THE
MOST AMAZING
ONLINE ORGANIZING GUIDE

EVER*

(well, it's the best one we can make right now)

*A practical handbook for community organizers
who want to leverage social media for social change.*

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INTRODUCTION

By Green Memes
Megan Kelley & Joe Solomon

Dear friends,

Megan Kelley and I (Joe Solomon) first had the idea for this guide as we were working together this past winter in the hollers of West Virginia to support groups fighting mountaintop removal. We were volunteering with groups like Coal River Mountain Watch and RAMPS, helping them grow their Facebook pages, make memes, and generally break through the social media noise barrier. And we thought, you know, shouldn't the kinds of social media skills we were sharing be available to all the groups fighting for justice everywhere?

And yet there wasn't really an all-in-one resource we could point to. There wasn't something lean, and packed with the kind of practical strategies and tested tactics that you could point community organizers towards to help them become online organizing all-stars. And so some starry night in the woods (when big ideas are apt to come), we thought, well, maybe we could help pull something together. And soon after we took a leap of faith and made a project on Kickstarter. com to fund "the most amazing online organizing guide ever." And it took off from day one! People chipped in right away, and in the end we nearly doubled our fundraising goal. People seemed to really want such a resource.

There was no way we could write this guide alone; the "most amazing guide" is a pretty high bar to set. So we invited over a dozen of the continent's best online organizers to chip in and write various chapters. And so you'll see chapters from the pros from 350.org, Greenpeace, Peaceful Uprising, Tar Sands Blockade, and Idle No More. Our roots are in the environmental justice movement (which explains some of our original outreach) but we also stretched beyond our borders and recruited great campaigner-writers from Freedom to Marry, OpenMedia, a trainer with the New Organizing Institute, and a number of more independent voices as well.

And now that guide, with over 30 contributing writers and over a dozen chapters, is either in your hands or on your screen. And we couldn't be more grateful to everyone who helped make it happen: to the sponsors, our backers, our nugget writers, our chapters authors who went through revision after revision with us, and our friends and family who cheered us on. And to you, the reader, for putting this thing to use.

We're not sure if it's truly the most amazing guide that could be created on this topic, but we tried our darndest - and so did all our authors - and we sure hope it helps you make your campaigns even more amazing.

Keep in touch,
Joe & Megan

Megan Kelley embarked on a wild meme adventure when she co-founded Green Memes in early 2013, and has been spending way too much time on the internet (with memes and Upworthy) ever since. She can make better brownies than you can, occasionally haunts the mountains of West Virginia, and is really excited about this online organizing guide. megan@greenmemes.org

Joe Solomon is a co-founder of Green Memes, is the current Social Media Trainer for Energy Action Coalition, and is the former Social Media Coordinator for 350.org. You can find Joe living in southern West Virginia, folding origami, drinking iced coffee, writing short stories, and volunteering in the fight to end mountaintop removal. He also loves snail mail. joe@greenmemes.org

GOING BIG PICTURE:
HOW TO CRAFT A WINNING STRATEGY

By Ivan Boothe

Start here.

Drive-by actions. Slacktivism. Social media revolutions. Sometimes, it can seem like there are more examples of meaningless online activism than real social change.

So let's start with a pledge: Our objective is building movements for social impact. Clicks, likes, donations, even actual organizations are just means to that end, and it's the end toward which we're working.

Social change begins with strategy. Rarely in history have movements been truly spontaneous — nearly always, it's been the often-unseen strategic work of hundreds or even thousands of individuals. Trying, failing, and trying again, until all of a sudden it seems inevitable.

Nor are social networks new, of course — the only difference is that some of these networks are now made visible online. Strategies hashed out in the homes of workers during labor movements, black churches in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, gay bars in LGBT movements, and college campuses in student movements have plenty to say to us today.

Friendships, communities and cultural ties are the birthplaces of social justice. We rely on our connections with others to work for social change — but relationships online can mirror social injustice around race, gender, class and more. The existence of online social networks makes our job easier in some ways, but it doesn't replace the need for campaign strategy.

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "Use social media to highlight the voices of those already building the movement - stories of hope, urgency and solidarity are what motivate others to action."
> Monica Christoffels

From faxing to Facebook

Working online, it's easy to get sidetracked into focusing on the tools — the shiny object syndrome. We "need" to be on this social network, using this app, or spreading our appeals using this tool.

Activists are always using new tools creatively, but looking to past campaigns shows how strategy has always trumped technology in successful movements.

Take the fax machine. In the 1990s, it was used by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines to knit together a coalition of disparate non-governmental organizations, by Turkish pro-democracy organizers to spread a coordinated nationwide nonviolent demonstration, and by activists in New York City who jammed the fax machines of city officials responsible for bulldozing community gardens.

One tool, three strategies. In this light, "Twitter activism" or "Facebook organizing" won't be an effective plan, because it substitutes the tool for the strategy.

In addition, starting with your favorite tool will limit your campaign strategy to tactics that work with that tool — it constrains your vision, and can result in diminished effectiveness. Before we sit down at the computer, we need a good strategy.

Three secrets to developing a great strategy

As Duncan Meisel describes in the next chapter, storytelling is at the heart of social change. The aptly-named Center for Story-based Strategy has an excellent outline of storytelling applied to strategy, in which you analyze the current narrative, determine your strategy for intervention, take action, and then reflect on your results.

Chart from *The Movement Action Plan*

1. Determine your objectives

Consider what "winning" will look like — how will you know when you've won? Be as specific as you can. One technique used in the business community for setting goals is the acronym "SMART" — specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. It's good to have a bold long-term vision like ending hunger or eliminating racism, but campaigns are built around shorter-term objectives that push the movement closer to that vision. This is where you identify your allies, and undertake power mapping to determine whom your targets should be.

Example: In Bill Moyers' essay, *The Movement Action Plan*, he documents the changing objectives of the anti-nuclear movement in the 1970s and '80s, as they shift their goals from educating the public to sponsoring ballot initiatives to civil disobedience to providing alternatives.

2. Figure out what's being said

Most social justice issues have an existing narrative, or story that's being told. Take a look at the underlying assumptions of that narrative — and what other popular narratives exist that support your position. For instance, if your campaign is around a crisis in public education funding, you might counter the belief that the state is broke with the frame that everyone in the community has to work together to ensure children have quality education, and that means the wealthy need to pay their fair share.

Example: Casino-Free Philadelphia wanted to oppose two casinos opening in residential neighborhoods. The popular narrative was that casinos would provide jobs and much-needed state revenue. Casino-Free Philly reframed the debate around democracy — the bill authorizing the casinos had been passed in the middle of the night — and forced a popular vote on casinos, which they won. They replaced a belief in scarcity (the state is broke, there aren't enough jobs) with one of democracy (a community should have a say in what gets built).

3. Identify the tactics that get you to your objectives

Different campaigns call for different tools, and it's not just about which ones we choose, but how we wield them. Facebook, with its massive reach and cultural ubiquity, could be used in a variety of different ways: building

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[Nugget of Wisdom]

"You'll find that social media can quickly draw attention to where you're walking your talk… and where you're not. Keep the mission of your organization at the center of your social media use to help you stay on track."
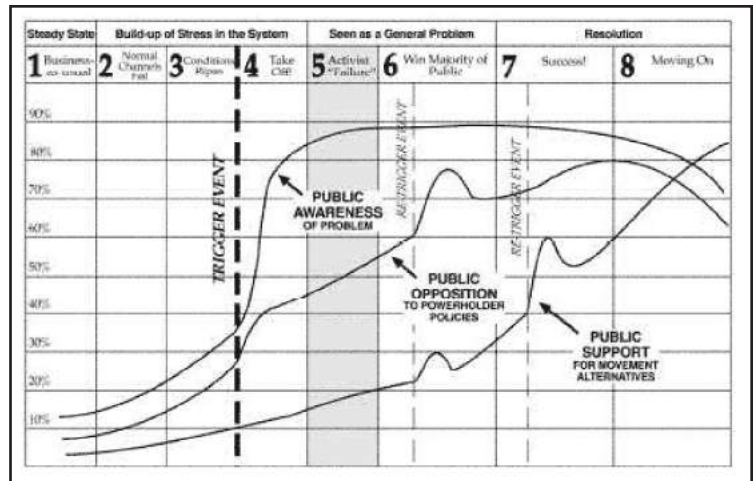
Christine Egger, @CDEgger

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communities of activists, spreading specific action items, educating the public, putting pressure on companies and elected officials, and more. But even smaller social networks can be used in different ways.

Example: ForestEthics, a Canadian and U.S. environmental coalition, was fighting against tar sands pipelines in Alberta and British Columbia. "We created a communications arc that engaged supporters. We started with easier actions like petitions then targeted actions, and moved gradually into high-threshold acts like event sign ups and donations," said Hilary Stamper, ForestEthics' online specialist. And they used social media not only to spread the action, but to tell a story — for which social media is perfect. "Tension is powerful in advocacy," said ForestEthics' Samantha Stanley. If the group had simply positioned itself as the solution, there wouldn't be much to say besides "please donate." Instead, ForestEthics planned out a "campaign story arc" to require supporters' participation to be successful. At key moments, supporters were asked for higher levels of activism: submit a public comment to the Canadian National Energy Board, speak at public hearings, and attend rallies. This meant that victories felt personal; instead of being about the organization, they were about the network — and they spread like wildfire on social media because of people's personal investments.

Elements of a great social media strategy

1. Point toward long-term change

Be sure your online organizing or digital activism components are pointing toward a larger picture. Every action should aim at a long-term goal in addition to a short-term objective, and that "line of sight" should be clear to your supporters as well. No viral marketing campaign is going to convince people to sign your petition if it's clear it won't have any real effect.

