



BY FREEDOM FOR ALL AMERICANS

Social Media Strategy

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In addition to your email list, making more public, visible noise about legislation you care about – whether you're stridently opposed or firmly supportive – is critical for mobilizing your base to take action. While hundreds of social media platforms exist, the two that are most useful for directing action, most widespread, and most straightforward are Facebook and Twitter. When you consider any piece of external communication from your campaign, be sure to put thought into how you're blasting this information on your social media channels.

You're In Control

Digital and social media have many unique advantages, which is why they're so important to successful campaigns. Perhaps the greatest strength of these tools, though, is the control you have over them. Unlike paid media, which is influenced by budget and prices, or earned media, which is influenced by the news cycle and the attitudes of reporters or media outlets, you have near-total control over when and how to share your messages digitally. You (or someone at your organization) write the emails, draft the social content and draft the blog posts. YOU are in control of your digital narrative—and in turn, the message your supporters hear from you each day. Harness this to build a compelling, effective digital effort that fits within your larger theory of change and bolsters the other facets of your work.

Digital Exists to Strengthen Everything Else

Nine times out of ten, your campaign won't be won online – it will be won in the legislature, at the ballot, or through court action. Your digital program – while vital to running a successful, modern campaign – will be a supplement to your traditional grassroots efforts; it won't replace them. If you find yourself in a place where all your campaign is thinking about is digital and social media, you should take a step back and make sure you're still on track to achieve the change you're seeking. But of course, this doesn't mean digital isn't important. In fact, another unique factor that sets digital apart is that nearly every program in your campaign, from field to communications to fundraising, can be strengthened or supplemented by digital action. Whether it's online fundraising, remote digital phone banking, digital exists to help make reaching your overall campaign goals even easier.

Do More With Less

Chances are that you won't have capacity – or the need – to make use of every shiny new social media channel available. It's most important, then, to choose a few platforms that fit your strategy best, and then execute those platforms very well. Having the time and attention to funnel specifically into just a few can transform your social media from something you're doing just to have into something you're doing with intention and drive. When you're deciding, be sure to consider (1) your audience (If you're specifically targeting young people, perhaps Tumblr or Snapchat are good investments in time, whereas if you need older users, Facebook or Twitter may be best), and (2) what you want your audience to do (if your goal is to get people to click to a website, Facebook or Twitter statistically drive the most traffic, whereas if you're working to build brand awareness or affinity, other platforms like Instagram may be stronger).

Consider Frequency of Posts

No one likes to be barraged by posts from the same user, so think strategically about what you're posting and why you're posting it. Find the middle ground between posting something just because you feel like you haven't in awhile and posting too little. On Facebook, a good rule of thumb is 1 to 2 posts per day when not much is going on (2 to 3 during active, high-content campaigns). On Twitter, posting every few hours is effective, but during breaking news, or when your organization is essentially reporting and creating new information, you can and should tweet more frequently.

Think Visually

Almost universally, social media is image-driven, so when you're considering content to push out, pay attention to the image or graphic you're pairing with the information. You're almost always going to elicit higher engagement, stronger brand identity, and a greater number of shares or retweets if you include a photo or image.

Include a Clear Ask (Just One!)

Treat social posts like emails: Be careful not to dilute the impact of your posts by including more than one action step. Each post should be one complete thought, and lead to one complete action, with the theory of change firmly reflected. Think: Why are you posting this article, or this graphic? What's the occasion, and what do you want your followers to do? Language like, "Read this article to learn more about our priorities for pushing forward this year:" can go a long way.

Use Storytelling to Drive Momentum

Human beings understand things best when they're framed as a story, and even more so when they can relate to the characters in the story. Stories of real people impacted by the issue you're working on, and other real-life examples of folks who care about it, are a great way to help you create your moment and keep your campaign engaging. For example, the story of a parent of an LGBT child who is advocating to update the laws to protect their child is a powerful story that many people – including parents of non-LGBT kids – can relate to. Your storytelling efforts can and should be reflected across all platforms of your digital program, including email, social media and blog.

Your News is More than Just a Press Release

Digital provides an excellent set of tools to spread awareness about what you're campaign is doing, to keep generating buzz and attention long after you've sent your press release. Thanks to digital, the life of your press release goes well beyond the moment you hit send. You can keep pushing out content - and generating momentum - for days after. Below we've outlined an example of how much content you can generate from that one press conference.

Example: Business Leader Press Conference

In the process of preparing for the press conference, your campaign will create a host of content you can use across digital platforms. Be sure to ask for (or take) a photo of each speaker, between those photos and their remarks you have enough to create:

- A blast email from one of your speakers encouraging others to get involved
- Social media posts featuring pictures and quotes from 2-3 of the strongest speakers
- A page on your website that's dedicated to the stories of business leaders who support your cause
- Later, after your press conference has received media coverage, you can re-post that coverage, too, for even more hits.