



The Job in Detail

An appendix to the Job Description for the Director of
the Breeches, Leather & Uniform Fanclub

June 2025

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Appendix: The job in more detail

Still interested? Here, I'll elaborate on the various job areas, with examples and things that you may need to consider in greater detail.

Day to day admin

The main day to day admin tasks of the site are pretty straightforward - approving new photos, dealing with applications to join, and dealing with member queries, or members who have been reported.

The volume of these varies; a typical day will see a couple of new applications, and 30-50 photos, but this can vary considerably. The automated systems will flag some profile updates to review, but most of those can be resolved with a couple of clicks. User-generated complaints may need more work.

Member applications can often be dealt with fairly quickly, but in some cases you'll need to send a more detailed note, for example if someone needs just a few alterations to their uniform in order to qualify.

There may also be events submitted that need to be approved for the calendar; again, these may be straightforward, or you may have to reach out to people for more information or rewrite descriptions so they're in a more consistent style.

On the present site, there are lots of permission levels, to allow for people to do various admin tasks in isolation; all photos are viewed by at least two people for example, and you can have a much larger pool of people doing first line review, as we do at the moment, and a very small group making the final decision - because ultimately, if people think something shouldn't be on a profile, it will be you they will complain to.

Similarly, approval of new members is best kept to a small group of people who can all be trusted to make consistent decisions - you don't want to be in a position where you have to rescind a membership that was granted in error.

You may also have to deal with requests from people who want to run events, be added to the site listings, and so on. At the moment, I have a very dedicated calendar editor, Rich (1802), who does much of the grunt work of ensuring events are listed. Without that, you will need to spend more time, or have a far less comprehensive calendar on the site.

Normally, you can probably clear most of these basic tasks in an hour or so a day. You don't necessarily have to be signed into Admin all the time, however I suspect that many members have become used to the fairly swift responses that I try to give.

Privacy policies

The nature of the world in which we exist, and of the club itself, means that privacy is very important. For some members, being discovered to have a leather fetish could mean a broken relationship, loss of a job, or even worse, in some jurisdictions.

So, privacy has to be taken seriously. In this, I consider the EU GDPR to be more or less the gold standard, and we aim to keep private data as secure as possible. This means things like no public profile pages, login flows that can't be used to see if an email address belongs to a member, and so on.

It extends into programming, and other areas. For example, being aware of the privacy policies of third parties that we rely upon, and aiming wherever possible to prevent leakage of data. Common scripts, fonts and so forth are all served from the BLUF server, rather than via CDNs (Content Delivery Networks). We don't use third party analytics. We maintain a strict opt-in policy for mailshots, allowing members to choose to receive only information they have requested.

When we request identity information, which is used for age verification, we redact it as soon as possible, and the information is stored separately from the main BLUF database.

An awareness of privacy is vital for your role; and remember that what may seem like a good idea can have unforeseen consequences. It was suggested once, for example, after a popular member had died, that some form of condolences be sent by BLUF. While a good sentiment, without knowing intimate details, sending a card 'from friends at BLUF' is the sort of thing that could out someone to a family, potentially causing them more grief.

More commonly, dealing with disputes between members may result in requests from one party to know exactly what action has been taken; that too may be a breach of privacy rights.

It may, in some circumstances, be necessary to discuss a member with other people on the admin team. You need to be aware when doing so that, in the EU, the UK and some other jurisdictions, people will have a right to a 'subject access request' or similar, requiring you to disclose information held about them, which could include those notes or emails.

You should therefore ensure that any such notes or emails are accurate and factual.

Regulatory issues

In an ideal world, we would be able to run the club in the way that we wish. This is not such a world, and BLUF is subject to various regulations, in addition to things like the GDPR.

As we are based in the UK, we have to comply with a number of UK laws; some of which are extraterritorial in effect - the Online Safety Act applies to any service, based anywhere, which has a user base in the UK. As the site allows 'user generated content' and 'user to user' messaging, it falls firmly in scope.

This means that a risk assessment has to be conducted, and updated regularly, covering a large list of topics (over thirty), from the risk of the site being used to disseminate Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), to illegal firearms, drugs, promotion of suicide, human trafficking, terrorism, and many more.

That may all sound like overkill - and I certainly think it's excessive. But the potential for hefty fines is real, and it's too much of a risk to assume that BLUF will never come to the notice of the authorities. It's entirely within the realms of possibility that a disgruntled member might make a complaint, or that anti-fetish or anti-LGBTQ forces decide that as a relatively well-known organisation, we're worth picking on.

