platforms to address authenticity and reliability of information posted by some individuals on social media on behalf of the NUST points to challenges in the way social media-generated records are being handled at the institution. Electronic records, in particular, will be lost if people within the organisation are not charged with the task of protecting them (World Bank 2000). As such social media records if not managed effectively can be lost before the NUST uses them to support certain

business decisions necessary within the organisation. The situation is not being helped by the continued delay to adopt the NUST's records management policy (Nyathi & Dewah 2017). The study therefore sought to investigate how the NUST manages its social media-generated records in line with best practises in social media records management as suggested by Carey (2016) and NARA (2017).

Research questions

The study sought to address the following research questions:
  i. Does the NUST recognise social media generated records as official records?
  ii. How are social media records generated and controlled at the NUST?
  iii. What records management challenges is the NUST currently facing as a result of its social media records?
  iv. Does the NUST records management policy address social media generated records management?
  v. Does the NUST use any best practices for the management of their social media generated records?
  vi. What measures are in place at the NUST to ensure authenticity of social media records?

Brief literature review

Social media records are a type of electronic records and thus in their management, the key characteristics of records, which are authenticity, reliability, usability, and integrity (ISO 15489-1:2016) have to be borne in mind in the light of the fact that they can easily be manipulated and deleted (Asogwa 2012). The idea of authenticity is far more complex in a digital world in which social media posts can be updated and edited with ease (Doran 2015). However, the increasing visibility of various business and public institutions on social media as well as their soliciting for the views of affected stakeholders via such mediums shows that social media is increasingly being used to communicate official matters. It is evident that they generate records worth managing and preserving for future reference (Kamatula 2017:36). This study therefore sought to establish how these records were managed at the NUST.

Social media records are generated or created on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, and LinkedIn (Evans et al 2018; Kentucky Government 2015) to mention only a few. For records management and archival professions, social media

records management is a relatively new concept and as such social media tools and applications present a number of challenges for these professions that include the following:

i. It is difficult to determine what social media content is record material, for instance when a post on social media has been duplicated elsewhere, whether a record is composed of a collection of posts.

ii. Capturing frequently updated records maybe labour intensive, inefficient, and duplicative.

iii. Ownership and control of data – social media tools are managed by third-party companies who may decide to terminate a service.

iv. Development and implementation of records schedules, including the ability to transfer and permanently delete records.

v. Difficulty to preserve social media records.

vi. Permanent preservation of valuable web content and ensuring accessibility over time (Kamatula 2017).

Kelleher and Sweetser (2012) posit that universities across the world are increasingly using social media for sharing knowledge, for recruitment, for marketing their institutions to prospective students as well as for sharing a variety of information with students that already exist in these institutions. Social media is seen as a viable tool for university communicators due to its low cost, immediacy, and its use by a large number of students (Kelleher & Sweetser 2012). Many of the potential students at these institutions are already avid users of the technology, forcing admissions offices to meet their audience online. Ninety-five percent of college admissions offices use at least one form of social media (Barnes & Lescault 2011). Visits by the authors to the websites of the University of Toronto, University of Tokyo, University of Cape Town, Midlands State University as well as Lupane State University showed that these universities actively use Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. These platforms are used for pictures, videos, social events and various achievements by universities. In the light of the above, this study sought to find out how the NUST manages its social media records created for various purposes in the course of its business.

Anecdotal evidence based on the observation of the authors seems to suggest that the NUST has maintained its presence on various social media platforms for a number of years now (Facebook since November 2011; Twitter since December 2011; Flickr since 2013; and YouTube since July 2013). However, the institution has had to address the aspect of authenticity and reliability of information on social media, for instance, a Facebook post on 17 November 2016 where the NUST

advised students to ignore an anonymous and malicious message that was circulating on WhatsApp purporting to be from the deputy registrar (academic) deliberately misinforming students that examinations had been scheduled to commence on 6 December 2016 and not 28 November 2016 as had been communicated through the official NUST timetable. The fact that the NUST took to its official social media pages, refuting the falsehoods contained in the records, indicates the NUST's desire to ensure that the social media-generated records about the NUST are reliable and authentic at all times. Social media records ought to be controlled and managed well by the institution to ensure their authenticity and as such this study sought answers to close this gap.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) (2017) recommends best practices for the capture of social media records using open source software or paid services such as Spredfast (for LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, blogs and Flickr), Total Discovery (for Twitter and Facebook), open software ThinkUp (for Twitter, Facebook and Google) and Flickr Api (For Flickr). Studies on the preservation and management of social media-generated records (Nathan & Shaffer 2012; Ginsberg 2013) have been done outside the African continent, hence the authors' motivation to establish whether the NUST is managing its social media records from creation to disposition by deletion or permanent preservation.