If we look back to the U.S. Civil Rights movement, there were many individual campaigns — the Montgomery bus boycott, the Nashville lunch counter sit-ins, the Freedom Rides, the voter registration drives, the March on Washington and more. In each case, organizers and strategists like Martin Luther King, Jr., Ella Baker and Bayard Rustin publicly connected the individual campaigns to the larger movement. The approach was grounded in community organizing, what Baker called "spade work" — preparing your garden to flourish in the next season.

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "One of the most valuable uses of social media is to build movements across campaign lines. On social media, you're a movement builder, not a nonprofit marketer."
> Emily Reynolds, Rising Tide Vermont

Instead of building standalone, siloed campaigns, connect each action to the larger vision — publicly — and integrate community organizing to bring supporters closer to each other and build a deeper connection to the movement. Remember that new supporters won't be ready for big actions right off the bat, and creating personal connections with existing supporters can help their learning and growth into your next dedicated activist.

2. Embrace solidarity

You're not competing with other organizations for the same donors, you're building bridges to a better future with many hands. Rising movements benefit organizations — people who are inspired to act, speak, or donate for one group are more likely to do so for a related one. And remember that ultimately, your work is about liberation, not ensuring your organization always exists — in a truly successful movement, organizations would be able to pack up shop after the last victory.

The project Upwell.us researches online conversations about marine conservation in order to

equip organizations across that movement with information to develop more strategic campaigns.

Instead of groups competing with one another for funding and supporters, Upwell's motto of "the ocean is our client" is helping frame ocean conservancy as a movement with many players, in which a rising tide of support really does raise all boats. For instance, their analysis of "shark week" revealed that despite a media focus on "shark terror," much of the online conversation was about "sharks being awesome." With that information, marine conservation groups knew investing in social media outreach during the week would pay off — and it did, dramatically.

Use social media to become a source of movement knowledge for your cause — become content curators. Don't endlessly repeat your own talking points, or pretend you're the only group out there that cares about the issue. Share information from groups doing similar work in different places — your supporters will be both better informed and more inspired!

So do away with the scarcity model — think about building the movement, rather than just your list!
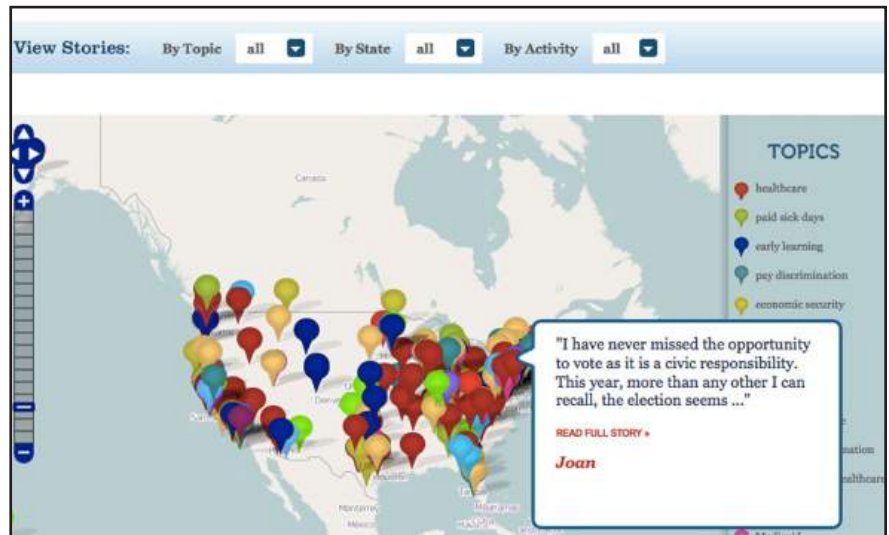
Map of member stories from MomsRising

3. Engage, don't broadcast

You have movement activists, passionate about the issue, waiting to speak in their own voice. Give them the tools to speak — craft a strategy, set up the action opportunities, and amplify emerging leaders. For instance, the organization charity:water enables people to create their own fundraising campaigns, and then features the most creative ones, like the "campaign to save/shave Cubby's beard." Goodwill scours the Internet for blogs, posts and tweets about their work and their thrift stores, and then highlights them on Facebook. Many national nonprofits encourage local members to submit photos or videos of their work, which they then spread on social media — featuring their most active supporters.

Above all, don't speak for your network. It's not "billboard media," it's social media — cultivate these social networks of change. Stories appeal to our heart, not just our brain, and shareable content with a personal story from a supporter is much more likely to go viral than another "take action now" headline.

4. Be listening, be measuring, and be agile

If you haven't reached your objectives — or it becomes clear that a win is going to be further off than you expected — how should you increase the pressure or change tactics? In addition to shifts in the popular story you're trying to change, it's important to recognize smaller wins too: if the number of supporters has increased, or new leadership has developed, or stronger networks have formed, then you're in a better place to start a subsequent campaign, even if your original goals weren't met.

For instance, MomsRising regularly solicits stories from their audience to see what issues matter to them, and then frames their work around it. MomsRising carefully measures their impact and adjusts campaigns accordingly. For instance, when they asked "please share your childcare story," there wasn't much response. So they changed the prompt to "What is your experience finding

affordable childcare?" — and got much more engagement. When supporters send in compelling stories, MomsRising works with them to hone the story and prepare it for sharing more publicly — with legislators, the media, and other potential supporters. MomsRising's network becomes its strength, not just as names on a petition but in pushing the movement forward.

Closing Note: It's the interwebs, people!

If you connect everyone to yourself, you've created a hub and spoke. You're in control, but if anything goes awry or some spokes get out of whack, a crash is going to be imminent. Instead, use online tools to build webs of activism — facilitate connections among your supporters, not just between them and you. A community of social change will be far stronger in your movement than a bunch of names on a mailing list. Go for the deep ties and the big win.

Further resources

Bill Moyer's landmark strategy book *Doing Democracy: The Movement Action Plan* gives several case studies of activists breaking down a big vision into campaigns with specific objectives. For one of the best histories of the strategy in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, check out *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*, by Charles M. Payne. For histories of successful strategic campaigns outside the United States, see the PBS documentary film and companion book *A Force More Powerful*, as well as *Globalize Liberation: How to Uproot the System and Build a Better World*, edited by David Solnit.

The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex, edited by INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, helps frame social justice work in the context of long-term movements in the United States. It will change the way you think about your strategic approach.

Need to map your network of supporters, allies and opponents? Start with *Net Gains: A Handbook for Network Builders Seeking Social Change*, a free guide edited by Peter Plastrik and Madeleine Taylor. *Building Smart Communities through Network Weaving* by Valdis Krebs and June Holley will give you a theoretical framework, while Clay Shirky's *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations* will give you some practical examples of activists who mobilized the power of networks.

For some useful analyses of how social divisions offline manifest in online social networks, see *White Flight in Networked Publics? How Race and Class Shaped American Teen Engagement with MySpace and Facebook*, by danah boyd; *Race After the Internet*, edited by Lisa Nakamura and Peter Chow-White; and *Race, Class, App.net: The Beginning of 'White Flight' from Facebook & Twitter?* by Whitney Erin Boesel.

Short on tactics? Want to come up with something more interesting than another petition? *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution*, edited by Andrew Boyd, is a website and book that compiles successful campaign tactics from diverse movements. For a more historical account, see *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, by Gene Sharp, the second volume of which provides 198 different tactics and the contexts in which they were used. The Center for Story-based Strategy also has a worksheet that will help you identify potential "points of intervention" for your campaigns.

Some books that explore the multitude of approaches with social media include *Social Change Anytime Everywhere*, by Allyson Kapin and Amy Sample Ward; *Share This! How You Will Change the World with Social Networking*, by Deanna Zandt; and *The Networked Nonprofit: Connecting with Social Media to Drive Change*, by Beth Kanter and Allison Fine.

Examples of data-driven campaigns can be found in *Getting Started With Data-Driven Decision Making: A Workbook*, from the Nonprofit Technology Network and Idealware, and *Measuring the Networked Nonprofit: Using Data to Change the World*, by Beth Kanter and Katie Paine.

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STORYTELLING:
WHY IT MATTERS & HOW TO GET IT RIGHT

By Duncan Meisel

What do you remember about the civil rights movement in the 60s in the South? Really, what's the first thing that comes to mind? (Try to be clear about what it is. I can wait.)

Now, I'm going to take a gamble here and say that the first thing you remembered when you read the question above was a story about someone, or a group of people, doing something brave—rather than voter registration statistics, or desegregation rates or the like. I suspect you remember Rosa Parks refusing to give up a seat, students being harassed as they integrated a lunch counter, Freedom Riders making their way across the South, or Martin Luther King Jr. at the pulpit. That's because stories are the essence of human communication and relationships, containing our collective memory and values. That makes them a core part of movement building.

Personal stories aren't just how we remember successful social movements—they're the connective tissue that links a movement together. Stories are both the inspiration that brings people to a movement, and the substance of the relationships that hold people to it once they've joined. Telling the stories of the people you work with is one of the most important ways you can use social media to strengthen your organizing.

What makes for powerful storytelling? Powerful characters.

Effective storytelling is anchored by compelling, well developed characters, and the stories we tell in movement building contexts are often most effective when focusing on people. Many fiction writers begin their work with involved character sketches, before any kind of plot development occurs, and I think that you will find (as they do) that firmly establishing powerful characters—i.e. you, your friends, and/or the other people around you who will change the world—will allow the rest of your storytelling work to fall easily into place.

Why focus on movement characters?

Character-focused storytelling helps overcome a few key challenges that we often face as climate justice and social justice organizers.

[Nugget of Wisdom]

"In 2006, Ethan Zuckerman proposed a mantra for advocacy organizations that has stuck with me ever since: 'Don't speak. Point.' Amplify voices rather than trying to speak for people."

