**14 Top Tools and Tactics to Win Organizing Campaigns in the Digital Age on a Limited Budget**

Social Movement Technologies

May 29, 2013

Notes from webinar. Full recording of webinar available shortly at [www.socialmovementtechnologies.org](http://www.socialmovementtechnologies.org)

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Agenda: next 90 minutes

* Introductions
* 3 important tools: texting, twitter, and on-line petitions
* 11 important digital how-tos
* Quick survey questions to help us prioritize what’s next to support you
* Opportunity to register for limited number of free assessment Technical Assistance sessions

Social Movement Technologies

* Movement non-profit organization founded early 2013
* Mission: **help organizing groups ramp up on social and mobile technologies to activate and broaden their base and win campaigns. Digital organizing how-to’s *by* organizers *for* organizers.**
* How: (1) online training (2) Q&A Group Coaching office hours (3) flexible retainer contracts
* This webinar: jumping off point to do your own experimentation and learning--in-depth in future webinars

**#1 Mobile to ramp up organizing**

* + dramatically expand ability to communicate during a mass organizing action--within a leadership team, and with action participants
  + dramatically expand ability to *escalate the action instantly.*
  + instantly capture key contact info from action participants--100% accurate, no data-entry
  + instantly poll members or ask for help during critical moments
  + significantly ramp up #s of members placing calls to targets at key moments
  + world of apps expanding rapidly in very interesting ways for organizations (access to member info and communication within a closed group, e.g. alum groups)

The 2 reasons mobile is key now

* + **#1: Everyone has a cell phone on them now**: 87% American adults have a cell phone, 45% of adults have smartphone; 38% of email now opened on a mobile device
  + **#2: Everyone reads their text messages, half within 5 minutes**: 98% current open rate on text messages (versus 1-7% email); more than 50% of all messages opened within 5 minutes

Mobile Use in Organizing:

a few examples

* + **NAACP** [This is my vote](http://www.thisismyvote.org/) GOTV campaign
  + **The Bus Federation** youth organizing Montana/Colorado: Organizers texting leaders indiv or as a group (Google Voice)--calls on campus posters go directly to organizers' cell phone without listing cell #. Texts directly from organizer--Free; for GOTV blasts participate in bulk contract with coalition for 18K messages [Flyer](https://www.dropbox.com/s/gtk26attmkdxdq7/The%20Wolfpack.pdf)
  + **United NY**
  + **Occupy NY**: Group text alerts with no ability to RSVP/no polling (Celly--ten to hundreds in groups)
  + **Immigrant Rights movement** best practice example: [home page](http://reformimmigrationforamerica.org/) leads you right to [opt-in](http://reformimmigrationforamerica.org/lets-get-started.html?action_code=FgxRWxYUOVIKQV0YA0gD&td=VVHRTtwwEPwVK08gXYKdS3Lk-tKKB6D0WqkUtVKpLMfZS1Y4dmQ7VFD137u5C4L6yTs7M94d_0lgUGiSbdIra1X_PjiNygzuEQawMYLurTOuQwiZ812ySvboQ7RqANJcHTTsq2sxIvWecSSUV5znVI29szPrvOJrXm2KYkNgAyGm2tmodEwjHmwI9tCiBx3l5M0Rkd2E7XKVjTLGxaVyY5SPc89OxqyS4CavF5swNf-V0ZGx3KOBkGx__iIEOzuNcu_8IA_286Dag4og2_mBnIt1ystU1EyU2_J8WxSvDBylaltPtLrOBK8ykdfZG4cpgJeqo-CIsnPPaIy6Pyszzk52SqONLvTv2LWNYBgB7Mst-8EElxtZnrIP42jgOzQ3GEmz3mRrwU5urr7tPq2YwQdgl6Af3Cm76L0b4P4srzKeiULwrCrZrdorjy-6eaJejZGmmZcUFLuZaEGF4YkaaI-711Wua-BFqnndpEJAnqqqblP-5sw_TmEtH_4ZfrOAEdhHh5bdBTb3iDK4djKwkI4ZJ3__AQ)
  + **California Nurse’s Association**: negotiations updates, calls to action