Other laws you will have to bear in mind include the UK's Extreme Pornography rules, which essentially mean no photos of extreme SM and certain other activities. My intention, before various personal matters intervened, was to arrange professional training on this for a core group of volunteers. This is likely to cost several hundred pounds, but I would suggest that it would be very useful for any new management team.

Other countries have laws too; in Germany there are strict prohibitions on the display of Nazi / extreme right symbols, which is one reason we don't allow that sort of material. Other countries may impose different requirements. Unless you want to rework the site to display different content to people depending on their location, it is simplest to adopt the strictest rules for everyone.

That means at present, we have particular regard to the laws of the UK, where we are legally established; of Germany, where we have a very substantial number of members, and enough events to argue that we have a de-facto presence there; and of Estonia, where our EU representative company is registered.

Sometimes these requirements have force through third parties, for instance app store approvals which require that certain material not be available in apps. You will need to navigate areas like this; the site is presently designed so that all images are classified and we could, for example, filter crotch shots from display in an app, if required.

Age verification is a looming issue in the UK, and in other jurisdictions too. At the moment, we have the ability to verify people when they apply, or to request verification for an existing profile. We do this using a service from Stripe, and the way in which it operates was designed with privacy very much in mind.

Our current policy is that this is done where someone looks very young in their photo, and a verification costs us around £2 per person.

If blanket verification were required, you will have to decide how to handle it. Some porn sites in the US have taken extreme action when states have introduced verification, cutting off all access from that state. That is one possibility; however, if you were to do that for the UK, for example, you would be losing almost 20% of BLUF members in one go.

But, to verify every current member of BLUF would cost over £10,000. The final cost is likely to be less than that, as I expect a significant number of members would prefer to delete their account than submit government ID for verification, but it's still likely to be expensive. It's also possible that some jurisdictions will specify which age verification services must be used, which may incur additional work and cost.

So, in short, you cannot ignore these issues, and will have to keep on top of them, and plan accordingly. That may also, from time to time, include responding to government consultations, where appropriate, and it may require some tricky decisions, both technically and financially.

Member conduct

Broadly speaking, we are fortunate that member conduct is not an area where we have massive problems; as mentioned elsewhere, I believe that tone is set from the top. And most of our members tend towards being more mature, and not looking for instant hook-ups, so we seldom have to intervene.

However, that does not necessarily mean that you can simply ignore issues of conduct, and you will have to engage with them.

At its most simplest, we have a reporting and blocking system, and reports can be reviewed by admins with appropriate permissions. This probably needs to be a fairly small subset of your volunteers, because of the privacy implications of dealing with complaints between members.

The vast bulk of issues can be solved by blocking contact between two members; blocks normally expire, because my view has been that I don't want BLUF to be the sort of site where people flick through and automatically block anyone they don't find attractive. Admins can impose longer blocks - if there is a serious issue between members, we typically put in a block for ten years.

Sometimes, however, you will encounter behaviour that requires more than that; for example, if a member has been reported by several people over a relatively short span, for using abusive language. You may choose to issue a warning or, ultimately, remove them from the site entirely, though this is not something to be done lightly.

As noted in the personal section, you may find yourself having to take action against people you know; this is one reason why messages from the moderation team are flagged as simply from that team, without identifying the admin dealing with the complaint. Only other admins can see who actually took an action. Nevertheless, be prepared to be complained at or about; some people do not take kindly to being told their behaviour has overstepped reasonable bounds.

As part of the reporting system, we have automated scanning, which flags up profile updates with certain key phrases. Sometimes, these are easily reviewed and dismissed - 99.9% of the times the system flags the word 'Nazi' in a profile update, it's because someone is expressing their dislike for that as a fetish.

This system can flag up other issues too, where you may want to head off problems before they happen. For instance, it has been used to flag up mentions of particularly heated topics in current affairs. This is not because these are forbidden topics on BLUF, but as a heads up in case something is added to a profile that may generate problems further down the line.

One example: in the past we had a profile which included a call to people to attend PEGIDA (an anti-islam group) protests; in my view, given that we have people of many different faiths and nationalities on BLUF, this is not an appropriate thing to be posting on a profile, and the member was asked to remove it from their profile. They decided instead to add a thorough denunciation of me instead, likening me to the Stasi. As a result, I terminated their membership. I do not believe we should be operating a platform that people are actively using to urge people to attack or campaign against others in such a way. Similarly, I have had to ask people in the past to remove comments about the character of other members from their profile. Members may well have history with each other, but profiles probably shouldn't be used to air personal grievances, or make statements that could be considered libellous.

