

Edit button or no, you could still be sued for that Twitter post

By [Chanique Rautenbach](#)

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The recent suggestion of an edit button on Twitter received enormous support from its users in a poll posted by Elon Musk. [Musk's poll](#) - a response to a Twitter April Fool's post - had over 4 million votes by the time it closed on Tuesday, with a split of 74% for "yse" and 26% for "on" [sic]. The option to edit posts after publishing them has been a longstanding debate on Twitter and would allow user to fix errors on published tweets or correct misstatements on any viral posts.



Image source: [ekinyalgin - 123RF.com](#)

While it may be welcomed, even with an edit button, the legal consequences of publishing on social media platforms remain. Irrespective of whether a post can be edited retrospectively, whatever statement you have posted is considered to be 'published'.

Publishing defamatory, confidential or misleading statements on social media could either land you in court facing a delictual lawsuit where you can face paying hefty damages, or you could even face a criminal lawsuit and, if convicted, earn yourself a criminal record. Injuring the dignity of another is a criminal offence.

Social media platforms have policies to which users must conform when publishing a post. [Twitter's policy](#) specifically states that one may not incite or engage in the targeted abuse or harassment of others. This means that Twitter can also institute sanctions against you.

Therefore, it is important that users should remain cautious when publishing on Twitter, even if an option to edit retrospectively is added as a functionality in future. And that's 'on' April Fool's joke!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chanique Rautenbach is a Senior Associate with Barnard Incorporated Attorneys

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