How it works & functionality levels

* + people have to opt-in (double opt-in for fundraising)
  + shortcode is the # (eg 27138) --shared to lower cost; pick keywords ($25/month/keyword)--differentiates the group/campaign--this is entered in the text field when people respond: "Text Michigan to 267263"
  + functionality spectrum and some recognized providers:

**Tier 1**: free text messaging to small group (turnout/updates/urgent appeals/instant leadership group communication); [Google Voice](http://www.google.com/googlevoice/about.html) up to 10 at once; [Celly](http://cel.ly/) --hundreds, less personal than Google Voice

**Tier 3**: highest priced, large volume, strategic support, high functionality e.g. enter zip code to be connected to your Senator ([Mobile Commons](http://www.mobilecommons.com/npo/) or [Revolution Messaging](http://revolutionmessaging.com/))--starts at $1K/month usually; 40K messages/month.

Mobile Functionality Levels

**Tier 2**: typical: $25/month includes one keyword, plus $.03 - $.05 cents per message, outgoing and responses. Opt-in list = 500; costs $15+ to send out message, plus some for responses/phonecalls made.

* **RSVP** requests to larger groups than 10 at a time: [CallFire](https://www.callfire.com/) / [EzTexting](http://www.eztexting.com/), others
* **Surveying** (IVR=Interactive Voice Response)
* **Voice Broadcast** to send recorded message
* **Call tracking** (How many people go on to place a call to an elected official...) additional $.05/minute. Can buy local area phone number ($1-2/month) that is forwarded to target’s number for tracking.
* **Fundraising**: [MobileCause](http://www.mobilecause.com/) ($100/month starting plan)

**#2: Twitter Campaigns**

Twitter is a great way to launch, or promote an ongoing campaign. It opens up your audience to a much wider spectrum of allies, than internal communications could.

Twitter Campaigns

With intentional *choreography*, you can accomplish a lot.

***Choreography*** is the process of facilitating interpersonal connections across distances; more specifically, **#Hashtags** are the nodes, for participatory interaction.

Here's sample tweet, with two common progressive hashtags #1u #p2.

More Specific Hashtags

Hashtags can be made for more specific campaign, and labor [event] hashtags.

**Recognize Any?**

#SaveMI

#ForwardOnClimate

#RobinHoodTax (National Nurse United tax)

#WalmartStrikers

#FastFoodFWD

* **Tracking/Measuring A Topic  
  through #Hashtags**
* When enough tweets are composed, using a common #HashTag, that hashtag may trend.
* Sport events, MTV shows, Holidays are often common trending Hashtags, but you can also make your own events trend.
* How? Where? <http://trendsmap.com/>

ThunderClap

* ThunderClap is a free web tool
* Thunderclap allows you to promote a well timed, controlled Twitter (and or Facebook) post to kick your offline campaign forward.
* You can create your own ruptures, or even disrupt an opposition's network zones!

http://ThunderClap.it

Depending on size your network, you can set a goal of how many people need to \*donate\* their account (which translates into social capital), before your campaign can be launched (at whatever time you choose).

ThunderClap may require a base, but they also help campaigns grow in size.

#ForwardOnClimate

Sample tweet of #CCSS courtesy @AFTunion

#TwitterBomb

#TwitterBomb is when you subvert intentionally the messaging of the opposition. It is similar to a photobomb, where you add something, so that the message becomes ironic, funny or ineffective

More advanced Webinars will cover this.

If Done Right  
Twitter Can Be Very Empowering!

**#3: Use online petitions to pressure targets and build supporter lists**

Thousands of small successful examples.