Your opinions may vary on this, but you will have to draw a line somewhere.

You will also sometimes be called upon to make decisions about behaviour that has taken place elsewhere; this can be a very thorny issue. If someone has been abusive to other members at a BLUF event, then you are probably quite justified in taking action, up to and including expulsion from the club.

But what if it's elsewhere? What then? Imagine you're informed that a member is a con artist who has defrauded people in the past, and has served time in prison. Should you exclude them, or consider that having served their time, they should now be considered rehabilitated?

If a member posts something racist on social media, should there be consequences? Or is it simply none of our business? Is there a material difference, if this happens, and the member uses

'bluf' as part of their social media name, or includes their BLUF number in their profile on that service?

I can absolutely guarantee that if someone who is known to be a member posts an image of themselves in Nazi/SS gear somewhere else on the internet, you will get complaints (you will get these complaints, probably every time the topic flares up on social media, regardless of whether or not a BLUF member is involved). You will probably be accused of running a site full of Nazis. And you will have to decide what to do. Can you reasonably expect that by being a member of BLUF, people must abide by our rules everywhere else they go on the internet?

There are no simple answers to questions like this, and you will probably have to decide on a case by case basis. This is one reason why we now have a fairly broad rule which allows termination of membership if, in the view of the Directors, someone has brought the club into disrepute.

It is also why our content guidelines are very strict; at present, they state that even something that has been obscured, or partially obscured, is grounds for rejecting an image.

Not long after I took over running the club, a member was 'exposed' in a UK tabloid for a Nazi fetish; the images accompanying the article were not from BLUF, and we have no reason to believe that any of the information was sourced from BLUF. But we nevertheless reviewed every photo carefully as a result. The guiding principle is not just something like 'a visible Nazi symbol' but more 'will someone like a tabloid journalist point at a bit of red armband and say "well, we all know what that is, don't we?"'

You may believe that it's possible to use these symbols in a sexual context, devoid from political meaning. Many other people don't, and if this, or other incendiary material, is linked to BLUF, it may well be your doorstep that journalists turn up on, and your name in the Sunday paper.

Event planning

Arguably, at least as much as the online platforms, events are the beating heart of BLUF. We regularly have over 150 events a year around the world, put on by volunteers.

Mostly, these look after themselves, and the main thing you need to do is to make sure that people abide by any rules regarding logo usage, and submit information in a timely manner so that it can be included in the BLUF calendar.

You'll also have requests from people to start a BLUF event in a new city, and you need to decide if they're a suitable person to do so, what sort of venue they're planning to use, and give them guidance - often people start with grand plans, but it's generally best to start small, and build up. Not every city can support a monthly event.

You may from time to time receive complaints about organisers, and you'll have to deal with these; it might be a simple reminder of rules, or it might require something stronger - in the worst case, replacing them with someone else. Venues can also cause problems too - for example a show a few years back at a Chicago venue was widely denounced as racist; in situations like that, you may need to work with local organisers to reach a decision and issue a statement.

To try and make sure people know what to expect from BLUF events, you should keep the Event Handbook, or something similar, up to date, and remind organisers of the expectations.

Managing volunteers

BLUF is nothing without our volunteers. But you can almost always do with more of them. The current website allows a lot of granular control, so you can allow people to access only very specific subsets of the information.

You'll need to explain to people how the back end of the site works, if that's what their role requires, or clearly communicate what's needed of them in other areas, like graphic design, event organisation, and so on. Some might consider the detail in some of our admin guides to be quite excessive - like the Content Moderation Guide - but if you want a group of people to be consistent, you're going to have to write things down, so expect to spend a fair bit of time documenting things.

You may sometimes need to remove a volunteer; always try to do this as sensitively as you can. And remember always, thank people often. BLUF punches above its weight, and that's down to the effort put in by countless people around the world, organising events, helping with publicity, and helping with admin.

Long term, I would love to see some form of recognition for volunteers and the work they do; I don't know what this might be - an award of some sort, perhaps - or the mechanism, but it's something to bear in mind.

Policy formulation

Internally, you need policies; whether on harassment, how photos are approved, and so on. These are best documented clearly, to ensure that other people can implement them consistently - for example, when I've been unwell, sometimes photos get approved that, perhaps I wouldn't have done.

You will need to consider things like what happens if there's a mistake; presently my view is that if we spot something approved in error within 48 hours, we'll remove it. After that it stays - because (other than clearly forbidden material), people ought to have confidence that what's on their profile won't suddenly disappear.