Research methodology

This study used a qualitative research approach and employed a case study design to focus on the NUST as an institution. This design was the best for the NUST because researchers wanted to portray rich, textured and in-depth accounts of the NUST and social media records. The population for this study was centred on the administrative units of the institution because they are the custodians of policies and they are responsible for managing the institution's social media presence. The three interviewees (Registrar, Director of Communication and Marketing and the Director of Information and Communication Services) were purposively sampled because they are key offices within the university that have a direct bearing on social media records generation, use, maintenance and preservation at the NUST. Apart from this, they are the custodians of policies at the NUST. The NUST does not have records managers or archivists and as such they could not be part of the study. Data were gathered through face-to- face interviews (Communication and Marketing Officer, Webmaster and Deputy Registrar: Academic), document study (the NUST Records Management Policy, Communication Policy and ICT Acceptable Use policies, National Archives Act of Zimbabwe (1986), the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and content analysis (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Flickr, and the NUST website). Case study

researchers employ various data collection methods and use multiple methods in a single study (Rule & John 2011). The study complied with all research ethics of seeking permission from the Registrar of the NUST to carry out the research in the institution, informing and briefing participants on the purpose of the study before copies of interview guides were administered, seeking informed consent from the respondents before they could participate in the study, notifying the respondents that their participation was voluntary and that they were at liberty to withdraw from the study at any stage if they so wish, without any sanctions. The respondents were also assured of anonymity in the presentation of the results. The researchers were meant to interview the Communication and Marketing Director, the NUST Registrar and the Information and Communication Technology Services Director. Researchers prepared an interview schedule with 12 questions and made appointments before engaging the interviewees. However, due to the work commitments and busy schedules of these key administrators, interviews were then conducted with their representatives (Communication and Marketing Officer, Webmaster and Deputy Registrar: Academic), each lasting between 20-25 minutes. The interviews were typed and transcribed. As Rule and John (2011) would advise, the transcripts were printed with large margins and increased line spacing for researchers to add notes where necessary and assign codes to different sections of text in the transcript using different coloured pens. The coding of the interview transcripts was followed by content analysis of the data that identified patterns such as similarities. The findings were presented guided by the objectives of the study. For purposes of maintaining anonymity of specific responses, the researchers used the codes such as Respondent 1, Respondent 2 and Respondent 3, depending on the number of respondents

Findings and discussion

The results are presented and discussed in the subsequent sections.

Recognition of social media generated content as official records at NUST

The first objective of the study sought to establish if the NUST recognises social media generated content as official records. Interviewees were asked if the NUST recognises social media content as official records that are generated during university business activities. Their responses were as follows:

Respondent	Response
Respondent **1**	The Communication and Marketing Officer is responsible for posts on social media, so they are better able to answer that question.
Respondent **2**	The NUST recognises this content as official records, for example the graduation that was live streamed in 2017. Although a copy of the proceedings was produced, the YouTube content remains an official record of what transpired on the day.
Respondent **3**	Social media content is a record even if the organisation may not perceive it this way.

It is essential that these social media posts be properly managed because they communicate official business and receive feedback from customers that can lead to sound business decisions. Current and prospective university students who follow posts can provide meaningful feedback that can result in improved service delivery.