Higher profile example: Dump Donald Trump campaign: [Color of Change campaign](http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/06/us-donaldtrump-idUSTRE74485T20110506) [SignOn Macy's petition](http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/urge-macys-to-dump-donald)

**Some well-known petition sites**

* [SignOn.org](http://petitions.moveon.org/) (came out of MoveOn)
* [Change.org](http://www.change.org/) (no longer just progressive, no address required)
* [Color of Change](http://colorofchange.org/)
* [CREDOaction](http://credoaction.com/)
* [SumOfUS](http://sumofus.org/): targets companies specifically
* [Avaaz](http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/) (international--21 million members)
* [Coworker](http://www.coworker.org/) (non-union workplace issues) [Walmart worker petition](http://www.coworker.org/petitions/hire-back-my-coworker-cayt-lawley)
* Do your own--host on your own site--e.g. [Presente.org](http://presente.org/)

**How petition sites work**

* Draft petition; goes out to small group (e.g. 1000) of petition site's past signers--you can specify target audience
* You promote to your membership (ideally first to prime the pump)
* If petition has high signage rate, petition site will circulate more broadly, more resources can be assigned by petition site entity
* You keep NEW signers
* The magic happens when petitions are shared: can be a powerful list-building tool

Pros & cons to using petitions

**Pros**

* List development!
* Tap into petition site's existing petition signers to get things started
* Good for more complex/nuanced story/message
* Easy activism--low on the activist engagement ladder, so good way to get people involved for the first time

To use online petitions effectively

* Clear Theory of Change: "If we do X, they will do Y." Dump Donald Trump example
* Narrative that is compelling to broader audience [NPR story on viral petitions](http://www.npr.org/2012/03/16/148556371/petitions-are-going-viral-sometimes-to-great-success)
* Good outreach plan: lists, allies & their lists, media outreach
* Headlines are critical. Write 25. Test. Use the best. Best guide: [Upworthy](http://www.upworthy.com/you-will-not-believe-how-easy-it-is-to-make-something-go-viral?g=2)
* Make sharing easy w/ links/icons
* Ask your existing list signers to take next step -> share on Facebook (esp) but also Twitter, by email. [ActionSprout](http://actionsprout.com/pricing/) ($25/month for up to 5,000 FB fans) is built solely to amplify Facebook sharing of advocacy actions and build email/FB lists in the process.
* Identify influencers and people with their own audiences - reach out to them directly, through tags in FB and twitter messages. ([attentive.ly](https://attentive.ly/) to ID social media influencers, or part of [NationBuilder](http://nationbuilder.com/) CRM (cheaper than attentive.ly)

**#4 How to scare companies: target social media soft spots**

What companies care about:

* brand image
* customer experience
* bottom line
* personal image (neighbors)
* ability to recruit new employees

Corp targets have gotten more, not less, sensitive to social media

Research targets:

* Do they have social media accounts?
* Do the CEOs or employees have accounts?
* Public email addresses?
* A pattern to email addresses?

Develop a Theory of Change: "If we do X, then Y will happen."

Digital pressure strategies that work

small scale examples

* **Yelp** for supermarket/retail. New York Communities for Change and RWSU (Retail Workers Union): Store boycott, Asset that NYCC/RWSU had: large tech savvy list, on-the-ground campaign to go with
* **target’s phone # on visuals** --great also for small targets, a couple thousand calls off FB--pepper spray cop from occupy
* **very targeted FB ad campaign** (to one zipcode)

Digital pressure strategies that work

larger scale

* FB ad targeted at Aetna employees during healthcare "Aetna killed this person"
* Coordinated tweeting (e.g. Twitter Thunderclap): UNITEHERE! [Hyatt Hurts](http://www.hyatthurts.org/) campaign
* Petitions: Dump Donald Trump [Macy's petition](http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/urge-macys-to-dump-donald); twitter campaign by Color of Change--got Groupon to stop Apprentice site on-line ads.
* [Occupy the Board Room letter campaign](http://posts.occupytheboardroom.org/post/51193)--NYCC got email addresses of top Wall Street bankers. 7000 amazing letters. tons of media about it.