In terms of policy on what content is allowed, you may need to seek legal advice, and a policy is most easily defensible if grounded in law. Hence, the banned symbols on BLUF are those banned by law in Germany, and in Estonia. There are other symbols or items (communist badges, VK79 uniforms, etc) that some may make an argument for banning, but since they're not covered by the laws applicable to us, we don't do so. We can thus argue a legal basis for the policy. If other items were included, it would become a political decision. That's not impossible to defend, but perhaps harder.

You need to find a way to consult on things, even if it's only advisory. Be aware that this can be very heated - a fairly innocent question about guns posted in the BLUF Facebook group created a lot of fuss, both from gun owners, and from people who had suffered from gun violence. And sometimes, the solution is a bit of lateral thinking.

In the case of guns, it was also apparent that there's a possibility in future of certain things not being permitted in photos on apps. So, the photo tagging system was added, all (over 50,000 then) photos were reviewed, with tags such as 'gun', 'bondage', 'crotch' assigned to each one.. If required, we can now filter these things from the app, and on the website we can offer users the choice to hide photos with alcohol, guns, or smoking, if they wish.

Should there be democracy in BLUF? There's certainly a lot to be said for the current solution; and if someone is spending hours of their time voluntarily, is it fair that they be commanded how to spend it, or not?

If you do allow members to vote, what do they vote on? Who qualifies? Everyone? Or people who have been a member for a specific period? Or people who have donated? Do people who make regular donations count for more? How do you guard against people trying to rig the vote?

BLUF has some external policies too, if you can call them that. For example, our stances on inclusion, and public statements on related topics.

Whether or not you think this is something BLUF should do will be up to you. From my perspective, to take a recent example, a UK court ruling gave a lot of trans people reason to worry. It seemed to me that re-iterating their welcome at BLUF was a good thing to do, notwithstanding a few grumbles from people who think that if it doesn't directly affect them, we shouldn't be doing it.

Similarly, when BLUF Chicago withdrew from Touché, along with other groups, as a result of a show widely considered racist, we issued a joint statement. Some would have had us not do that - but should we just ignore the hurt of our non-white members "because we're a leather club" ?

Should we advocate for particular political parties? Maybe not. But can we encourage people to take care of their mental health? Absolutely. Can we promote PrEP? We did - and we had a 'what is PrEP?' page on the site several years ago.

If there is genuine reason to believe an issue of public policy is harmful to our interests, should we ask members to write to people about it to their representatives? Why not?

And can we set an example? My belief is that BLUF has a pretty high profile, and with that comes a moral imperative to use it well. So, no I don't think we can sit by when parts of the community are attacked, because they may well come for us next.

In taking on BLUF, you also take on a platform, and a vehicle for spreading a message. If you choose to use it, use it wisely.

BLUF's technical platform

At the moment, we rely on a hosting platform which provides a Linux VM exclusively for our use; I believe this is the best way to ensure that we can maintain the privacy of our members. So, unless you change the whole architecture of the club, you will need someone who is able to administer the server (applying security updates, and so on), and you'll obviously need to ensure sufficient funding is available - this is our largest regular monthly outgoing.

The core software is written in PHP, using a templating system to allow multiple languages to be supported on the web pages. The current version, 4.6, is based on the complete rewrite of the site I did in 2016, so is now getting quite old in parts.

Work has begun on BLUF v5, which is again a complete re-write, using more up to date versions of PHP; there is already a new API that could be used to implement apps providing most of the functionality of the website. Whether or not I continue work on this, or hand it over, or the software is replaced entirely, is something for discussion.

Whatever you choose, ultimately, you are going to need people who can code and design for you - I don't believe there are any off the shelf solutions that would offer what we need, and include the level of security and privacy we expect. If you think we can rely on a few fancy WordPress plug-ins, I have a bridge I'd like to sell you.

In addition to the main website, there are various other sites hosted on the server, such as the online stores and a platform other clubs use for issuing digital membership cards; a fuller description will be made available to interested parties.

Apps run on B4X, which is a similar system to Visual Basic, and allows for easy cross-platform development. They talk to the current website via an API, but should be transitioned to the new v5 API for better performance.

While both website and apps use, for the most part, custom code written by me, there are also obviously libraries and dependencies, and you will need to keep track of these, and update as necessary. For example, things like payment libraries may need updates for new regulations, or new features, and this can require extensive testing. As server software updates, you may need to update libraries or other code to ensure compatibility.

Migrating to a different platform is obviously a lengthy process, as would be creating a whole new site from scratch; I'm willing to help with this for as long as necessary. At some stage, every platform becomes obsolete or insecure, so there has to be a plan in place.