Social media platforms used by the NUST

Interviewees were asked to identify which social media platforms were used by the NUST and for what reasons. As a follow-up question, interviewees were to explain why the NUST uses these platforms. The responses from the respondents were as follows:

Respondent	Social media platform used at NUST	Reason/explanation
Respondent 1	The NUST uses YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp (amongst university management).	"Motivation to use Facebook was mainly due to the fact that most of our students use Facebook even more than the website"
Respondent 2	The NUST currently uses YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.	"The university tried to use Flickr, but did not have adequate manpower to see it through"
Respondent 3	The NUST uses YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr. By right we should even use Instagram and LinkedIn.	"We use these platforms so as to reach a wider audience including our alumni and students and also because they are widely used by the current age groups"

Information gathered from the respondents showed that the NUST uses social media platforms as shown on its website. The platforms listed on the website as being used by the NUST are YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr. It should be pointed out that the failure of the NUST to use common social media platforms as cited by the respondents is a cause for concern that shows that social media use and, ultimately, social media-generated records at the NUST are not properly regulated. It is evident from the interviews that the NUST has embraced the use of social media platforms. They may have challenges like manpower that one of the respondents alluded to, but it is of interest that the organisation has an official social media presence. The trends in the use of social media across the world are such that 'social media is seen as a viable tool for university communicators due to its low cost, immediacy, and use by a large number of students' (Kelleher & Sweetser 2012). The information that the NUST posts is also in line with common uses by universities where social networking sites are used to communicate information associated with their research and innovations, to share important information in the events of emergency, to advertise their various institutions to potential students as well as to keep in touch with their current students with regard to any challenges they may be facing (Russell 2017). However, the uncertainty that the NUST is experiencing on whether social media-generated records are official records is not new and certainly not peculiar to the NUST alone. Carey (2016), writing about social media records in governments, is of the view that 'beyond the legal definition of a record, it can be unclear what local governments and state agencies should consider a record when it comes to social media. Creating a definition of what a social media record includes for your government body and including this definition in a social media policy is a good idea'. In a similar vein the Government of New South Wales (2014) avers that 'if this information is needed by your organisation to help perform, improve or report on its operations, then you will need information management strategies to support your social media businesses'. This clearly demonstrates that organisations, universities included, ought to put in place measures to afford official status to social media-generated records.

Responsibility for social media records generation, posting and control

The researchers inquired on who posts information on social media and the responses from the interviewees were as follows:

Respondent	Response
Respondent 1	"The Communication and Marketing Office is responsible for posting information on social media. Various departments and sections of the university write memos to the Communication and Marketing Office giving them the information/records they want to be posted on social media. However, in some instances, the Communication and Marketing Office will use their wisdom without getting inputs from departments."
Respondent 2	"Official information is posted on the NUST social media pages by the Communication and Marketing Officer, the Marketing Technician and, in some instances, the Marketing Office interns will post the information depending on the nature of the information. The Webmaster also posts some of the information on social media."
Respondent 3	"Social media records are controlled by the Communication and Marketing Office."

The responses were found to be in line with the NUST Communication Policy which states that 'the chief spokesperson of the University is the Vice Chancellor who shall normally speak through the Director of Communication and Marketing' (National University of Science and Technology Communication Policy, n.d). Generating these records was the responsibility of all departments and sections within the NUST if they had any important and urgent information that they wanted to be communicated through social media. The aspect of control for social media records was also attributed to the Communication and Marketing Office. Although the NUST was found to be exercising levels of control as far as posting records on social media is concerned, it is rather concerning that none of the respondents spoke about generating records from social media posts by other stakeholders who are not from within the organisation. Generating records from the social media platforms is equally important because such platforms may stop operating temporarily or permanently, resulting in losses of records if they are not captured. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) are of the view that players such as the Record Managers, ICT Specialist, and Archivist interact in order to shape the digital records.

Social media records management challenges experienced at the NUST

One of the objectives of the study was to identify the records management challenges that the NUST is currently facing with regard to its social media records. Respondents were then asked to identify such records management challenges that the NUST faced due to its social media presence, as well as how these challenges

had been addressed to date. The respondents gave the challenges that the organisation faces as a result of social media records as follows:

Respondent	Response
Respondent 1	"Social media use by NUST is fairly new and as such the Communication and Marketing Office, who are responsible for social media may not have had the time to appreciate the challenges and put in place strategies to resolve these challenges."
Respondent 2	"There are so many pages with the name NUST and its logo and seemingly no framework in place to regulate all those pages."
Respondent 3	"NUST faces a challenge of people or organisations who respond seemingly through automated responses that are not in any way related to particular posts. Social media records are a part of electronic records so, cannot follow the records life cycle phases which are rigid where challenges like technological obsolescence are bound to set in. Also in managing electronic records it is essential that focus is paid to content, context and structure."