Ivan Boothe, Rootwork.org

First, it provides us with protagonists that drive a positive message. Talking about the people who are part of our movement provides a positive message by showing that there are in fact real people trying to make a difference—instead of dwelling on the problems. Showing that organizing is underway, led by amazing people, is the best possible news we could give people.

Second, when planning an action telling stories puts momentum behind recruitment. Your stories make the action feel concrete, and not just a theoretical date on the horizon where an event might take place, bringing folks

off the fence with the knowledge that they will not be alone.

Thirdly, stories help us build a diverse movement. Stories are entry points where communities can begin to identify with the movement. Feeling like an organization or action includes people who share your background makes it easier to feel comfortable joining. Stories show communities that they have a place in the movement that we're building. For example, featuring the story of a mother with her children will show other mothers that an action is a safe space for families, and lets them connect over shared concern for our childrens' future.

Practical storytelling: How do you start recruiting powerful stories?

The first step to telling stories about participants in the movement is to ask them to tell their stories! It seems simple, but so many organizers don't actually ask the basic questions supporters/participants need to start telling powerful stories. The first, maybe most important, question to ask is: "Why are you involved?" Putting a form with this question on the thank you page of a signup form, or in an occasional email to folks on your list, will turn up fascinating people with stories to tell.

The next thing is to follow up, and empower people to tell their own story in their own words. This is more complicated than just asking. Usually, people aren't accustomed to telling their own stories, and so following up requires providing guidelines and structures for the telling, as well as clear expectations for the ways you hope to share their story moving forward.

Often, the people affected by an issue won't think they have a story to tell, or won't think they're

Here are a few questions that I've found to be very helpful in eliciting compelling stories:
* *Explain in a few words why you decided to get involved with the action:*
* *Are you willing to risk arrest in this action? If so, why?*
* *What do your friends and/or family think about your participating in the action?*
* *Do you have a message for folks who might be on the fence about participating?*
* *[[I'll usually include a question specific to their story here as well]]*
* *Anything else you'd like to add!*

good at telling it. It can be tricky to pull the story out of them, but totally worth it. The people most hesitant to share are the ones who'll give you something that doesn't sound forced and rehearsed, because they haven't said it in fifteen interviews already.

For any given storytelling project, I'll usually write up a few key elicitive questions that I can re-use for follow up after someone has signed up to join an action. When looking for written stories, I've found that many folks are unaccustomed to writing out their stories cold, and a few good questions can shape their responses into a good blog post. For video or audio, these can be the questions asked in an interview format, and cut up into a short video or audio clip.

Mother and Activist Cherri Foytlin: Lessons From the Gulf Coast

Uncategorized,Why I am coming to DC — admin August 25, 2011 at 7:06 am

Among those arrested yesterday was Cherri Foytlin, who came to the ongoing sit-in at the White House to pressure President Obama to deny the permit for a massive new oil pipeline. Watch her powerful story:

Cherri Foytlin: Lessons From the Gulf Coast

0:00 / 1:26

Screenshot from Tar Sands Action website showing a story video from Cherri Foytlin, a movement leader from the Gulf Coast. Case study described on page 11.

Also, asking for personal photos - or taking your own! - is very helpful. Photos are particularly concrete, and can be more effective in meeting some of the goals I described above—in particular lending weight to action lead-up, and creating a mirror for the movement. Once you have a good photo, you also have the option to take the meme-making advice found elsewhere in this guide, and make a meme of their story.

Sharing your supporters' stories

The final step in the storytelling process is actually sharing the stories you've gathered. Blog posts on your website are usually the best place to start, and sharing pull quotes or mini-bios on your social networks is a good next step. The key to story sharing is to use all of your bandwidth. By that I mean: use the fact that publishing online costs you just about zero dollars, and tell as many stories in as many ways as you think your supporters can stand. The benefits of storytelling only get better the more you do it, so do it lots. (There may be some limit to how many stories you can tell, but I haven't found it).

No Dash for Gas protester atop a West Burton power station smokestack.

The only other advice I can give is that when telling a lot of stories, mix up your characters so that any given week of shared stories roughly reflects the diversity you want your organizing to embody.

A few times where storytelling worked (or at least helped):

The first example is the Tar Sands Action, a campaign I helped run in the latter half of 2011, targeting President Obama over the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. The campaign was driven by a handful of actions, starting with a two week sit-in outside the White House. Each day of the sit-in focused on a different community linked to the pipeline—from Indigenous leaders near the tar sands mines themselves, to landowners whose land the pipeline crossed, to people living near refineries. Each day we produced storytelling devices focusing on the community—from photos, to video, to first person storytelling blog posts. In addition, in the weeks leading up to the sit-ins, we filled our social media channels with simple personal narratives about the decision to risk arrest at the sit-in, which helped dispel fears for the parts of the climate movement that were just finding their taste for mass civil disobedience.

Another example of effective storytelling in action is the No Dash for Gas action at the power company EDF's West Burton power plant in the UK. This was a technical shut down of fossil fuel infrastructure—climbing an under-construction smokestack and occupying it for seven days to delay its opening—but with an unusual amount of transparency. No one sought to hide their identities or role in the action, and they kept comprehensive photo and video records of the action as it was

planned and executed.

These storytelling devices were the bedrock of their successful legal defense campaign, which waged a broad and effective PR campaign against EDF. They used a mass-pressure campaign involving a 60,000-signature petition (I signed), threats from supporters to switch power companies, driven by personal appeals from participants in the action to get the suit and charges dropped. The willingness of participants to talk publicly about their anger, hopes, and fears underlined the extraordinary courage behind their action, and galvanized 60,000 people to show their support, and score a bigger victory against their target.

In conclusion...

The specifics of your storytelling will no doubt change depending on the kind of work you hope to do, and at what stage of a campaign you are in. But I hope this chapter has encouraged you to explore a storytelling strategy that focuses on people, as a powerful and flexible approach to adapt to many circumstances, as we work to make our movement bigger, broader and more bold.

Duncan Meisel is a Brooklyn based climate activist. He works as a social media coordinator and actions organizer with 350.org, an international campaign against climate change. Past projects he's worked on include the Tar Sands Action, US Uncut and many billionaires' satirical campaigns. Questions, concerns, beef can be directed at @DuncanWrites on Twitter.

FACEBOOK 101

By Michael Crawford & Cameron Tolle

Facebook is much more than a platform we use to share photos with friends that show how much fun we're having. With more than one billion users, it's also an incredible way to reach lots of people.

Before getting started creating/building your organization's page, ask yourself this question: How would using Facebook help advance my organizational goals? If you can't come up with solid reasons to use it, Facebook may not be the platform for your organization.

Here are some possible reasons your organization may use Facebook:
Spread your message
Connect with and inspire your supporters
Reach potential new supporters
Raise money
Drive traffic to your site
Inspire supporters to take real world action

At Freedom to Marry, a key way we use Facebook is to help amplify our message with a goal of creating strong content that our supporters will want to share with their friends (and ideally, their friends will share it as well). This helps us to reach beyond our base to people who may be open to hearing our message and who may be inspired to take real world action.

We also use Facebook to drive traffic back to our site. In some weeks, Facebook has driven 30% - 40% of the traffic to our site. For the state campaigns we work with, we use Facebook to connect supporters with offline volunteer actions including door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, and rallies.

Once you've made the decision to join Facebook and have created your page, the first big task is building your supporter base. Here are four ways to grow your Facebook presence:

> 1. Post compelling content that people will want to share
>
> 2. Ask your friends to "like" the page
>
> 3. Include a "like us on Facebook" button on your website
>
> 4. Use Facebook ads to target potential supporters to "like" your page

The newsfeed is the heart of Facebook, so at Freedom to Marry, we focus on creating engaging content that our supporters will want to share with their friends. By focusing on content that is emotionally compelling and that we hope our supporters will share, we've been able to reach new potential supporters who then "like" our pages, engage with our content and feel motivated to take offline actions—including donating money, volunteering on the ground, and calling their legislators.

Another reason to focus on optimizing content for the newsfeed is that 96% of a brand's supporters don't go back to the page after their initial engagement That means that after "liking" your page, a majority of your supporters will never return. They will, however, see your content in their newsfeeds and have opportunities to "like," comment, and share your posts.

At Freedom to Marry, we prioritize the number of shares because a key goal for us is using Facebook as a tool to reach new supporters. "Likes" and comments can show how engaged existing supporters are with the content you create - and shares can help you amplify your message to a broader base.

Let's look at the types of Facebook content.

There are four main types of Facebook content: Text status updates, links to your website or other outside content, video content (which you can either upload directly to Facebook or post a URL from YouTube or another service), and image-based posts like photos and graphics. Facebook also makes it possible for you ask simple questions in a kind of polling format that can give you a way of soliciting feedback from your supporters.

You can also use Facebook to promote your organization's events, including fundraisers, volunteer opportunities, and rallies. By creating event pages, you will also encourage supporters to RSVP. Once they RSVP, they will get notifications when you make updates to the information on the event page.

As you work to build your Facebook page, take note of how your supporters engage with your content. This will help you find a voice on Facebook that keeps your supporters engaged while helping achieve your goals. We tested a number of different types of content and found that a more aspirational message focused on photos of loving and committed couples works best for us.

Shocking Secret: Not everyone who "likes" your page will see every piece of content you post. Facebook uses an algorithm called EdgeRank to determine who sees what content. Through a complicated process, Facebook shows what it thinks will be the content most relevant to a particular user. There are, however, some tricks of the digital organizing trade that you can use to give your content a better chance of being shown to your supporters.