In addition to the main server, we operate the BLUF.email service to provide mailboxes to BLUF black card holders. These are presently hosted on a server in my office, and should be migrated to the main server, or somewhere else.

The identity server is also presently hosted in my office; this is where information such as member ages, and when their ID was verified, is stored. That keeps it separate from the main database, and it can only be queried via cryptographically signed requests, to ensure as much privacy as possible. Again, arrangements will have to be made for this or something similar, if you want to maintain such personal information.

Because of the sheer amount of time involved, software development is the principle thing for which BLUF pays, albeit at rates that probably aren't equivalent to the UK living wage. A willingness to do this work for not much reward is probably a pre-requisite; certainly, paying commercial rates for the development of a site as complex as ours is probably not yet within the scope of our funding.

Third parties

Though the core of the BLUF website is self contained, we do rely on services from third parties for a number of things; these are not necessarily set in stone, and you may wish to change things, but in doing so, it's always wise to keep an eye on the privacy policies of any services you use, and opt out of data collection where possible. Some services may desire to collect information for AI training; we avoid this if at all possible, and where we can, use services that are compliant with GDPR rules.

Aside from our actual hosting, the third parties on which we rely most are PostMark, for email delivery; Twilio for SMS delivery and some inbound phone numbers; Google Firebase for notification delivery to mobiles; DeepL for automated translation services; Google Places for venue information and maps; Google Wallet for digital membership cards; Apple Developer services for the iPhone app; Google Play for the Android app; Anywhere Software for App development tools; IPapi for geolocation; Hover for DNS registrations.

Many of these are chargeable services, so sufficient revenue needs to be generated to cover them; others have free tiers. You will need to be mindful of the potential costs that adding extra features may incur, and the ways in which those can be mitigated (for example, by caching some data where possible).

Some of these services can be substituted more easily than others, but in most cases it will require considerable technical effort. For example, switching email and SMS from Elastic to PostMark and Twilio required considerable extra coding and, in the case of email, a whole new set of templates.

Many third parties will have their own rules or requirements, which you need to keep on top of. For example, Google will periodically update requirements for apps on their store, which might require additional coding effort, or the addition of a specific page detailing a privacy or account deletion policy. For many countries, our SMS messages come from the shortcode 'BLUF', and from time to time, different countries require updated information for compliance, such as proof of company registration, or KYC (Know Your Customer) information.

These things are usually relatively straightforward, and only crop up a few times a year, but nevertheless, they can't be ignored.

You may also need to consider other issues; for example, we withdrew from posting on Twitter/X because we no longer felt that the site aligned with our values.

Finance and fundraising

Someone has to pay for all this. BLUF has always had a policy of free membership, and relied on donations. To be frank, in the past, those were often few and far between - when I took over, we could go for months without a single donation, and the club was essentially subsidised by me, and before that by Leon.

The introduction of the BLUF White card encouraged more people to donate, and donations really took off with the introduction of the BLUF Black card on 2020, allowing people to make small regular donations.

In our accounts, we make a small loss most years at present; this ultimately varies a lot depending on things like merchandise sales and how much programming work (our chief expense, as mentioned earlier) has had to be done. Nevertheless, we try to maintain sufficient funding in our accounts to cover the bills for around a year.

I've always been keen on retaining free membership, though given the cost of gear, you can make an argument against that too. I certainly think it worth retaining the present situation where everyone on the site is equal, regardless of payment status - you don't get more messages, or more photos, and so on, just because you pay. We don't have to play that game where suddenly you're asked to pay to continue on a conversation, so we shouldn't.

However, as noted under regulatory matters, there is the issue of age verification. If we have to do that for everyone, it may make sense to have a small application fee, payable on acceptance, to cover the cost of verifying a new member's age. This is something for you to ponder.

Besides merchandise and normal donations, we have in the past had special funding drives, for example when we faced substantial legal fees as a result of a trademark issue. Ideally, these are to be avoided. They can be a useful tool in a specific situation, but you don't want to create donor fatigue.

In terms of handling the monies we receive, we have an HSBC bank account in London at present, which is our main account. We also have WISE, which provides us with Euro and US Dollar accounts. While most of the money from these is transferred to the main HSBC account, we maintain a reasonable balance in both for direct payment of bills in those currencies (for example, DeepL charges us in Euros, while our backup services are charged in US Dollars) without facing extra currency conversion fees.