Although the NUST seemingly concentrates more on social media use than social media-generated records management, the findings are consistent with social media records management, especially on the high accumulation rates for social media records such that the organisation may be unable to identify elements constituting an authentic record like content, context and associated metadata (Kamatula 2017). Content analysis established that the current National Archives of Zimbabwe Act (1986) does not identify social media records. This leaves archivists and records managers with limited means of coming up with records retention schedules (Kim 2012).

Regarding addressing records management challenges, only Respondent 2 suggested training as a way of addressing challenges with the management of social media records. The respondent stated that, "In as much as people are self-trained on social media use, the organisation needs to train its workforce so that they are aware of the records management challenges associated with social media use". The respondent should be commended for identifying training as a means for addressing records management challenges. However, it should be pointed out that the NUST may have actively started using social media without involving all other departments and sections in the organisation. Although the posting of content on social media platforms is the Communication and Marketing Office's responsibility, input from other sections, for example, is needed so that the NUST can have an appreciation of how social media records emanating from social media use can be incorporated into their local records systems. This is possible if an "interdisciplinary team of

Information Technology Specialists, Records Managers, Archivists, web managers and other relevant stakeholders is put in place" (NARA 2013).

NUST records management policy and social media records

The other objective of this study was to find out how the NUST records management policy addresses issues of social media generated records. The researcher solicited interviewees' comments on how the NUST records management policy addresses issues of social media records. The interviewees gave the following responses:

Respondent	Response
Respondent 1	"The NUST Records Management Policy's silence on social media records is a big omission reflecting that the use of social media by NUST is new. The policy needs to be amended such that it includes restrictions and repercussions on misuse of social media. The policy also needs to have guidelines and state what social media records are archive materials because even comments from students are university records that can be archived for future decision making."
Respondent 2	"NUST is yet to harness the potential of using social media in business settings, hence the records management policy not mentioning social media records."
Respondent 3	"I am not aware that NUST has a Records Management Policy and so I will not comment on the issue."

Besides the worrying fact of the NUST's records management policy omitting to mention social media generated records, anecdotal evidence from the authors indicates that policies are passed at the NUST and then they are not communicated to everyone in the organisation, which leads to a situation where departments are not team players for the greater good of the NUST. For social media records management, this has a negative impact because social media records management ought to be a team effort with input from various stakeholders and not the current scenario at the NUST whereby the Communication and Marketing Office is meant to be responsible for social media-generated records, but lacks expertise on how to do so. The importance of a social media records management policy cannot be under estimated because if properly implemented a policy enables "…the creation and management of authentic, reliable and useable records, capable of supporting business functions and activities for as long as they are required" (ISO 15489 2016),

hence the need for policies to be communicated and implemented at all levels within the organisation.

Best practices for social media records: capture and preservation

Pertaining to the use of any best practices for the management of the NUST social media generated records, interviewees were asked to identify best practices used for the capture and preservation of the NUST's social media-generated records. The interviewees gave the following responses:

Respondent	Response
Respondent 1	"The Communication and Marketing Office is in a better place to explain the best practices in use at NUST because they are responsible for the university's social media."
Respondent 2	"I don't think there are best practices followed but without knowing, they may be following best practices because care is taken on the quality, wording of information to be put on social media, sensitivity to the external environment. If there are defined international best practices we could have adopted them without noticing."
Respondent 3	"As a section we currently do not use any best practices for capture or preservation."

"A best practice is a practice that has been shown to produce superior performance, and the adoption of best practices is viewed as a mechanism for improving the performance of a process, business unit, product, service, or an entire organisation" (Szwejczewski 2011). As such, the failure by the respondents to refer to best practices associated with electronic records management points to an organisation currently failing to effectively control its social media-generated records. To this, Carey (2016) suggests best practices to capture social media generated records that include copying the social media records and converting them to MS Word documents or PDFs or even keeping them as paper records. For effective preservation of social media-generated records, the use of Application Program Interfaces (APIs) is recommended as well as the use of a platform for self-archiving services (Bandziulis 2014; Day-Thompson 2016).