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "We've all heard that a picture is worth a thousand words. That's because our brains are hard wired to respond to imagery. Pictures tap directly into our emotions, and emotions inspire action. It's time to shift from thinking 'how can I say this best? to how can I show this best?'"
> Liz Banse, Resource Media

Crib Sheet: Five Tips for Making Your Facebook Updates Awesome

1. Keep It Short

We know that you have a lot of information to share, but less really is more when it comes to Facebook. Shorter posts receive more "likes", comments, and shares than longer posts. You can always link to your website to direct supporters to more information.

Pro Tip: Make your descriptive text short and punchy. This goes for text, photo, and video posts. If possible, keep it to around 250 characters.

2. Make It Visual

Photos, graphics, and videos get more engagement. There's no way around it.

Pro Tip: Post a photo, and in the descriptive text link to your blog or website.

3. Suggest An Action

When you post on Facebook don't leave it to chance that your supporters will know how you

want them to engage with your content. Include an action ask in the descriptive text. Here's Rhode Islanders United for Marriage urging supporters to contact their state legislators in support of a marriage bill in advance of an upcoming vote.

Pro Tip: Post a piece of content with something like this tacked onto your message: "LIKE and SHARE this graphic to help spread the word!"

4. Post Daily

Posting daily is a great way to keep your content and your message in front of your supporters. It also gives you a better chance of achieving a breakout hit where your content is shared widely.

Pro Tip: You can now schedule posts in advance so that you don't have to manually post every day.

5. Be Relevant

Never post something just to post (or because your boss asks you to). Make sure to find great content that is consistent with your organizational message and that your supporters will want to "like" and share, and hopefully take action. On occasion, you may want to post critical information or an update that you want people to know. In those cases, you can worry less about the number of likes and shares because it's information about your cause or an allied cause that is important for people to know. Keeping your supporters engaged and inspired can be as important a goal as generating shares and "likes."

Pro Tip: Unbranded content posted by other organizations that is relevant to your audience can be a great source of content to post to your page. You can also ask supporters to share their feedback or personal stories, or ask them to answer questions in the comments section. For example, we've asked our supporters to share which states they thought would be the next states to win the freedom to marry. Our supporters were eager to weigh in with comments and suggestions that helped us get a better sense of what their priorities are.

Checklist: How to Optimize Your Facebook Post

Facebook can be a powerful tool in helping you rally support for your cause if you put a little effort into it. By scheduling posts in advance, repurposing content that you may have created for your website, and sharing graphics created by allied organizations, you can create a robust presence with minimal effort. This will help to amplify your message, engage new supporters and connect supporters to offline events and volunteer activities.

Here's a quick checklist that you can use to make sure that the content you're posting is awesome.

☐ Is it visual?

☐ Is the descriptive text short, to the point, and actionable?

☐ Does it include a link for more info or to take action?

☐ Is it clear how it fits into the goals you're working to achieve and the narrative you are advancing for your organization/campaign?

☐ Would you click "share" on the content you want to post? If the answer is no, consider re-writing the post until you feel you would share it as well.

Left: Graphic used on Facebook to promote the results of a new poll showing growing support for the freedom to marry, Case Study 1.
Below: Graphic used on Facebook to promote a rally in Illinois, Case Study 2.

Case Study 1

To promote the results of a new poll showing growing support for the freedom to marry, we posted the graphic shown on to Facebook. Rather than just post a statistic, we posted a graphic with the stat that gave people an opportunity to identify as a marriage supporter. The graphic was shared by thousands, helping us to reach 1.7 million people on Facebook.

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "People 'like' your page to hear from and talk to people who care about justice and the planet. Don't use a Facebook voice that sounds like a robot, be personable—be real."
> Ibraheem Al Awadi, Online Campaigner for Greenpeace in Arab Countries

Case Study 2

To help our partner organization, Illinois Unites for Marriage, turn out supporters for a rally at the state capitol in support of a marriage bill, we posted the following graphic (seen on). We stressed all the details people needed to know to participate and linked to a Facebook event page where people could RSVP. After people RSVPed, we could message them with updates and reminders about the rally.

Michael Crawford leads the digital program for Freedom to Marry, overseeing online strategy in fundraising, organizing and communications. He led the successful campaign to win the freedom to marry in Washington, DC.

Cameron Tolle is the Online Campaign Manager for Freedom to Marry, where he leads the organization's state-based digital work. He has led and helped shape digital programs for successful marriage campaigns nationwide, including Delaware, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Maine.

12 SECRETS
TO REMIXING FACBEOOK FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

By Green Memes

Facebook is as much a tool for promoting social change as it is a puzzle. How do you figure out how to use the arsenal of tools Facebook offers (and often changes on a whim) to break through the noise, reach the most people, and sometimes inspire folks to do stuff. Below are twelve well-worn tips online organizers use to do all those things.

1) Got a Facebook page?

For the long haul, chances are good you ought to have a Facebook page for your campaign. A page lets you make events, lets others link to you, lets you accrue a following, and so on. Everyone from President Obama to 350.org to Skittles has a Facebook page - and you can too. (If you're just a normal person trying to get the word out, not an organization, you can skip this step and #2.)

2) Boost your Facebook page's community size.

There's no reason your campaign should have a small Facebook page—or if you already have a few hundred or a few thousand fans, why you can't grow significantly.

These days, anyone can access the feature to invite friends to "like" a page. So, why not encourage all your staff and core volunteers to invite all their friends? Host an "invite your friends" pizza party! If ten of your core staff and volunteers invite all their friends, and on average you have 300 friends each, you will have invited 3,0000 friends in one fell swoop. If just 10% say yes, that could be 300 new fans for your page!

Bigger communities don't just let you reach more people, they let your current supporters see they're part of something much bigger. And that kind of realization can be key to encouraging folks to check out what you're up to and share your stuff. Nobody wants to be all alone "liking" and "sharing" your stuff, you know?

3) Focus on photos.

Facebook is at heart a photo-sharing network (remember, it's 'Facebook', not 'TEXTbook'). People relate to pictures of other people and can quickly find meaning in a visual. And more than that: it seems clear the Facebook feed prioritizes showing images over showing articles. **So try it: from now on, just post photos to your Facebook feed.** And when you want to post an article, that's cool. Just upload a photo that relates to the article, and when Facebook asks you to "say something about this photo" - write a blurb about the article, and post a link to it. Often you can use the photo that's featured in the article. Just remember to give credit to the photographer!

Photos can also play a special role when communicating progressive victories. The story of any social movement is that people are at the heart of making social change. So when you're sharing especially good news that you know was due to people power, consider uploading a picture of a protest, rally, or hearing that was part of making that change possible. Then write

more about the victory in the blurb section. Often mainstream media fails to connect progressive victories to the ordinary people who fought hard for that change. In some small way, we can try to amend that via social media.

Posting photos of your team and volunteers can also help your followers put a face on who is behind your work, and in general make things more real and relatable. Look for moments to take pictures of you and your team at work (or even at play), and through doing so humanize your feed a bit. Remember, it's *Face*book.

4) Make memes too (it's easier than you think)!

The only thing sexier than photos for the Facebook universe are "memes". Memes, for the purposes of using Facebook, are photos that have words layered over them. You see them all over Facebook, right? (e.g. an inspiring quote above a cloud or something) Well, you don't have to be a pro-designer to make your own memes. Currently, our favorite tool for making quick and dirty memes is a website called PicMonkey.com. Check out our guide that makes it almost too easy to make your own basic memes - on

It makes sense to make a meme if you have some punchy, compelling, exciting news you really want to share (and see shared). Making a meme can be as simple as layering a headline over or below an image. A good meme is essentially a vehicle for carrying a clear message within a compelling visual medium, and so people are more likely to see it, get it, share it, and some of their friends may do the same, and so on, and so on, potentially creating a big outreach wave.

Seriously, don't be intimidated by making your own memes. We've helped break it down in a meme-making chapter. Memes will take a little longer to craft - but a good meme can reach as many people as posting dozens of articles and photos.

5) Always post a message with your content.

Try not to become one of those pages that just posts links. If people just wanted to see headlines, they'd go to the NYTimes.com. People go to Facebook to connect, and they want to hear why you want them to check out a particular link.

Whenever you post anything to Facebook, whether it's an article or a photo, include a message about why folks should check it out. Express some excitement, include a compelling quote from the article, a summary, shout-out who was featured in the article, etc. Even if it's just a few words (e.g. "Check this out - this is great news"), that will go a much longer way towards encouraging folks to check out what you posted.

This also applies with sharing other people's content on Facebook (e.g. an ally's meme). Take a quick moment to write out a unique blurb for why you shared it/what's inspiring or important about it, and chances are more people will have a look.

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "It's a noisy world out there. The best way to be heard is to get the chorus singing your tune. Give before you get. If your organization provides value to the community, supporters are more likely to rise to the occasion when asked to help."
> Nicole Lampe, Resource Media

6) Write for one degree out from your core.

When writing updates, write for the friends of your friends. Why? Because your followers should

already get what you're up to - and you want your followers to share your updates with their friends. So who better to write for than the friends of your friends? Your followers will appreciate this, and show it by sharing your stuff more often. Here's what we mean: explain your acronyms and niche lexicon, use clear and engaging language, and write updates that even your mom would grock and get behind.

If you're having trouble writing a great update, sign out of your page, and just start writing an update about whatever news to your friends. If you can write an update that you think would hook your friends, chances are you have an all-star update you can use for your campaign.

7) Show social evidence of support (don't be shy about asking people to 'click LIKE + SHARE!').

We're building "social movements", right? You heard us say this before: people want to see they're a part of something bigger. So, when you're posting things you want to see go popular, spike it with some activity. Ask people to "Click LIKE & SHARE" on occasion to quickly generate some buzz, and make it more likely more people will want to join in and spread the word too. When you're promoting an event, make a 'Facebook event' (and invite all your relevant friends) and link to it often to show your community that lots of folks are already on board. Whenever you have a chance, make visible the surge of support that already exists (or is rising) for your cause. Refrain from asking your online supporters to be the first to step up. Use email and more traditional organizing tactics to inspire the first wave of action (e.g. when gathering petitions, RSVPs, etc.)

