Why I share political views on Twitter but not on LinkedIn

Lately, I have seen a couple of opinion pieces written by marketing people that state you should never, ever share your political opinion, at the risk of losing clients and alienating your network.

I don't agree. I think it depends on several factors and there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. You will need to consider at least two issues:

1. Are you an employee or are you representing yourself? Are you sharing a political opinion for a company or for yourself?

2. Where you are sharing your views?

Let's start with the where.

I don't think you should ever share political views on LinkedIn, no matter if you are a company, individual or small business owner. But you should (in certain cases) on Twitter.

LinkedIn is a professional, business-oriented social network. Twitter is not.

People go to LinkedIn specifically to network and to research your professional background. They do not go to LinkedIn to find out about your views on Hillary Clinton.

Twitter is real-time conversation. LinkedIn is more static.

I know that you aren't supposed to talk about politics or religion in polite company. But Twitter is not polite company. It's a rapid-fire issue-of-the-minute national and international conversation. LinkedIn, on the other hand, is

not that. It’s a staid, share your credentials and network sort of place.

There are millions of tweets every hour. On LinkedIn, your network probably shares a few updates a day.

People go to Twitter to share their opinion and see what others think.

During the presidential debates it was pretty easy to see who doesn’t live in the United States and who uses automated tweets. Those were the folks who didn’t weigh in on the Clinton-Trump stand-off and/or tweeted about non-political matters.

But it matters who you are, too.

On social media, not everyone is treated the same.

- If you are tweeting as yourself and you are not claiming a company or organization in your Twitter profile, then you should say what you want.

- If you are tweeting in name of the organization, then you need to be very careful what you say.

- If you are representing a consumer-oriented organization (like a restaurant or manufacturer), then you should be probably keep quiet. People do not generally follow a product or brand to see what political views it has.

- If you work for an organization that works in a political or advocacy space, then you must make your views known. People follow political/advocacy accounts precisely because of a specific viewpoint.

- If you are like me, an individual who owns her own business, then you should make a decision that best fits you. I choose to share my political views on Twitter, not on LinkedIn. Be aware that not all your current or potential clients will

share your views, and may choose not to do business with you because of those views. On the other hand, some people will share your viewpoint and will choose to interact with you precisely because of that view.

We are human

In the end, we must remember that on social media, we are not automatons, we are human beings. Sometimes we respond viscerally and in the moment. For example, when people found out about the horrible massacre at Newtown, they shared their horror and some also shared their views on guns.

Human beings have ideas, likes, dislikes and of course, political opinions. While political opinions can incite strong responses, your likes and dislikes can generate controversy too.

You win some, and you lose some

Ultimately, you will need to accept that sharing your opinions (political and otherwise) may create a backlash, or it could result in support. Your opinions can lose you followers, but they may also gain you a following.

What do you think? Do you share your political views? What is the main reason you do or do not? Let me know in the comments.

P.S. If you care about my political views, follow me on Twitter at @DBMC.