NFTHD #42: Company names on social media posts?

In this Note from the Help Desk, we answer a question about if it's necessary to have the company name and contact details on every social media post. The context was an unbranded health awareness campaign, appropriate for consumers, and would be published on a social media platform such as Facebook, and also on the company's own social media platform such as LinkedIn.

The Code's Overarching Principle 10 ensures that "all activities undertaken by Companies are clearly identified to their audience as a Company activity by the inclusion of the Company's name and city/town of the Company's Australian office". This principle is part of our commitment to ethical behaviour and transparency and is relevant in the context of posting any content on social media, or in any forum.

Do we need to have the company name and location on every single post – or is it OK to do without if those details are clearly available on the company's social media page, or the platform which is publishing the material? Taking a common-sense approach works most of the time. So if the platform that houses that material (Facebook for example) shows the company details when a person views the post, then this will satisfy the Code's principle. Similarly, if the Facebook page is the company's Facebook page, then again, it should be clear to the viewer that the company created the content, and the company details are easily accessible from that platform.

However, if the post can be taken out by a viewer and shared in isolation from any company details, then this presents a problem. A company should consider this possibility and mitigate that risk where it can ... in such circumstances embedding the company name and the location in any post or graphic would do that trick. But each platform and post has their own unique circumstances, so like many Code-related issues, context is key. Ultimately, we have a responsibility for ensuring there is no perception that any company-created content is not company-created content.