



HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY





PRO-TIP: Most issues simply don't rise to the level of an organic campaign that will go viral on social media. Congratulations if you have one but, otherwise, it takes strategic planning, targeting and creativity to make social media have an impact.

CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

- Social media is just busy work unless it has a specific strategy and purpose.
- It can be a powerful tool on its own or part of a larger communications strategy when it engages a legislator's real constituents.
- There is so much information overload that you have to be creative and specific to break through the noise and have an impact.
- Define what impact you are trying to have and make sure your tactics are aligned with the desired outcome.

A MESSAGE THAT RESONATES

- Why does your issue matter to the broader public or at least to an audience big enough to mobilize in support of the issue?
- Long, complicated and boring explanations on social media just won't cut it.
- Think in terms of how your issue affects the everyday life of the people you want to rally to your cause.
- Remember there are three phases to the messaging arc: awareness (education), persuasion (explanation) and activation.

HOW WILL YOU FIND PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT YOUR MESSAGE?

- Data and targeting. The amount of targeting data available is staggering.
- "Data analytics" is a popular buzz term in the digital world. Make sure you are dealing with someone who actually understands what it means and how to find and use the right data for your issue.
- Build a "look-alike audience." Based on data you may have, or what you know about your issue, a good data analyst can build a target audience that "likely" would care about your issue.

PAID DIGITAL ADVERTISING TO DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

- Very few issues can build significant engagement organically. Most likely you need to find those people who will care rather than them finding you.
- Mobile, desktop and video ads are great tools to drive people to social media.
- Social media is then the best platform to engage people in the issue and ultimately get them to take an action on your behalf.

DOES THE LEGISLATOR YOU'RE TRYING TO IMPACT CARE?

- Remember that legislators respond differently to various forms of outreach. This is why your social media strategy must define what you need to accomplish.
- Social media engagement is not the end goal. It is merely part of the process to get a constituent to make direct contact with his/her legislator.
- Do some research to find out what moves the legislator. Is it phone calls, emails, tweets, letters or people who show up at town hall meetings? Your activation goal from social media is to get a person to take the action that will have the greatest impact on the legislator.

DON'T FORGET TO STAY IN TOUCH

- Be sure to thank everyone who takes an action on your behalf.
- Remember that we live in a fast-paced world and there is great competition for everyone's attention.
- Once you get social media engagement, make sure you keep it with fresh content and updates on your issue.
- Find creative ways to keep your audience engaged once the issue of the day is wrapped up. There will always be another issue and the best source of activation is going to be those people who have already done something for you.

REMEMBER: Effective social media requires a strategy. By properly using data to build a target audience and creatively messaging that audience, you can build your social media engagement. Through engagement you move people to take specific actions that will impact legislators.