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
>
> "Identify Facebook pages that share a similar ethos, make friends and strategize together. The more you work together the faster you'll build a large network of influence. Cooperate, don't COMPETE."
>
> Winnie Wong, Seismologik, Occupy Network

When you can show there's a decent upswell of support, you're more likely to inspire an actual groundswell.

8) Create a Facebook storm.

A Facebook storm is when a whole bunch of pages and people post about the same thing at roughly the same time. If you want something to really break through on Facebook, you might want to plan a "Facebook storm". Get in touch with colleagues at related pages and invite them to post whatever it is on the same day, at say noon. Memes are really good for this. For example, if you post a meme and then a bunch of related Facebook pages cross-post your meme at roughly the same time, it will greatly increase the chances that it shows up in many of the Facebook feeds of people who care about your issue.

It's also just good to be in touch with colleagues who administer sister Facebook pages on a regular basis. That way you can ask for promo help, and you can make impromptu storms, and so on. Just be ready to give some solidarity back!

For more on Facebook storms, check out Henia Belalia's chapter!

9) Seize newsie moments.

The arc of a traditional narrative for a campaign goes like this: outreach - protest - rest - outreach - protest - rest - etc. With social media, you can spice up this narrative. Check the news on a fairly regular basis, and look for moments to frame your campaign in the context of what's the hot news of the day. For example, just recently the Obama Administration responded to a Star Wars petition, saying that they did not support blowing up planets. That made an opening for us to make a meme for CRMW asking, "So, why does Obama condone blowing up our planet?" But forget Obama, maybe you can connect the latest Justin Bieber drama to why stopping rhino poaching is so imperative?

10) You are a storyteller - not a news reporter.

As a Facebook communicator, you are now a storyteller for what's likely one of the greatest sagas of our time. Don't forget that: you're not just a machine for pumping out news. People can find their own news—especially bad news. Don't worry about posting every article under the sun. You're a saga-writer. Ordinary people are often your heroes, the spectrum of civil society activism are your main mediums for showing modern heroism. And even when you're not winning (which is most days), things tend to move forward. Bit by bit. And more often than not, it's because of community organizers and public sentiment shifting the conversation. Always aspire to weave the over-arching story of people power into your updates. It's the truth, and it's validating and inspiring to boot.

11) Don't be seduced by the "FaceCrack."

Facebook is just a tool, as part of a larger toolbox for building movements. And it's far from the sharpest or most effective tool in the toolbox. Don't be seduced by the impression you can build power or turn out mad crowds by simply hitting all the Facebook bells and whistles. Tighten your time on Facebook. And use it smartly in conjunction with other outreach tactics, like coffee shop meetings, door-knocking, phone-banking, letter-writing, pamphleting, tabling, etc. And even if you get all this, communicate this theory of change to your followers too. When asking them to "like" or "share" something, give them something more meaningful to do too. Remind folks that showing up will always mean so much more than clicking Like. No revolution was won by folks who showed up in spirit. By building a culture of valuing offline/deep activism, you'll be primed to turn people out when it's go time.

The best online organizing generally arises from amazing offline organizing and actions whose stories are communicated well online, and in turn inspire more people to get involved, inspiring more powerful digital media, which in turn inspire even more people, and so on.

And if you are already addicted to Facebook (and if you use a Mac), try out the app "Self Control," which lets you set times on your computer in which you can block any given website.

12) Take risks.

This seems obvious--but it's important. All the Facebook tips in the world won't get you terribly far unless you're willing to take some risks. Facebook is just a tool, and you can use it in myriad ways. Try looking at the tool sets in new ways. What are ways you can encourage a conversation in, say, the comments of a post? What are ways you can rally your Facebook supporters to storm a malignant corporation's Facebook page? How far can you go in using an honest, personal voice when writing updates? Push the boundaries and you'll see those boundaries turn into your most effective ventures. Value your mistakes--you'll make plenty of them--it means you're expanding your potential.

How to unleash a Facebook storm

By Henia Belallia

Online organizers design what we call a "Facebook Storm" to burst through thousands of people's feeds with a critical message or call to action. A Facebook storm is a coordinated push, by which dozens of online organizers collaborate to share the same message or call to action on the same day, via their personal and organizational networks. As a result of everyone pushing at once, a storm can break through the Facebook noise barrier and reach thousands of people, raising their awareness about a key issue and mobilizing them towards action.

Facebook Storms don't just happen - you've got to do some savvy online organizing to make them come alive. Over at Peaceful Uprising (the climate justice grassroots group with whom I organize), we've orchestrated several of these storms to get the word at key moments that called for waves of people power.

There were many lessons and tricks gathered along the way, which I've laid out for you below.

8 Steps to Coordinate Your Own Massive Facebook Storm:

Step 1. Get Clear on Your Goals

● What do you want to communicate with a mass audience? Is it a clear and crisp call to action, or some other story or video that people have got to see? Storms just to get people riled up aren't that fun - make sure you're giving people something to do.

Step 2. Nail down a date.

● What's the target date for your social media storm? Ideally, you have at least a week between when you start reaching out to allies, and the storm itself.

Step 3. Start reaching out to storm partners.

● Who do you want to make Facebook tempests with? Who has big and influential Facebook pages? What allies, partners, and networks will resonate with your message? Think: local groups + national groups; mainstream + edgy groups. And don't forget outside-the-box groups like artists, faith groups, and generally progressive news outlets.

● Make the ask! Send out an email to potential storm partners with a message that sounds something like this:"*Next Wednesday we're having a Facebook storm to get people excited for so and so campaign. We're asking a dozen groups to get out the word with us on the same day so we can really reach a lot of people. Will you help promote this action with us?*"

Step 4. Prepare memes and status update drafts

● Create memes that help get the word out about your action. Maybe it's a picture of an activist or a protest image with the details of the call to action emblazoned on top of it. These days, you want to offer at least one solid meme for your Facebook storm. (Check out the meme-making chapter for an easy tutorial!)

● Draft the sample Facebook updates and tweets you want partners to share during your storm. It's important to write sample updates because most online organizers are working within tight schedules, and really appreciate having updates they can copy and post or easily re-work to their liking.

Step 5. Make your Promo Document

● Drop all the sample Facebook posts, tweets, and memes into a Google Doc, which you can then share with your storm partners.

● Add a synopsis of the storm at the top of the document, re-explaining the action you're promoting.

● List the campaign website or other links you want storm partners to point people to in their updates

● TIP: at the top of the shared document, I give THANKS to all of the individuals and groups who are joining the blast, to build solidarity and to help show some lovin'

● TIP: include a note asking folks to SHARE your meme directly from your Facebook page (rather than downloading and republishing it from their own page), as this will ensure it reaches more people ultimately

The image above was used for the Canyon Country Action Camp Facebook Storm, described below.

● Check out these Facebook Storm promo Google Docs as examples (Bidder 70 Earth Day Screenings, Canyon Country Action Camp, Mountain Mobilization)

Step 6. Send Out Your Promo Doc

● Email your promo doc to your partners 2-3 days before the storm, and generally remind them that a storm is brewing. Use fun extreme weather metaphors! "Get ready for a digital derecho like you've never seen before..."

Step 7. It's the morning of your storm....Go LIVE!

● First things first - fire up your own cannons! Post the first memes and other updates to YOUR campaign's Facebook page, Twitter accounts, etc.

● Send a bulk email to all confirmed allies and invite them to join in (TIP: to respect people's privacy, include all of their email addresses in the BCC section)

The image above was used for the Facebook Storm to welcome Tim DeChristopher home from prison.

Step 8. After the storm...

● Send your gratitude to all those who helped -- by email or phone -- and tell folks how the blast went, who joined in, share compelling moments, and explain how they were part of something amazing.

● Also, use this opportunity to remind your storm partners that you'll be happy to return the favor, whenever they need it.

● To make this easier for the next time around, create a contact list of storm partners so you'll know who to reach out to on the next go ground!

Two Stormy Case Studies:

1) Canyon Country Action Camp, Utah, July 2013.

We launched a storm to promote an action camp, organized by several groups in Utah, to bring people together to halt the first commercial tar sands mine in the US. To announce the camp, we created a meme (shown above) to inspire participation and put the issue on people's radar. The meme reached 80,000 people, was shared 989 times, and generated hundreds of RSVPs. It was also a way to elevate our burgeoning campaign within the context of the national narrative and growing struggle against tar sands extraction.

2) Getting Tim DeChristopher Out of Isolation - and Welcoming Him Home.

We used a rapid response Facebook storm when our friend Tim DeChristopher -- who was in prison for civil disobedience against the gas and oil industry -- was sent into isolation. Our strategy was to use Facebook (and email blasts!) to mobilize thousands of people to flood the lines of the prison warden demanding his release, on the same day. It worked: Tim was released from isolation

within 24 hours from the start of our storm. We also used a storm to welcome Tim out of prison! (Check out the meme we used on the page above—thanks to all our allies piling on, it got 624 shares).

Henia Belalia, an Algerian-French native, identifies as a theatre director, climate justice organizer, facilitator and day dreamer of collective liberation. She stands for systemic change and dissolving a hyper-individualistic society by means of community, stories, ritual and heart-speak. She's inspired by processes that crack people open, by theories of change that address the intersections of systems of oppression and elevate marginalized voices to the core of their process, and by communities that reclaim their spaces and local sovereignty.

†WITTER 101:
BECOMING FLUENT IN THE BASICS

By Beth Becker

OMG ... How do I "Tweet"?