**#5 Find your members on social media**

**Survey your membership**

* What social media channels are they using?
* At what time of day? Tweets and FB posts have short shelf-life
* How many access internet only via smartphone? How many don’t access internet but have cell phones?

**How to survey**

* Ask in person 1:1 (integrate into other 1:1)
* Survey during other meetings/events through show of hands
* Phone survey
* If have email addresses, run social media profile (e.g. attentive.ly, NationBuilder)

**#6 And meet them where they are using the right tool in the right way**

**One example: different ways of using FB**

* Open facebook groups for neighborhood chapters (NYCforC)
* Secret facebook groups for union negotiations
* FB events, [NYCC example](https://www.facebook.com/events/243254762486329/)
* FB open page w/diversity of shared family photos for older union crowd, e.g. [Local 179 Plumbers & Pipefitters Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/UA179?fref=ts)
* organizers friending people on their personal FB pages as more personal approach
* [ActionSprout](http://actionsprout.com/) to ramp up FB action and list-building. Sierra Club [“WTZuck” one of Sierra Club’s highest-profile Facebook campaigns of all time, still unfolding as we speak](http://actionsprout.com/sierra-club-actionsprout-winning/)--targeting Mark Zuckerberg re: FWD.us support for oil drilling in the arctic.[Home Defenders League FB page](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Home-Defenders-League/119245791466456?ref=br_tf)

**#7 Make 2-way engagement a cornerstone**

* Posts with real questions to elicit comments that are meaningful

[Sierra Club FB page](https://www.facebook.com/SierraClub); [FIRM](https://www.facebook.com/fair.immigration.reform.movement) FB page

* Photo ID challenges for event group photos (advantages of tagging)
* Variety of posts--e.g. retirement announcements, health & safety tips, relevant humor, along with political--Mix it up
* To make this work:
  + Active moderators!
  + Recruiting volunteer moderators
  + Put guidelines in place, for posts and comments [The Humane Society](https://www.facebook.com/humanesociety/info)
* Contact us to brag about your FB page--we're looking for examples of high engagement

**#8 Build Social Media Registration & Training Into Every Event**

A membership base that is ready-to-go with online knowledge can bring a campaign’s visibility to a far greater audience.

**#9 Integrate Digital to Expand Event Impact**

This is a great tool in our organizers’ event toolkit – a little bit goes a long way!

**#10 MAKE IT EASY FOR ALLIES TO ACTIVATE THEIR MEMBER BASE TO SUPPORT** **YOUR CAMPAIGN**

**1. Make it super easy to share**

Customize landing pages and emails with good sharing links & calls to action.

**2. Drive consistent messaging in large coalition mobilization efforts**

* use hashtags (#WorkersRising)
* campaign site, or at least campaign landing page linked in emails designed to be forwarded by allies (domain, WP site <$100 to set up)
* FB event page with broader messaging
* tweet suggestions
* shareable FB posts

**3. Institution-neutral branding**

* Immigration fight-- neutral branding, people can take action w/out being tied to an organization: [keepingfamiliestogether.net](http://www.keepingfamiliestogether.net/)--a storytelling web site.

**#11 Develop a Meaningful Narrative**

Increase buy-in and impact with a strategic and compelling narrative frame.

**#12 Use Photos and Images to Be Louder Online**

Stuff you can do right now --for free -- to get more Facebook likes and grow your reach.

Cost of Full Page Ad in the NY Times:

$64,575. Seen by about 500,000 people. Some fraction will go to your website.

A good meme, even from a small org can reach almost as many people **for free.**

To get more shares, put your petition, fundraising, or action links in the description of an image post on Facebook. Post engaging photos that invoke emotions that make people share them.

