

President's Message

The Rise of Social Media

Recent studies have shown that Singapore's internet and social media penetration rates have risen quickly, undeniably the result of fast-paced technological developments putting out newer and better smart phones, coupled with growing affluence as well as changing demographics where people crave to be connected constantly.

This has certainly not gone unnoticed by organisations, where more have hopped onto the digital marketing bandwagon in one way or another. Social is no longer media confined to being 'social', as it has increasingly become a significant component of organisations' marketing strategy. This necessitates having appropriate processes in place to undertake comprehensive assessment of the risks and govern its usage in mitigation of these risks.

We cannot underestimate the speed at which negative or misrepresented information about an organisation can be propagated to a vast online audience, with far-reaching and potentially devastating impact. This could be best demonstrated through a recent voyeurism case where the victim took to social media, which led to the relevant authorities taking prompt investigative and remediation actions, something that might not have been achieved in the absence of fast and widespread dissemination of information via social media.

As internal auditors, we need to be cognisant of the impact of social media risks and risk mitigating measures. Start by understanding the potential sources of social media risks in your organisation, how and who is responsible for managing the risks. Has your organisation established a social media policy to provide guidelines on the use of social media? Is there continuous monitoring or "listening out" to social media (which can be achieved with the use of tools or social media monitoring service providers) for timely actions to be taken to address budding issues? These basic questions can provide you with some insights on whether the organisation is adequately managing social media risks.

Yours sincerely
Tan Boon Yen, CIA, CRMA
President
The Institute of Internal Auditors Singapore