Control and authenticity of social media-generated records at NUST

Objective six of the study sought to establish measures that the NUST applies to ensure authenticity of social media records. Therefore, when asked to explain how

the NUST ensures authenticity of social media posts/records, the interviewees responded as follows:

Respondent	Response
Respondent 1	"Authenticity of social media records is ensured through the centralisation of who is responsible for posting the content. The fact that it is the Communication and Marketing Office posting on behalf of NUST means that all the information appearing on our social media pages is authentic."
Respondent 2	"Control and authenticity of social media-generated records at NUST is achieved by using the NUST communication policy and the confidentiality clause in posting social media content."
Respondent 3	"In order to ensure control and authenticity of social media records, NUST maintains one official account per social media platform. The rights and passwords to ensure access to the official accounts are granted to a few selected individuals. Also before posting the social media content, the Communication and Marketing office ensures that it is from specific offices with authority to relay that specific information."

The NUST is commended for centralising the posting of social media content as this helps to ensure the authenticity of its social media-generated records. These were found to be in line with measures adopted for electronic records management where 'a record's authenticity can be measured by referring to the authority and originality of the source of information, e.g., 'what it is; where it came from; what its content is…'" (Park 2002).

Even with newer formats of records that are cropping up, proper recordkeeping remains essential for organisations because 'a record is more than just information, it is supposed to be trustworthy: reliable and authentic, able to serve as evidence, and to support accountability' (Oberg & Borglund 2006). It is important that records possess content, context and structure in order to ensure that the records characteristics of authenticity, reliability and usability are not compromised.

Conclusion and recommendations

This article is based on the study that aimed at investigating the management of social media-generated records at the National University of Science and

Technology. The study concluded that the NUST recognises social media posts as records; this is evidenced for instance by the live streaming of the 2017 graduation on YouTube. Although the university has a final audio-visual copy kept at the Communication and Marketing Office, it cannot be disputed that the YouTube version is also an official version of what transpired on the day. The NUST mainly controls records that are created and posted on its social media platforms and there is no evidence of them appraising posts to determine if they are worth being incorporated into their local records management system. Findings revealed that the generation and control of social media-generated records is the responsibility of the Communication and Marketing Office. This scenario is not favourable because the office may not have expertise for the generation and control of social media-generated records.

This study concluded that the NUST still faces challenges regarding the proper management of social media-generated records. The records management challenges associated with social media records are well documented by such authors as Kamatula (2017), Rastogi (2014), Ginsberg (2013), Kim (2012) and Franks (2010). The study concluded that the appreciation and the level of awareness of these challenges at the NUST were found to be low. Policies in records management are important because they provide guidelines on the records that an organisation creates and preserves. The study concluded that the NUST records management policy is silent about social media records management. Although the NUST does not have a social media use policy, the NUST Communication Policy has been used up to now with relative success to regulate social media use. The university has control of their social media platforms through the NUST spokesperson who regulates what ought to be posted. Passwords to social media platforms are not shared and student interns are not allowed to post anything about the NUST using these platforms.

The study concluded that the NUST does not follow best practices regarding social media-generated records. Researches carried out in social media records management are bringing to the fore the concept of having best practices for social media records management (NARA 2013; Osterman Research 2016; Day-Thompson 2016) and, if properly implemented, best practices help to enable superior performance. The study concluded that the NUST should take measures to refute falsehoods peddled and circulated on social media platforms. In this way, the NUST corrects the untruths coming from social media records. This is a welcome development given the ease with which these records can easily be manipulated and forged thus losing their authenticity.

In view of the findings and conclusions the study recommends the following:

➤ The NUST should come up with social media use and social media records management policies to specify what social media platforms the institution uses for social media posts and social media records. Putting such policies in place would offer important guidelines on the generation and control of social media records, making it clear on the roles of who is responsible for what process.

➤ The study recommends that the NUST should appoint a multi-disciplinary team with expertise which includes Records Managers and Information Technology Specialists to oversee social media records management in the university.

➤ The NUST may revise its current records management policy such that it incorporates social media records management.

➤ The NUST should introduce a viable records management unit (records centre or registry). The unit can spearhead the adoption of best practices and standards for all records management activities at the NUST, thus leading to a situation where all records of the organisation, including social media records, are appreciated and managed well so that the organisation has reliable and authentic records at all times.

➤ That NUST should introduce short courses in records management to cater for trends that come about as a result of using various technologies, like social media. Technology is dynamic and this has a bearing on the people that deal with records management activities. The short courses could target both staff at the NUST and can be an effective way to equip those tasked with social media records management.

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