For most website donations, we use Stripe for credit cards, which pays out into one of our accounts depending on the currency. We also have PayPal, and GoCardless for direct debit payments.

In person payments and online payments for the UK web store are handled by Square; this allows us to do a pop-up shop in the UK and take payment for merchandise at events via the card reader. For Europe, we use Stripe for store payments, via Nigel Whitfield OÜ. In person payments are handled via MyPOS, chiefly because their service allows the same card machine to be used anywhere in the Euro area. This again is handled through Nigel Whitfield OÜ.

As with corporate structure, this will need to be transferred to new accounts, or some ongoing arrangement reached.

Recent accounts can be found at the [Companies House page](#) for BLUF Ltd, though these are very much abbreviated.

Over the summer, we will work on more detailed management accounts for the most recent year, to give a clearer view of all the expenses and receipts.

Merchandising

Merchandising has, in the past, been a fairly significant chunk of the club's income; exact figures will be available when the detailed management accounts have been prepared. Since the introduction of the BLUF subscription, they are a much smaller proportion, but still represent a useful income.

Our biggest sellers are probably the tie clips, though we make a reasonable amount from clothing such as T shirts and hoodies.

For tie clips, badges and keyrings, an upfront investment is required, as these items generally have to be made in substantial quantities (2-300 at a time) to get a decent price. This, then, is something that may need to be factored into cashflow.

Most other items, however, including the BLUF calendar, are now produced using 'on demand' services. This means we can add items to our stores, simply by creating them using the service - the main one we use is [Printful](#) - and they are only made when someone orders one. This means things happen more or less automatically, without any intervention.

Items we order in bulk, by contrast, have to be packed and posted, which I currently do from London. This is a task that I'm prepared to continue doing for a while, since it can provide me with a small income. That's a topic up for discussion with the new team.

Since Brexit, we have had to operate two online stores. The EU store serves only customers within the EU, and is presently operated by my Estonian company. This enables us to post items from the UK to customers in the EU, without them having to pay additional taxes and charges on delivery. You can read a detailed explanation of this [on my blog](#).

The UK store caters to the UK and the rest of the world. Both stores actually run on the same PrestaShop platform, hosted on the BLUF server. While PrestaShop itself is free, various of the plugins we use have annual service fees, which need to be factored in.

Since many countries still have a threshold below which no duties are payable, the current system means that people in most places can buy merchandise without unexpected fees, as long as they use the appropriate store.

The BLUF calendar has been a good source of revenue in recent years, and is probably an idea worth continuing; it didn't appear for this year simply because the production period clashed with my operation for thyroid cancer. I hope to start work on a new edition this summer.

Note that for a piece of work like the calendar, it's advisable to do it as formally as possible, ie we typically ensure that a digitally signed model release form is provided by each person featured, and we also have a signed revenue sharing agreement with the photographer. This helps avoid any misunderstandings.

It's possible to make an argument for both streamlining our range of merchandise, or for extending it. That will be up to you, but note that there may well be potential for raising additional revenue, especially with the club's 30th anniversary on the horizon.

Intellectual property

BLUF has a limited amount of intellectual property. The word 'BLUF' is trademarked for social media applications, event organisation, and clothing (but explicitly not headwear) in the UK, the EU and the USA.

This action was taken to protect the name of the club after a dispute arose in Berlin some years back, with a volunteer seeking to trademark 'BLUF Berlin' and prevent others from organising events. As part of the eventual settlement, we acquired the 'BLUF Berlin' trademark, but have now let it lapse, as such usage would be covered by our main EU trademark.

Note that trademarks expire, and this means that periodically, there will be costs incurred in renewing them; we have recently submitted the renewal for the USA trademark, which cost us around €3000.

In the event that you needed to take action for breach of trademark, then that too may cost. We retain the services of a German law company that specialises in intellectual property to advise and assist us in these matters, on a pay as you go basis.

You may decide that this is unnecessary, and money can be saved. However, that does mean that you will have less power to prevent people using the BLUF name in an unauthorised manner.

Separately to the trademarked name, the BLUF logo is obviously covered by normal copyright rules. While not as strict as a trademark, this also gives some leeway to prevent unauthorised use.

Besides our own intellectual property, you will need to be mindful of that belonging to other people; this is why events in the calendar now carry a disclaimer indicating if they are third party or official events, as some mistakes in the past have led to complaints from people about the use of their trademarked or copyrighted name in the calendar.

So, you need to be mindful of the rights of others, and if unsure, seek permission to use logos, or other material. We should strive to be seen to be setting a good example in this matter.