Twitter may be intimidating for those unfamiliar with it, however with some understanding of the basics Twitter isn't intimidating at all. In fact, it may be the easier social platform to use. In its barest bones sense, Twitter is where the world communicates in "status updates" of 140 characters or less.

Over 500 million have joined Twitter. You too can join the trend-setters, by signing up here: http://twitter.com/account/new.

So if I'm using Facebook why do I need to use Twitter too?

It's easy to lump Facebook and Twitter into the same category of online tools, after all they are both social platforms that allow us to build community; however to do so is a mistake. While Facebook tends to be collections of people who have something in common, much like a school or church, Twitter is more like the world's coffee shop- there's something that brings everyone in but that something is different for everyone.

The real value of Twitter in organizing is that journalists and bloggers gather on Twitter, searching for stories of interest and promoting stories they've written or talked about. This makes Twitter a great tool for developing relationships with these influencers in order to increase your earned media for your work. Communities of activists can also be found on Twitter, their tweets aggregated in hashtags (Twitter specific search queries).

So what exactly is a tweet?

Let's look at an example. In the example on the right we have a demonstration of all of the important pieces of Twitter:

1.) The "hashtag"

Hashtags are how people connect and follow conversations on Twitter (and more and more, off of Twitter too!) A hashtag is just a keyword with a number sign (#) placed before it. People put the number sign (#) before topical keywords

and agreed upon phrases to help other people who care about that topic discover their tweets. When you click on a hashtag, you will see an aggregation of tweets that contain that same hashtag. In the example above, clicking on **#MarchonWashington**, **#DreamDay** or , **#MOW50** would take you to a collection of tweets discussing Martin Luther King Jr, Civil rights, or the March on Washington. You can also search for hashtags here: https://twitter.com/search

2.) The retweet link

Clicking "retweet" on any given tweet means that you'll be sharing that tweet with all of your friends. People and organizations use the retweet feature to bump up compelling quotes, stories, news, photos, etc. - and help their followers see it too. A group like the Congressional Progressive Caucus is likely to retweet members of the caucus and allied groups.

3.) Shortened link

Twitter automatically shrinks your web links for you, or rather - any given link you share on Twitter only counts for 22 characters. However, you can shrink your own web links using tools like bit. ly. and ow.ly. In the above tweet, Twitter automatically shortened the link to on.fb. me/184UVsd.

4.) Mention/Reply (@)

In order to talk to or with someone on Twitter, we preface their user handle with the at symbol: "@". In the example above, the person who tweeted this tweet referred to themselves as @USProgressives. It's important to mention other groups and people in your tweets so that they'll be more likely to see your tweets, and "retweet" your updates.

Birds Eye View of Twitter Features

In the larger picture, Twitter itself is pretty easy to find your way around. When you first log into your Twitter account what you see is called your Twitter stream.

Near the top left corner, you can compose your own "tweet" (or status update.)

And to see what people are saying about you, you'd click "Connect" in the top menu. This is where you can find who is talking to or about you. You will also find information about who has retweeted you, favorited your tweets or followed you.

Getting the Most of out Twitter

Now let's take a closer look at how Twitter can be used. In general, there are two main categories of Twitter usage: Content Delivery and Content Curation.

Content Delivery

Most people use Twitter because they feel like they have something to say, and the same use applies to your advocacy organization or electoral campaign. The key is to be saying something people want to say.

Think about what people are coming to your Twitter stream to learn about, then provide it for them in a clear, concise way that they will connect with and understand. In social media, we often talk about telling stories and Twitter is just another way to share those stories with your community. Yes, it's only 140 characters, you can still fit a lot in there, and you can add photos as well.

Or, you can link to a video or a news article or blog post on your own website so that people can learn more. Here's a little secret: not everything you tweet has to be on message. Have fun- be a part **of** the community, not **apart from** the community.

Above is an example of a tweet with a picture attached.

Here's another secret: experiment. There's no way to give you a checklist of what it means to deliver great content because **every audience is different.** Some audiences may prefer links to long policy briefs while others will prefer memes and quirky videos. Take the time to get to know your audience and then give them the content they want.
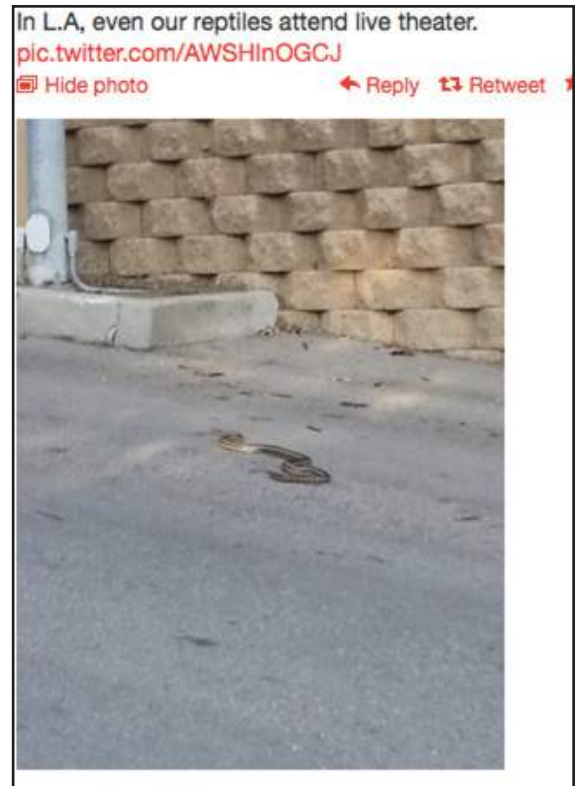
Content Curation

Many people who use Twitter rarely or never actually tweet. They use it to find information. So many different people are tweeting about so many different things that Twitter is often a way to find information or news. Often, news stories break on Twitter first. Often, what starts out as a small story gains traction and later mainstream media attention on Twitter first (the news about the death of Trayvon Martin is an example of this).

It can in fact be difficult to sort through all of the information out there to find what's useful, but using Twitter Lists is a great way to make sense of the chaos.

So how do I find people to follow?

1. On the left side of your main Twitter stream,

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
>
> "We are vain creatures at heart. Flattery is the key to social media success! Kindness and thanks are the principal currencies of social media (not unlike the real world). I've found that if you continually express gratitude and general lovin' to folks who participate in your networks, they're a lot more likely to keep participating, and get deeper involved! But if you take folks for granted: you end up with a digital ghost town!"
>
> Elijah van der Giessen,
> NetSquared.org

Twitter recommends three people you may want to follow that changes every time you refresh the page (note: you may not want to follow everyone they recommend...you'd be amazed by the crazy recommendations that sometimes appear).

2. You can click on a hashtag associated with an issue you care about and see who is tweeting into that hashtag.

3. You can find people you know and trust and see who they are following.

4. There are also a wealth of websites that can help you find people based on their interests or influence in particular areas, for example Klout will help you find people based on their influence.

It's important to remember is that at the end of the day Twitter, and social media in general, is about **being social**, having a conversation with people. If you are just broadcasting information then you aren't building a community. Yes there are times it is appropriate to just send out information, and there are certainly Twitter accounts designed to do just that, but as an advocacy organization or electoral campaign your goal should be about building a community of people based on relationships and common values, beliefs or issues that will help you to amplify your content, whatever that may be.

How do I build a community?

One of the biggest mistakes we see people make on Twitter, and social media in general, is to only care about the number of followers a person has. The truth is, it's not the size of the audience that matters, it's how engaged they are. Do they interact with you? Do they retweet you, talk to and about you? It's very easy for people to follow an account on Twitter and then never interact with it again. If your audience isn't helping you to spread your message or engaging with you, how exactly are they helping you at all? They aren't. As Alan Rosenblatt wrote on the *Big Think*:

"In the final analysis, to get the greatest value out of Twitter, maximize your influential followers and minimize your inactive followers."

So how exactly is Twitter an organizing tool?

We've talked about Twitter as a communication tool, both for delivering content to people and and getting information from others, but how can we use it as an organizing tool? Think about what your goals as an organization are and what you are doing offline and how can Twitter complement that. A few examples:

1. If you are having a bunch of people go out and knock on doors- ask them to live tweet about it. Use a protected account (protected Twitter accounts allow you to control who follows the account-people have to request to follow the account and you have to approve them) to communicate with volunteers in the field.

2. Holding a rally? Designate a hashtag and ask people in attendance to live tweet the rally using that hashtag. Host a Twitter townhall, or question and answer session featuring a guest expert or celebrity.

Twitter Case Study

New York Paid Sick Days Campaign Rapid Response Success

A coalition of diverse organizations in New York City banded together to escalate the conversation regarding paid sick days for workers, with an emphasis on getting the NY City Council to pass legislation mandating paid sick days. At the time, Council Speaker Christine Quinn had not called for a vote on this issue. But they took advantage of a moment on Twitter to press their case when the coailtion (with a little help from their friends) gave an impromptu course in how to run an online rapid response campaign.

On a Wednesday morning, the coalition announced that they were teaming with Gloria Steinem to ramp up the pressure in this campaign. Speaker Quinn must have realized she needed a powerhouse of her own. So on Thursday, Susan Sarandon (aka, a celebrity activist who often ends up on the progressive side of things) tweeted the message below.

Using other online tools such as email and Facebook and even offline tools like phone calls and text messages, they urged supporters to ask Susan to use her relationship with NYC Council Speaker (and expected candidate for NYC Mayor in 2013) Christine Quinn to allow the council to vote on paid sick days legislation.

Susan Sarandon @SusanSarandon — 18 Jul
Spent some time with NY City Council Speaker @ChrisCQuinn. She's the real deal - smart, imaginative & dedicated. What NYC needs.
Collapse ← Reply �record Retweet ★ Favorite

3 RETWEETS

10:09 AM - 18 Jul 12 via web · Details

Initial tweet from Susan Sarandon.

