

blastingnews

**Acceptable Content Guidelines.**



## 1. INTRODUCTION.

Blasting News strongly believes in the freedom of expression. We are an open and democratic platform where every freelance contributor around the world (called Blasters, in our jargon) has the opportunity to propose their own piece of content and has the chance to make their voice be heard. We are proud to offer an independent platform where freelance contributors can express their own angle, free from editorial pressure, and where readers can enjoy both sides of the story.

However, openness requires responsibility. Blasting News recognises the need to protect the reality, accuracy and quality of the content, as is clearly stated in our [Mission, Values and Editorial Guidelines](#).

For this reason, every single piece of content submitted by Blasters is screened and fact-checked by our Senior Team. The Senior Team is made up of content curators and journalists who are either employed by Blasting News, or enthusiastic members of the Blasting News community with extensive and proven experience in reporting news. The Senior Team is responsible for screening any text, image, video or other media that appears on any Blasting News content.

The objective of the Acceptable Content Guidelines (ACG) is to provide guidelines for the Blasting News Senior Team about the principles to apply when reviewing and fact-checking content submitted by Blasters. Through the prism of the ACG, the Senior Team will be able to judge which piece of content ought to be double checked, as well as which piece is not compliant with Blasting News policies and should therefore be rejected.

Moreover, we loathe fake news, in any and all forms. People want to see accurate information on Blasting News, and so do we. False information makes the world less informed, secure and safe. We are working hard to fight the spread of false news by disrupting economic incentives for any Blaster who submits false, misleading or click-bait content. We are also continuously adding new products and tools to the Blasting News platform that will curb the spread of false, misleading or click-bait news.

## 2. FACT-CHECKING AND FAKE NEWS.

We are committed to fact-checking every single article proposed by the Blasters and to avoid publishing fake news, in any form. We truly believe that - both as a publisher and as a tech company - Blasting News has a social responsibility to prevent the spread of any false or misleading piece of news, and to ensure independent and accurate information. Our goal is to provide unbiased content that will help the public make educated and informed decisions that will contribute to a better world.

As a result, we do not publish any form or any kind of fake news.

Blasting News's fact-checking process has the precise purpose of revealing mistakes, inaccuracies and lies, determining the truthfulness and correctness of any statement. It is conducted by in-house professional journalists and external freelancers, both before and after the publication of a piece of content. Thanks to information and resources available online and offline, Blasting News's fact-checking process has been extended to include verbal declarations (such as interviews or public speeches), timelines, photos and video manipulation.

As a general checklist, we make sure to follow each of the following steps every time our Senior Team reviews a piece of content:

- **We investigate the source.** Every story must be reported initially by a source that we trust with a reputation for accuracy. If the story comes from an unfamiliar organisation, we always check who they are and what motives they may have in reporting that story.
- **We check social media profiles.** Who is reporting the story? Who is quoting whom? What did they say in past online posts or articles? Are they biased?
- **We are skeptical about conspiracy theories.** We do not publish theories unless they are very well supported by facts.
- **We consider the photos.** False news stories often contain manipulated images or videos.
- **We inspect the dates.** False news stories may contain timelines that make no sense.
- **We look at other reports.** If no other news source is reporting the same story, it may

indicate that the story is false. Reliance on unnamed experts may indicate a false news story.

- **We think critically.** Some stories are intentionally false.
- **We have nothing to hide.** The content that we publish must clearly indicate:
  - Any statement reported
  - Any verification conducted and its conclusion;
  - Quotes and primary sources of information.
- **We understand that it is better to wait than to misinform.** Breaking news is important, but a healthy and well-informed public opinion is even more important. The fundamental question we ask ourselves when an article is submitted to the Senior Team is: "How do you know this?" We apply the maximum amount of skepticism, working as if we were collecting a probationary dossier, in order to understand where each statement comes from.

Examples of unacceptable content:

- Content that fails to cite sources (either primary or secondary ones).
- Content that fabricates quotations that didn't exist.
- Content that manipulate photos to make them appear more sensationalistic.
- Content that is not clear regarding dates and places.
- Content designed to deceive the reader into believing that they are reading legitimate editorial content or fact-based news.
- Content that could be a cleverly disguised advertisement (with little or no value afforded to the reader) or a piece of propaganda or a hoax.

### 3. CLICK-BAITING AND SKETCHY HEADLINES.

Click-bait content is content that relies on sensationalist headlines or eye-catching thumbnail pictures to attract click-throughs.

We do not publish click-bait nor sketchy headlines. Headlines can be attractive, but they must always be true and factually correct. Moreover, what you read in the headline must be what you find in the article. If claims in the headline sound unbelievable, they probably are. Inaccurate information, exaggerating or stretching a fact to make it sound more interesting is prohibited by

our policies.

Examples of unacceptable click-baiting content:

- “Do NOT try this at home!”.
- “Only the people with an IQ above 160 can solve these questions. Are you one of them? Click to find out...”.

## 4. ADULT CONTENT.

While interpretations of adult or mature content may vary, these are the standard requirements we hold all Blasters accountable to in order to create a safe and comforting space for everyone. When adult content is present, the focus of the piece should be on informing and educating rather than arousal. We ask ourselves: would I be embarrassed to view this content at work in front of colleagues? If the answer is yes, then we do not publish it.