**Tips for sharing photos on Facebook, Reddit, Tumblr, and Google+**

* Best size for maximum compatibility is around 400 x 400 – 600 x 600 px square
* Test how it looks in other people's feeds by logging in on another account and seeing what it looks like. If it doesn't look great, delete, resize, and re-post
* Images that go viral **don't need to be high quality or taken on a fancy camera**. But they usually are some combination of:
  + Funny
  + Shocking
  + Informative
  + and Timely

**Emotions that get people to share according to recent NY Times study:**

* Anger
* Awe
* Anxiety

**How the heck do you add text to photos like that?**

* If you have it, use Photoshop or Adobe Illustrator
* If not, never fear. On a Mac just use Preview, on a PC you can use Paint
* Or use an easy online editor like <http://imgur.com> (very easy to use, has a social element, makes photos very easy to share) or <http://pixlr.com> (more editing options.)
* For super fast and easy editing use <http://QuickMeme.com> to add bold “meme” text over any photo or solid color background just use the “Poster” function in “Make a Meme”

**One last awesome tip...**

* Integrate your email strategy with your social media and photo sharing strategy. When you send an email out to supporters [include a mysterious link](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=505460999521340&set=pb.418775708189870.-2207520000.1370176711.&type=3&theater) that invites people to click and then takes them through to a photo on your Facebook page that you’d like them to share.
* You should also include sharing buttons in your emails. I recommend using really big ones like Upworthy does. It takes learning a little bit of HTML but it’s worth it. A good strategy is to ask your supporters to take an action and then follow up asking them to share the page, photo, etc. with others.

**#13 Cultivate On-Line Influencers**

**Identify them**:

* Corporate Accountability International [McDonald's campaign](http://www.lettertomcdonalds.org/) against childhood obesity.
* people who talk about your target on-line--in blogs or on twitter
* not necessary that they have huge following. A celebrity might have a big audience but isn't necessarily influential on your issue or with your target.
* ability to reach target
* positioned as an organizing and/or thought leader on your issue/in the community. They might blog, write opinion pieces in newspaper, have on the ground leadership roles
* [practical how-to guide for ID'ing](http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2012/06/05/how-to-identify-relevant-online-influencers-using-free-tools/); [Ideas for reaching out to/engaging general online influencers](http://venturebeat.com/2012/09/12/14-strategies-for-finding-and-leveraging-major-online-influencers/)

Example: Josh Eidelson on Labor. [Twitter](https://twitter.com/josheidelson)

**Cultivate** these bloggers and tweeters just as you would a print editorial board or reporter.

* Develop a list and communicate your story to them.
* Make yourself available on-line for their questions.
* Feed them good visuals—especially photos.

ID & cultivate on-line influencers

already in your followership

**Paid options** to match your list with social media profiles (attentive.ly) or NationBuilder ($29 for up to 5000 emails, could do just one month to ID to social media members)

**Hootsuite good tool for monitoring influencers**.

**Grow influencers from your social media followers**

Give them tools, support, feedback, messages that can be used/shared, insight into goals/strategy, special events, insider news for influencers, webinars/hangouts, dvance notice of campaigns, events

[Fast Food Forward](http://www.fastfoodforward.org/en/) Tweets out the journalists, follows accounts, created personal relationship with Josh Eidelson & others

**#14 Build a powerful contact database to drive multi-channel campaigns**

* **Relentlessly collect emails and cell phone numbers** from members and allies
* **Get a CRM in place**--Constituent Relationship Management tool. Be ready to spend $240/yr (NationBuilder minimum) to $2400/yr (Salsa minimum). Can’t do without it. MailChimp and Constant Contact aren't enough. Salesforce free (but)---
* **Email sign-up front and center on web page** (just email and possibly name or fname)--pop-ups starting to be used (e.g. [Upworthy](http://www.upworthy.com/))
* **Opt-in** on web page (immigration example) and in emails to build phone messaging list (opt-in legal requirement); activate stewards/leaders on this
* **Automate email/cell collection** through text-in during events
* **Build accuracy & segmentation** by inviting members by email to correct their contact info and preferences

**How can we support your organizing?**

**www.socialmovementtechnologies.org**

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