Occupy Wall Street @OccupyWallSt — 19 Jul
Thelma and Louise deserved #paidsickdays. @SusanSarandon, why doesn't @ChrisCQuinn support them? #ows
Expand

Main Street Alliance @mainstreettweets — 19 Jul
Our small business owners support #paidsickdays. @SusanSarandon, will you urge @ChrisCQuinn to support, too?
Expand

Tim Judson @TimPSN — 19 Jul
RT @FmlyValuesWork: Thelma & Louise deserved #paidsickdays. @SusanSarandon, pls help get @ChrisCQuinn to support them. nyti.ms/OcGf0H
View summary

Edrie Irvine @edgery — 19 Jul
The real deal would support #paidsickdays. @SusanSarandon @ChrisCQuinn
Expand

ROC-NY @ROC_NY — 19 Jul
.@SusanSarandon LOUISE didn't get #PaidSickDays - 90% of restaurant #workers dont. Pls support real life Louises & tell @ChrisCQuinn 2 too.

Left: Tweets @ SusanSarandon in response to her initial tweet about Council Speaker Christine Quinn.

What followed? A firestorm of over 100 tweets to Susan Sarrandon within a few hours (shown above). Enough people tweeted at Susan Sarrandon that she replied with two more tweets of her own (shown below).

Above and right: Susan Sarandon's responses to the tweets directed at her (shown on the previous page).

It's important to note that the actual win- a vote on paid sick days took another year to happen but the combination of smart online and offline organizing, in the end, won and NYC's City Council did in fact vote on and pass paid sick days.

Conclusion

Twitter can be a powerful tool in your online advocacy campaigns. It is important to remember it is just that: a tool. It will never replace anything else you are doing, but when done purposefully as part of your overall strategy it can help you build your community and accomplish your goals.

Beth Becker brings 20+ years of communication and marketing background to politics where she has consulted for numerous House campaigns, non profits and unions. Beth often can be found conducting trainings about digital strategy for the New Organizing Institute, clients and conferences like PA Progressive Summit and Netroots Nation. As a contributing blogger at epolitics.com and avid activist, Beth shares her knowledge to help the progressive movement use digital with offline to win.

TWITTER 201:
TAKING TWITTER TO THE NEXT LEVEL

By Meena Hussain

Okay, now that you've had a great introduction to the world of Twitter, let's cover some tactics you can use on this social network to reach new audiences and expand your community.

Look & Feel: Design is SO Important!

As organizers, we often don't think too much about how we look. I often roll out the door in the mornings in my Chacos, cut-off jean shorts, and ratty Greenpeace t-shirt to head to the office. As a result, I get some pretty weird stares on the DC metro, which tends to be a sea of suits during rush hour, and quite often get mistaken for a college student. You don't want this happening with your Twitter feed.

Taking a few extra minutes to design your Twitter account with imagery that ties into your campaign will make your organization look more professional on social media. Twitter is a unique community with its own culture, codes, and rules, and you need to understand that community to be a part of it.

An example of my personal profile pic and header photo. I chose a close up shot of my face as the profile so that people can identify me -- it could even be closer! I also chose a photo of palm trees because I'm from California and it's a large part of my identity.

What's What:

Profile Picture - This photo is your identity on Twitter. It's the little picture that appears with your tweets in the feed. Since it's so small, it's best to go with something clear and easy to see, like your brand's logo or a picture of your face. (Measures 81 x 81 pixels)

> **Organizer tip:** *Do you want to edit your design but don't have the software? Download Gimp! It's just like Photoshop but free for all.*

Header Image - This is the backdrop image behind your profile picture, similar to a Facebook cover photo. An iconic photo of your organization's identity (or your own)

will work best here. For example, maybe a photo of a protest of your activists holding signs, an iconic image of what you're fighting for, or an iconic image of where you're from. (Measures 520 x 260 pixels)

@greenpeacemx - A great example of a well-designed brand Twitter page.

Background Image -
This is the image design behind all of your tweets and profile information. It's seen differently on various screen resolutions, but to be safe, go with 2560 x 1600 pixels. A great background photo is usually one image (not a tiled version of a small image) and has your brand imagery/logo on the left side of the feed so it can be seen clearly. Here's a cheat sheet on social media sizing.

Tweeting Well: Best Practices

Tweeting can be tricky sometimes. There is no formula for the perfect tweet -- your audience may respond to something that some other group's audience may not. This section has some guidelines and tips based on my experience with tweeting for Greenpeace and industry research I've done.

Find Your Voice

It's in your favor to develop a distinct voice for your org (or for yourself) so that your tweets can shine above the masses. This can be especially difficult if you're an org, which is usually a collection of distinct voices. So don't be afraid to experiment with different voices and see what sticks. Don't be afraid to fail -- social media is all about iterations. Try something, look at how people react, adjust, and try again.

Tweets that travel well tend to:

☐ Have a personal, human voice (You could be serious, funny, sarcastic, excited, etc.)

☐ Contain interactive media (meme, photo, vine, video, link)

☐ Cover breaking news from a distinct perspective (THINK: This news is important, but why is it important to our org and audience specifically? Tell them in the tweet!)

☐ Has a strong theory of change (THINK: In a feed of thousands of tweets, what impact will someone have by spreading the news, taking action, donating, reading the blog, etc? Tell them in the tweet!)

☐ Inspire the reader (ex: positive news, positive statistics, inspiring quote from a thought leader)

This tweet is a great example tweet engagement.

Tweet Engagement

In order for tweets to reach as many people as possible, there are a couple rules of thumb to go by. Keep in mind that this doesn't have to happen for every single tweet you put out, just for when you want your tweets to really fly through the network.

☐ Keep your tweets at 120 characters or less to increase engagement with the tweet. Some even say to keep it at 100 characters or less.

☐ No more than 2 hashtags per tweet! I know you might feel the urge to be as strategic as possible and add every relevant hashtag you can to each tweet, but research has shown a 17% decrease in engagement with tweets with more than 2 hashtags. Also keep in mind that this is not Instagram and users don't want to read every other word in hashtag form.

☐ Tell your followers to retweet! Your followers don't know to RT unless you tell them to, and tweet engagement is known to increase 12x when followers are asked to retweet. Use either RT in front of the tweet or write out retweet when you have a specific call to action or strategically want to increase your engagement.

☐ Tweeting during business hours on weekdays and on weekends can help your tweets get more eyes. Think about how you or your friends use Twitter. They might check it on their morning commute or with their first cup of coffee to get the top news headlines of the day. They might also check it on a Sunday morning to see if some of their favorite blogs posted something new.

☐ Network! Want to spread your campaign? Ask the right people to tweet it out to their network for you.

On the next page is an example of how you can follow up with a special tweet just for them:

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And here's @SnagFilms' tweet about our project:

Hashtags: Why? Which ones? When do I start a new one? How do I choose?

Just to re-cap from Beth Becker's Twitter 101 chapter, a hashtag is a word or a phrase prefixed with the symbol "#" -- it's a way for people to connect with and listen to conversations on Twitter. For example, if you include the "#stopmtr" hashtag in your tweets, people who care about stopping mountaintop removal can find your tweets—or you can search for other mountaintop removal tweets by searching for #stopmtr at search.Twitter.com.

Why use hashtags?

Hashtags are a great way to expose your tweets to potential new followers who may be interested in your tweets. Do you have something relevant to say about a policy issue or a corporation? Well, there's probably a conversation already happening about it on Twitter, and you want those people to hear what you have to say. It's always best to join conversations rather than create your own, otherwise you risk talking to just yourself.

Which ones? Hashtag Research.

Hashtag research enables you to quickly find the most active conversation on Twitter about the issue you are advocating for. **Here are some simple, easy steps to find the best hashtag for your conversation:**

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1. Type '#' + the word or phrase of the issue you are looking for in the search bar.
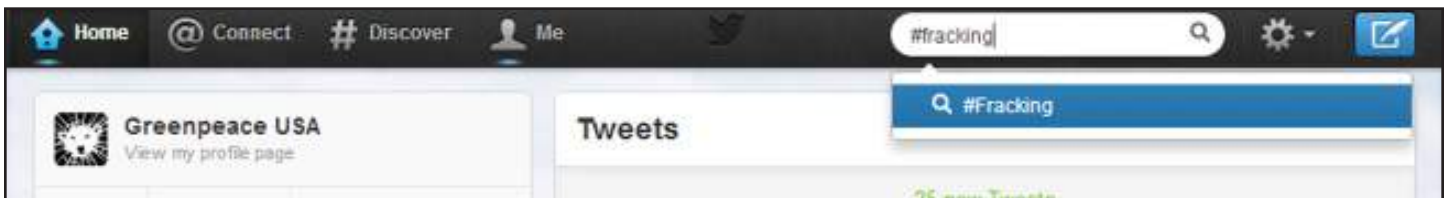
2. Click on 'All' to get timestamps of the real-time conversation.

3. Look at the timestamps to see how often tweets are going out with that hashtag. Compare them with other possibilities. Do you see one hashtag getting 2 tweets a day, and another getting 5 in one hour? If so, go with the more popular one! In the screenshot below, we do a comparison between the search of "#fracking" and "#banfracking" on Twitter:

#fracking is more popular than #banfracking in this case -- but this can change day to day! So make sure to research hashtags you use for your campaign often.

How do you choose?

In many cases, there will be multiple hashtags for a single issue. If we continue with the fracking conversation as an example, #fracking and #banfracking are two of many hashtags that make up the overall conversation of this issue. I pick what is strategically best for my tweets, depending on what content I am tweeting. For example, if I were tweeting a news article on fracking I would choose #fracking because from what I see in the conversation, there are a lot of news-specific tweets. Conversely, when I was tweeting about a fracking rally in front of the White House, I used #banfracking for all of @greenpeaceusa's tweets because that was what activists were using, and the conversation about the rally and the anti-fracking movement lies there.

