

Tips for Using Social Media for Campaigns

Types of Social Media:

- **Facebook:** acts as a filtering process, prioritises “paid for content”;
- **Twitter:** Chronological feed, changes quickly; private messages: more personal, builds goodwill;
- **WhatsApp:** replacing email in the modern world of mobile smart phones, secure instant messaging for groups.

Other Forms:

- **Email Lists:** can be stronger than social media. Emails are good if you have something 1) specific, 2) simple and 3) clear you want the respondent to do – eg sign a petition. Text messaging and emails “like a postcard” – are easily read by anyone looking, therefore not secure.
- **MailChimp:** Mass-mail-out tool, with tools to improve the image of send-outs, get statistics on engagement (whether email opened), and free up to 2,000 emails.
- **Tumblr:** between Twitter and a Blog

What is the Purpose of Social Media for Campaigns?

- Spreading the word beyond your existing group or contacts;
- Acts as a complementary tool/ an aid/ add-on, to existing ways of working;
- Keeps communication/ dialogue going in between big events;
- Awareness raising, not so much an action tool.

Social Media: What is it Good For?

- Asking for things, such as help or stuff. Lots of people out there with skills who want to help but don't know how. Using something like twitter to ask for things, brings people in, they become invested, and helps general community-building;
- Can get stuff for free; Contributing and tapping into a broader knowledge-base, by asking Questions, eg for information;
- Encourages reciprocity and people helping each other
- The success of a tweet/ post will measured by “how much a subject is on people's minds”; this is a variable can't be planned for.

Twitter

Some tips for Twitter & Tweets:

- **Hashtags:** Tweeting in relation to things going on in the world (using hashtags) can get you into a wider audience (eg #elections). Sharing stories along common themes, and interact with different people (eg hastagging - #[theme]). Hashtags – 1) organise discussions, 2) bring people in who may not have known about you before;
- **Tagging in Tweets:** Tagging too many people, too often in photos, etc to promote tweets becomes spammy after a while. Always think: “What's it like being on the other side (of the action)?”
- **Timing:** good times to tweet are: 1) later in the workday, mid-afternoon/ evening (people waiting to go home), 2) first thing on weekend mornings (people in bed, with time).

- **Tweeting @EvilCorporation:** The tweet will appear in their mentions, so they will be aware of it. May get their attention if there is a big Retweet. Some corporations are more susceptible to negative social media, especially if they rely on social media for their marketing.
- **Getting Attention:** Issues may be major for the campaign, but a blip on everyone else’s radar. Need to get people’s attention with emotive language, and/or use it as a conversational medium.
- **Twitter Insights:** analytics which can be used to see when the best time of the day to tweet, who is online when, popularity of tweets, Tweet Activity, etc. Click on “Analytics” in menu options >



Tools for Twitter:

- **Share Link Generator:** People can tweet link to politicians, to get them to commit to things
- **Organising:** programmes like Hootsweet and Tweetdeck allow you to schedule tweets into the future, however cannot tag people in photos using scheduling.

Creating Tweets with Maximum Impact

The diagram illustrates the components of a tweet. On the left, three boxes labeled 'Tweeting @', 'Hashtags #', and 'Link' have arrows pointing to the corresponding parts of a tweet from 'SE LDN Sisters Uncut @selsistersuncut'. The tweet text is: 'Why we're occupying a building to protest @lb_southwark's housing policies #NowhereToGo sistersuncut.org/2016/06/29/sum ...'. Below the text is an image macro of a banner that reads: 'HOW CAN SHE LEAVE IF THERE'S NOWHERE TO GO'. To the left of the image macro, a box contains the text: 'Words – 140 characters' and 'Picture - 1,000x500 pixels, or similar ratio'. A bracket groups these two boxes and points to the image macro with the number '2'.

Words:

- Distil key bits of information into 140 characters;
- Victories & Positive stories are well received because they stand out from doom-and-gloom stories;
- Should keep a balance between plain text (black) & clickable bits (blue) so the message is readable and stands out – suggested clickables: 1x#hashtag, 1xlink;
- Can use ALL CAPS headers to grab attention, such as “BREAKING: xxxxxx”;
- Message should have an “internal logic”, ie it should make sense on its own, without wider explanation.

Images:

- Strong images, with high contrast, stark – gets peoples' attention;
- Pictures increase profile of a tweet - 2:1 (photo:words), jump out;
- Images which tell the whole story, as well as having major contrast, are the best;
- Can add up to 4 images in a tweet, stacked;
- Can put text in the photo, eg short quote, to tell more of the story;
- Can reuse images for different tweets but best to wait a few days.

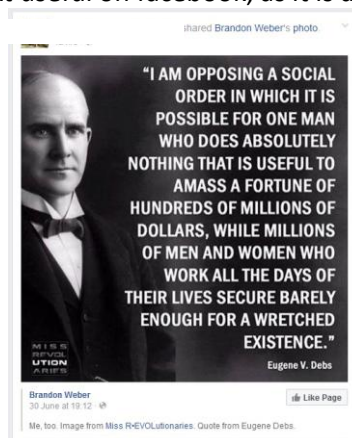
Facebook

Tips for Facebook:

- **Text:** Text with the post should be short, as people have low attention spans on social media;
- **Videos:** links to youtube videos do not show so well on Facebook and can't be shared. Best to upload your video to Facebook direct. Videos should be 3 minutes tops, 90 seconds is best;
- **Events:** Cannot boost Events, as FB expects you to have a personal connection with the people you are inviting. However, put an Events link into a post on a blog, or FB post, and share/ boost it that way.
- **Hits & Boosting:** For example in the FB analysis stats, Organic refers to normal hits, and Paid refers to hits after boosting post. To boost a post, you pay on a scale (av. £10-20) to FB, and appears as an advert to a wider audience.



- **Images:** Images with lots of text useful on facebook, as it is a picture/ visual medium



WhatsApp

Immediate, short, peer-to-peer, encrypted messaging. Good organising tool for small group with a specific purpose, eg local campaign working group. Can share images from an event (eg demo), and create subgroups. Not a generic tool for a mass audience.