



Internet Misuse in the Workplace

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America's obsession with sports is nothing new. The loss of productivity during a fantasy sports season will cost the U.S. economy an estimated weekly \$1.1 billion. That's an enormous number, and it's a situation that is difficult for companies to control if the policies aren't clear-cut to employees. So how can companies reel in this misuse of company time? Some employers take the strict approach by banning recreational use of the Internet. Other companies view wasted time during the workday as a mental break for hard-working employees.

Whether your company decides to hold the line or be flexible with personal Internet use, the primary concerns are consistency and clarity. First, consider your options, consider all the consequences, and decide what you should do. Then, draft a policy that clearly establishes the rules for your workplace and communicate that policy to employees. Expectations about fantasy sports teams and general recreational use of the Internet should be discussed when new employees are hired and on other appropriate occasions as well. Just be prepared to enforce whatever policy you adopt.

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