

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

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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](#) 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](#)
- **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](#) leads you right to [opt-in](#)
- **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](#) up to 10 at once; [Celly](#) --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](#) or [Revolution Messaging](#))--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](#) / [EzTexting](#), 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](#) (\$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](#)

[SignOn Macy's petition](#)

Some well-known petition sites

- [SignOn.org](#) (came out of MoveOn)
- [Change.org](#) (no longer just progressive, no address required)
- [Color of Change](#)
- [CREDOaction](#)
- [SumOfUS](#): targets companies specifically
- [Avaaz](#) (international--21 million members)
- [Coworker](#) (non-union workplace issues) [Walmart worker petition](#)
- Do your own--host on your own site--e.g. [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](#)
- Good outreach plan: lists, allies & their lists, media outreach
- Headlines are critical. Write 25. Test. Use the best. Best guide: [Upworthy](#)
- 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](#) (\$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](#) to ID social media influencers, or part of [NationBuilder](#) 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](#) campaign
- Petitions: Dump Donald Trump [Macy's petition](#); twitter campaign by Color of Change--got Groupon to stop Apprentice site on-line ads.
- [Occupy the Board Room letter campaign](#)--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](#)
- FB open page w/diversity of shared family photos for older union crowd, e.g. [Local 179 Plumbers & Pipefitters Facebook page](#)
- organizers friending people on their personal FB pages as more personal approach
- [ActionSprout](#) 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](#)--targeting Mark Zuckerberg re: FWD.us support for oil drilling in the arctic. [Home Defenders League FB page](#)

#7 Make 2-way engagement a cornerstone

- Posts with real questions to elicit comments that are meaningful [Sierra Club FB page](#); [FIRM](#) 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](#)
- 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: keepingfamielsttogether.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](#) 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](#) 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; Ideas for reaching out to/engaging general online influencers](#)

Example: Josh Eidelson on Labor. [Twitter](#)

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, advance notice of campaigns, events

[Fast Food Forward](#) 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](#))
- **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
860.306.7447