Examples of unacceptable adult content:

- **Nudity and pornography.**
  - pornographic images, videos or games, regardless of whether private parts are visible.
  - pornographic cartoons or anime (hentai/ecchi).
  - full exposure of any private parts, such as genitalia, breasts and buttocks.
- **Sexually gratifying content.**
  - close-ups of breasts, buttocks or crotches.
  - images of men or women posing and/or undressing in a seductive manner intended to arouse the viewer.
- **Fetishes and sexual aids.**
  - bestiality, necrophilia, incest and voyeurism, role-playing, bondage, dominance and submission, sadomasochism, snuff.
  - promotion of sex toys eg. vibrators, dildos, personal lubricants, penis and breast .
  - promotion of sex aids such as enlargement tools and/or medications.
- **Explicit text and extreme profanity.**
  - erotic stories and/or unnecessary descriptions of sexual acts.
  - crude language and/or excessive amounts profanity.

- **Sexual tips and health.**
  - advice about improving sexual performance.

## 5. CONTENT THAT ADVOCATES AGAINST AN INDIVIDUAL, GROUP OR ORGANISATION.

We do not publish content that harasses, bullies, incites hatred or promotes violence against individuals or groups based on race or ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, age, class, profession, veteran status or sexual orientation/gender identity.

However, unbiased content containing educational, documentary, historical, scientific or artistic material related to such subjects is permitted.

Examples of unacceptable content that advocates against an individual, group or organisation:

- “Why you should never trust a doctor/lawyer/priest”.
- “Beware of all muslims”.
- “You should never employ a gay person, here’s why”.
- “These absurd feminists fight for equality”.

## 6. ALCOHOL OR DRUG-RELATED CONTENT.

We do not allow the promotion of products or services that cause damage, harm or injury. For this reason, content that promotes the use of recreational drugs or irresponsible alcohol consumption - including the favourable portrayal of excessive, binge or competition drinking, or drug abuse - cannot be published.

Examples of unacceptable alcohol or drug-related content:

- “How to use crack cocaine”.
- “Why you should go out tonight and drink until you fall”.

## 7. HACKING AND CRACKING CONTENT.

We do not publish content that provides users with instructions or equipment that tampers with or provides unauthorised access to software, servers or websites (so called hacking-and-cracking content).

Examples of this include content that instructs the user on how to unlock/jailbreak a smartphone and how to illegally download YouTube videos or MP3 songs, and how to stream content that you would otherwise have to pay a fee to access.

Examples of unacceptable hacking content:

- “How to download YouTube videos”.
- “Install Kodi now and stream any movie”.
- “This app will let you rip any album for free”.

## 8. VIOLENT AND WEAPON-RELATED CONTENT.

We do not publish content that contains overly graphic or explicitly violent images such as bloodshed, gory fight scenes, freak accidents, etc.

Examples of unacceptable violent content:

- Breaking bones.
- Gory videos or images.
- “Watch this video of a man getting hit by a bus and dying”.

Examples of unacceptable weapon-related content:

- “Tips on how to build your own explosives”.
- “Where to get a gun”.
- “Instructions on how to buy/use a fire weapon”.

## 9. CONTENT THAT ENABLES DISHONEST BEHAVIOUR.

Blasting News's core principles are honesty and legitimacy, as such, we do not publish content that intentionally misleads readers or promotes fraudulent or dishonest behaviour.

Examples of unacceptable content that enables dishonest behaviour:

- Content that promotes creating fake or false documents, eg. passports, diplomas, accreditation.
- Sale or distribution of term papers, essay-writing or exam-taking services.
- Information or products for passing drug tests.
- Content that promotes fraudulent activity or advices on how to avoid detection by police authorities.
- "Get approved for any credit card with this trick".
- "Pass any drug test with this trick".
- "Where to get a fake ID".

## 10. CONTENT THAT INCLUDES SENSITIVE WORDS.

Regardless of the context, whenever possible, certain sensitive words should not be published.

As a rule of thumb:

- First, remember the reader and respect the fact that we should not casually use words that are likely to offend.
- Second, use such words only when absolutely necessary to the facts of a piece, or to portray a character in an article; there is almost never a case in which we need to use a sensitive or swear word.
- Third, the stronger the word, the harder we ought to think about using it.

Examples of unacceptable content that includes sensitive words:

- Porn, pornography, pornographic, pornstar.
- Dildo, masturbation.
- Bondage, Orgy.



- Viagra (and similar drugs).
- Orgasm.
- Streaming, crack, hack.
- And any blasphemous or obscene word.

## 11. CONTENT WITH GRAMMAR MISTAKES AND OTHER ILLEGITIMATE TECHNIQUES.

We do not publish content with spelling and grammar mistakes, run-on sentences, one-sentence paragraphs, no space or multiple spaces after periods, keyword-stuffing. Some of the techniques we detect and prohibit include:

- Rewriting articles by changing words or sentence structure (a.k.a. Article Spinning) or automatically generated content.
- Stating the obvious just to add length to the article, for example, “Rabbits eat carrots. Rabbits eat a lot of carrots. Carrots are great for rabbits”.