That extends to things like event posters, where we should always ensure that permission of the people in images is sought and that of the photographer too. It is a matter of law in many countries that the copyright of an image, unless otherwise assigned, belongs to the photographer. So while a member may consent to their image being used for our publicity, they may not necessarily be able to grant that permission. You need to check with the photographer, and if there are conditions, such as a credit, ensure that it is included.

Not to do so can, in extremis, result in a photographer refusing to allow us to use any of their work in future.

Promotion and media relations

The most important promotion that BLUF does at the moment is for events, both our own and others that are listed in the calendar. Thankfully, much of this is now automated, so that if an event is added to the calendar, it will be automatically posted on Blue Sky, Mastodon/Fediverse, Telegram and Instagram.

Obviously alternate platforms may become prominent in future, and you'll need to consider which ones merit attention.

We also from time to time produce offline material, like the Time to Talk cards, and these need to be budgeted for. We don't generally have a budget at the moment for routinely producing printed posters, but at the moment I consider that most people will be getting their information about events from social media platforms, or from our various regular emails. We occasionally pay for items such as flags for local BLUF groups; this is done on an ad-hoc basis, but you may want to formalise funding such things.

Besides promotion, you may from time to time be called upon by media organisations for comments, or for interviews. This is entirely voluntary, but can be a good way to boost the profile of the club, or to highlight particular issues - for example, a piece I wrote for a UK website about the presence of fetish people at Pride.

Over the years I've been interviewed by a range of people, and written a few articles about the club for different publications. So, it is certainly helpful if one or more members of your team is reasonably media literate and able to clearly articulate points in a one on one interview.

We have advertised the club a couple of times, including in Drummer magazine; these have been free placements, and given the club's existing profile, I don't tend to view paying for publicity to be something that we really require. Again, this is an area where you may differ, but as ever, it would need to be budgeted for.

Equity and inclusion

BLUF is a club for men who are into uniforms. What does that mean, in practical terms?

There have always been bisexual members; there have been members who identify as straight too, though I think it's fairest to characterise us as primarily a gay club.

Since 2012, we have explicitly allowed trans men; we didn't have a prohibition before, it's just that no one had actually asked. This policy is laid out explicitly in a 2016 blog post [What makes a man](#).

Pragmatically, whatever you think of this policy, to have anything different is impracticable, unless you are going to require birth certificates, or genital photos for membership, neither of which is anything but a recipe for chaos and privacy nightmares. And, bluntly, I am not inclined to hand the club over to someone who would wish to deliberately roll back this policy.

More broadly, it is likely you will at some stage have requests from people who wonder if there is still a place for a men only club; that's a matter for you - but my view is that yes, there is. And while people may be able to make a good argument for a mixed leather uniform club, that club is not BLUF, in my opinion. But if someone were to start one, I would offer them my full support, and even the use of the BLUF code, if that would be helpful.

We try to make sure that in publicity, in things like event imagery, in selections for the best photos each month, and so on, we include a variety of members - difference ages, ethnic origins, body shapes, and so forth. I know, because people have told me so, that when they see someone like them on publicity for a BLUF event, they appreciate it and feel reassured that they will be welcome. I think this is a policy that should continue.

In terms of the website, it is presently available in four languages - English, German, French and Spanish. I try to ensure that all important news, blog posts, and so forth include all these languages. Some events are only in English, which could be said to be the club's lingua franca, but my view is that we can do better.

The site includes translation tools that allow members to automatically translate messages, and this extends to some admin tools as well. This is not particularly an area in which I wish to tie my successors' hands, but nevertheless I think it would be a shame if we were to become a single language site.

Our app is presently English-only, and this is something that I would like to see change; but of course, making everything multilingual, even with some of the tools that we have, does slow development down.

More generally, I think it would be advantageous for an admin team to include members who are reasonably fluent in more than one language, and from a range of different backgrounds; there are things that have changed over the years as a result of input from people of colour, trans members, and other groups, which would not have happened had I not listened to their views and taken them on board. You may want to try and formalise this - as I had hoped to, but pressures of time and other things have meant that has not gone as far as I would like.

Our membership is global, and I think to ignore that would be a mistake.

Corporate structure

At the moment, BLUF is incorporated in England and Wales as a Company Limited by Guarantee, called BLUF Ltd. A company of this type has no shareholders; instead the named Directors (of whom there are presently two) are potentially liable for the debts of the Company, should it be wound up, up to a limit of £10 (yes, ten pounds).

