

## Amber Warnings - Don't be socially awkward...

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PARTNER | US

**CATEGORY:**

BLOG

At our event, Socially Awkward, last night, [Daniel Isaac](#), our employment team, [Kenneth Mullen](#) of our IP team and I discussed social media and its legal implications. We were joined on stage by [Phil Lewis](#) of London Strategy Unit. I spoke about three of the legal weapons that you may find in your armoury to protect you against attacks from others in the online environment; and reminded you that you may find these weapons turned on you. They are the laws of defamation, privacy and harassment. I issued a series of Amber Warnings in relation to all three and thought that I would reproduce them here for you by way of reminders: **Amber Warnings on Defamation**

1. **Do a double take:** If you publish anything electronically — tweet, blog, e-mail, text — don't press send before you've re-read it; this could make the difference between publishing something you can stand by, or something you'll live to regret. \*\*
2. **Know your online image:** Regularly read what is being published online about you — consider undertaking an online audit where we review and pressure test the online information about you — and move to remove statements that are seriously inaccurate or defamatory. If you don't, there they will fester on publicly accessible, online archives... forever.\*\*

### Amber Warnings on Privacy

1. **Stop peeping toms:** Put proper passwords on your computer, smart phone and tablet.
2. **Think before you tweet, blog, Facebook or post:** The extent to which you expose yourself or your business and any private or confidential information may seriously impact the extent to which you can protect yourself against incursions by others. \*\*
3. **Audit your privacy boundaries:** Find out what is unlawfully or inappropriately in the online ether about you (consider an audit as referred to above); where you are shocked by what you find, try to get it removed, fast.\*\*
4. **Referee!:** Privacy injunctions are not just for footballers who have been playing away. The courts will balance the rights of others against those of you and your organisation and protect you where it is the interests of justice to do so. \*\*

### Amber Warnings on Harassment

1. **Put down a marker:** Start a paper trail with the culprit where a campaign has begun, writing formally to record the activity, that it is unacceptable and that if continued, will constitute harassment.\*\*
2. **Keep a diary:** Note all harassing conduct — this may be invaluable whether you approach the police, or the court;\*\*
3. **Don't delete:** Keep all relevant texts, e-mails and posts, however upsetting these may be, as they may be the vital evidence that you need.

Photography by Stephen Widdows: [www.stephenwiddows.com/2014/02/28/withers-llp-social-media-seminar-socially\\_awkward-dont-get-caught-out-in-the-trend/](http://www.stephenwiddows.com/2014/02/28/withers-llp-social-media-seminar-socially_awkward-dont-get-caught-out-in-the-trend/)

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