

# What to consider: writing social media posts



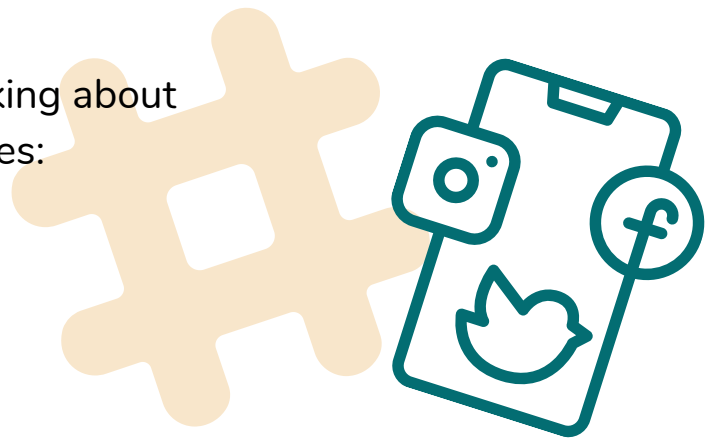
There is much to balance as a working journalist, but sometimes what is shared may directly or indirectly hurt someone.

The stories written about im/migrant sex workers are no exception and can cause ripple effects that influence the way workers are treated, the services they can and can't access, and can even result in further stigma.

## Sharing Articles

There are many things we should be thinking about when writing for social media. This includes:

- Copy for social media posts
- Images
- Hashtags



It can be difficult to undo shared information—even if a retraction is posted.

**Once it's out there, it's out there.**

# Social media and post copy

Sometimes words hurt, especially when they paint extremely broad strokes about a particular group of people—the impacts can be devastating.

[Take a look at this great example](#), and listen to how the main character, Su-Lin, is impacted by the way sex work is talked about.

It's common for post copy to come from an article, so hopefully the piece will be informed by properly balanced coverage: if the story involves sex workers, SWAN firmly believes it should [include the voice of sex workers](#).

## Food for thought: social media copy

**Is it balanced?** Is everyone who contributed to the story included?

- Have you made every effort to include commentary from each person involved in the story?

Are the comments **taken out of context**?

- The meaning of the words can change dramatically even with a slight shift in writing, tone

Does it use terms that could paint sex work in a **certain kind of light**?

- Positive? Negative?

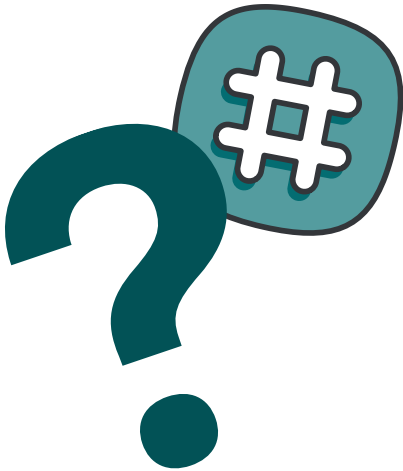
Does the copy reiterate **hyperbole, moral panic or stereotypes** around sex work that have been debunked?

Is the copy **racially, ethnically, emotionally** and **culturally sensitive**?

# On hashtags

HASHTAGS ARE A GREAT WAY TO SHARE THE IMPORTANT STORIES WE COVER.

Sometimes, however, **certain tags** can **create problems**.



What is the purpose of using a certain hashtag?



Can the hashtag be misinterpreted?

Sometimes using #girl instead of #woman might suggest the person involved in sex work is younger



Does the hashtag speak to the spirit of the story?

Do you really need to use the hashtag?

# Imagery

Photos of women in the shadows, bound and blindfolded completely miss the mark.

Sex workers are first and foremost people. They laugh, cry, experience and enjoy things...

**just like you.**

## Some questions to ask about the image you're using



Does the image perpetuate outdated stereotypes about im/migrant sex work?



Does the image oversimplify the topic/story?



Does the image humanize or dehumanize the subject?

Please note: Not everyone's primary identity centers around their job. Not all who engage in sex work will self-ID as a sex worker, despite the broad language that is sometimes used to refer to this community.

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