You should note, however, that there may be other forms of legal jeopardy where you will assume personal liability. For example, in UK law, you could be personally liable for defamation, should material published on the site be found to be libellous. Other legislation, like the Online Safety Act, may also attract personal liability, and BLUF Ltd is most unlikely to have the resources to reimburse or indemnify you.

Fines under the Online Safety Act, for example, can be up to £10 million, or 10% of annual global turnover, whichever is greater. Although it's considered unlikely that such high levels would be imposed on a community site such as us, there is no firm guidance, and it's a very new law, so who knows what level fines may turn out to be levied at?

I would advise that this means you need to pay careful attention to regulatory issues, and consider whether or not you need additional insurance. This is not something we have yet done, but it may be a consideration for the future, and something that BLUF pays for, to provide cover for its management team.

In addition to BLUF Ltd, we also have a dormant company registered, Breeches and Leather Uniform Fanclub Ltd, which was registered chiefly to hold the name.

Additionally, I personally have an Estonian company registered through the E Residency scheme, called Nigel Whitfield OÜ. This company presently operates the EU store and acts as our appointed representative in the EU for matters related to the GDPR and GPSR.

You may decide that it's appropriate to incorporate BLUF in a new jurisdiction; if so, there will have to be a transfer of assets from the existing companies to a new one. Or you may wish to simply become Directors of BLUF Ltd, subject to the requirements of UK law. Or to reach an arrangement where BLUF Ltd remains the holding company, asking you to operate the club. Likewise, you may wish to retain the current arrangement for EU representation through Nigel Whitfield OÜ, or to set up a new EU company or foundation.

None of this is set in stone, but there may be tax or other implications for whatever changes you make.

It will also be likely to make new banking arrangements; we presently bank with HSBC in the UK, and use WISE for Euro and Dollar bank accounts. How readily these may be transferred into other names is something that will have to be explored.

BLUF Ltd is the current owner of the BLUF trademarks, and (in most, but not all cases) the entity that forms contracts for things such as hosting, email and notification delivery, and other online services provided by third parties.

As Directors of a company, note that there are legal obligations to do things like file accounts and keep other records up to date, and associated fees that are payable, and potential fines for not doing so.

Personal matters

It is important to bear in mind that taking on a role managing a club like BLUF will almost inevitably have an impact on how you interact with people at events, even non-BLUF ones.

As a public face of the club, people will approach you with thanks, with complaints, with questions and suggestions. You may find this exasperating at times, if you are just hoping to spend time with friends relaxing, but to an extent, you will always be 'on duty,' and if you don't want to engage with someone, or talk shop, you will have to be as polite as you can, sometimes through gritted teeth. It can at times make it a little harder to simply relax and enjoy yourself. But it will not be helpful if you fly off the handle at anyone. "I met the BLUF Director in Berlin and he was the rudest person I've ever come across" is not something you want to see on social media, nor is the suggestion that you have tried to throw your weight around, "Don't you know who I am?"

You may also find that, at times, you are called upon to take action against someone you know, perhaps quite well. If, for instance they breach a BLUF guideline, or post something inappropriate that may reflect badly on the club.

There will be some people who will expect that, as they know you, you will automatically take their side in a dispute, regardless of anything else. Others may invoke their closeness to me, or to our founder, to try and persuade you that we would have done something different, or that they deserve better treatment. Needless to say, this can be awkward, and you will need a certain amount of thick skin, and to try and act always in a way which is as transparently fair as possible.

Some aspects of the current site are designed to make this easier; if your profile is reported, for example, you can't resolve the complaint yourself in the management side. Nor can you approve your own photos.

People will snipe from the sidelines; or post "Remember when BLUF was about ..." every time you dare mention something they disapprove of. They'll often do this anonymously, or in the knowledge you don't follow them; and others, well-meaning, will forward you messages, asking "Did you see what X was saying about you?" My advice is to ignore these; some people have no empathy, and hope that criticising you to their coterie of friends will make them look good. Leave them to their playground.

It is likely that, at times, you will need to seek wise counsel; in the first instance, this should probably be from other people on the management team, but you whomever you ask, you will always need to be mindful of privacy and data protection.

BLUF is just one of various communities I have run online over the last thirty-five years. I am firmly convinced that tone is set from the top.

There may be times, like the middle of a social media storm about something or other, when it is very tempting to fire off a quick reply to something, or to be brutally frank with people. You may feel, in the middle of something, that you dread opening Instagram, or BlueSky or your mailbox, because of some ongoing drama.

Take your time. Close the laptop and go for a walk. Take a day, or more. It's far better to take time and post a considered response, and reach out to people for more information, than to react immediately.

ENDS.