So different audiences may be on different hashtags for your issue. Think about which audience you want to engage with each and every tweet, and use the best hashtag for it!

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
>
> "Never tweet in anger. If you feel emotional about something you're about to share, walk away. That tweet will still be there in an hour."
>
> Darren Barefoot

When do I start a new hashtag?

Starting a hashtag is often unnecessary. There are 400 million tweets sent out per day on Twitter, so there is probably a conversation happening about your issue that you should join. It's also very difficult to start a new hashtag and get other people to use it besides yourself, so I recommend doing your research.

> **Organizer tip:** *If you're linking to a great blog post -- use your reading comprehension skills from back in the day to find the most important bit of information that you want your followers to know -- and turn it into the tweet. This will actually get people to click and read what you want them to!*

Consider starting a new hashtag if:

- There's a part of the existing conversation on Twitter for your issue that you think is missing.
- The new hashtag will make the existing conversation more dynamic in some way.

If you do your research and decide a new hashtag needs to be started, go for it. The difficult part of starting a new hashtag is getting other people to join the conversation there. It's like getting your friends to come to the new bar across town only because it's near your house but it's not near theirs!

Using Twitter in a Different Way - "Twitter Chats"

A Twitter chat is when you have a real-time conversation with a group of people on Twitter--for a specific amount of time--with everyone using and following *the same hashtag* to connect. Twitter Chats are usually scheduled for an hour, and that hour tends to fly right by.

Organizing a Twitter Chat can be a great way to build buzz for an event, or a way to launch a hashtag into the world. You could say the #noKXL Twitter Chat held in August 2011 was what launched the now-pretty ubiquitous #noKXL hashtag into the world.

Below are some secrets to hosting a successful Twitter Chat:

- Invite and confirm about 5 featured guests
- Prepare 3-5 questions you'll want to discuss in

Tar Sands Action

Participants   Why we take action   Keystone XL Facts   Press

Join us for a LIVE Twitter Chat —
Thursday, August 11th @ 8pm – 9pm EST / 5pm – 6pm PST

advance and share them in advance with the guests

- Promote the Chat well at least one week in advance (with a list of your featured guests)

- Be prepared to host the conversation in real time through your Twitter account -- including asking questions, retweeting answers, connecting people together, moving the dialogue along, etc.

- Invite all your followers to join in before the Chat, and warn them that your tweet volume is about to get pretty high! (Some people even recommend creating a new Twitter account just for Twitter Chats and other live-tweeting events)

Live Tweeting

Live tweeting is citizen journalism at its best. You don't need major news networks at your event. All you need is your phone and a some good hashtags on your side to have your event reach a good chunk of people.

- Make sure you're all set up ahead of time. If you don't have a smart phone, you can set up SMS to tweet. If you do have a smart phone, make sure you have the Twitter App downloaded and that it's working just fine with your account.

- Write out your tweets in advance! Yes, I'm serious about this. When you're in the moment your thoughts can get lost in the chaos and excitement, so it's best to write things down first and have an idea of what you want to come out with going into the event.

- Tell the story of your event: "[Insert Name] is speaking now," "Great quote from speech," "We're marching now," etc.

- Pay attention to the world around you, not your phone screen. Then take just a moment to blast out an update.

- Follow up! Interact with your followers; tag them in conversations so that they feel included.

Case Study: Paula Bear in DC

As part of the global Save the Arctic campaign, Greenpeace had our life-like polar bear puppet deliver over 300K petitions to President Obama. We tweeted it live and got lots of response, as well as blog pick up.

Below, you can check out how we covered this live activity via @GreenpeaceUSA.

The day before, I sat down with our Blog Content Producer Cassady Sharp to create a story for Paula Bear, and pre-drafted tweets from it.

We took Paula Bear to different iconic places around the Capitol, so I included a photo with each tweet for added pizzaz.

We have an account on Vine, so I created some fun vines on the scene for added interactivity. It's important to make people feel like they are there with you!


Look! The tweet at the right has 171 retweets! Our friends at other Greenpeace offices around the world retweeted this tweet and helped spread it far and wide.

A lot of people thought this was a real bear! So it was important to quell the concerns of animal rights advocates everywhere. Twitter conversations are dynamic so make sure you are always taking a look at how your supporters respond so that you can have a conversation with them!

Tracking the Conversation

It's always great to keep track of how your tweeting is going, as well as various conversations that are relevant to your campaign. Here are some tools and tips that can help you with that:

● *Tweetdeck is a tool that allows you to load multiple Twitter accounts all into one place.* You can also schedule tweets, send out tweets on multiple handles at the same time, and have multiple columns loaded with hashtags and keywords for real-time tracking. There is a Chrome App for this, as well as downloadable software for your computer, and an App for your phone.
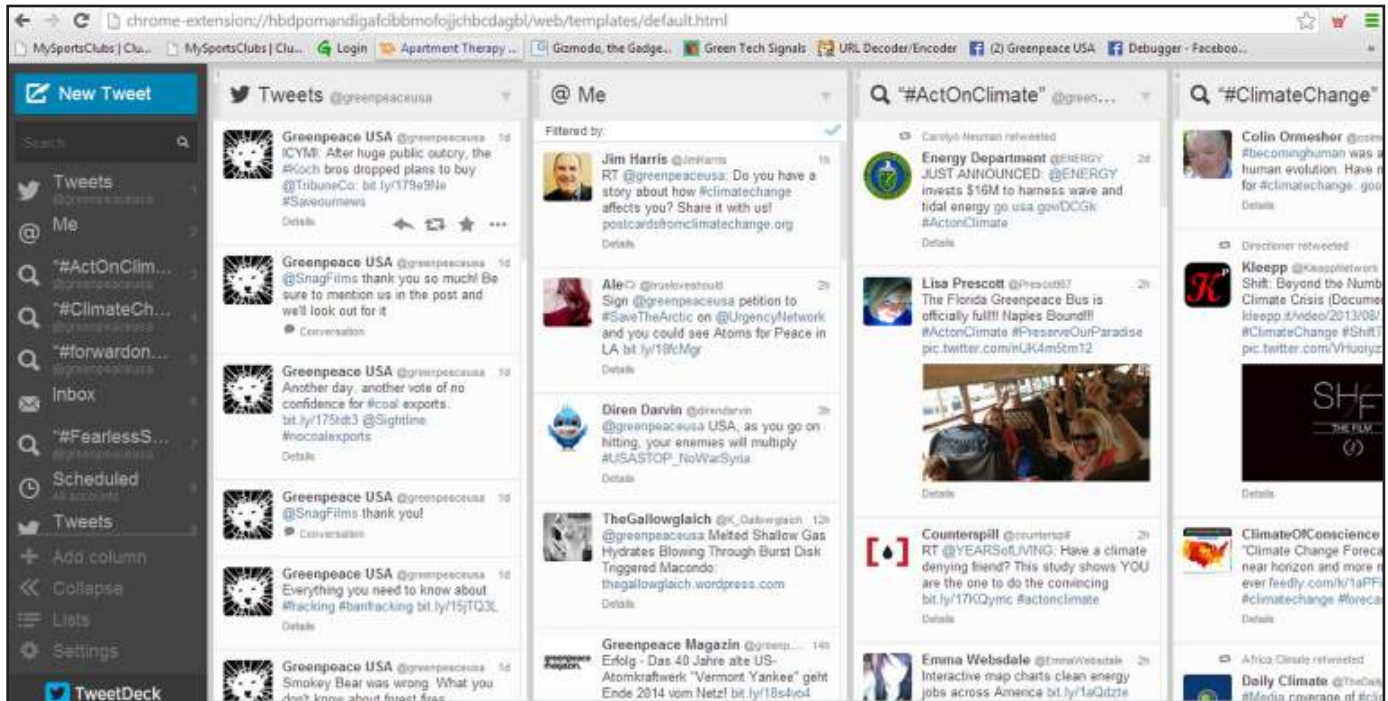
The screenshot above shows TweetDeck, which is logged into multiple Twitter accounts simultaneously.

✔ Hootsuite is also another free service, and has added features for a pretty low monthly price. It has added analysis functionality and allows you to run reports, and also allows you have multiple team members on one account so you can all schedule tweets together.

● *Use bit.ly or another URL shortener to track your tweets.* This type of tool allows you to actually see roughly how many people clicked on your version of the link you put out, so that you can track engagement of your tweets.

I hope this chapter has helped bring some more light into the wonderful world of Twitter, and given you some tips on how you can make your tweets fly further. Remember not to feel too overwhelmed. You don't have to do every single thing on here right now! Just take it one day at a time and do what you can. Twitter is an ever-changing platform, so don't forget to talk about this with your friends and colleagues! You never know, you might learn something new. And I'm always available to chat via @meenazahra!

Meena Hussain is the Social Media Strategist for Greenpeace USA. She creates online content for all social assets and writes the overall vision for Greenpeace USA's social media strategy. On her free time she likes to do things with her hands that don't involve the use of a screen, like rock climbing and knitting.

How to make memes
(without any graphic design skills)

By Green Memes

What's a meme, you ask?

For our purposes, a meme is one of those cool images you see all over your Facebook feed, with powerful quotes or words of truth layered on top of a photo. This is a super basic guide on how to make your own amazing memes.

Meme sticklers will point out that the word "meme" was originally coined by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, in the book, "The Selfish Gene". The word's original definition isn't far from what we're yearning for here: **a vehicle for a viral idea**.

What makes a great meme?

The most popular memes we've seen are those that **tell stories**, which is why we most often make memes that feature photos of activists explaining their personal reasons for doing the work they do.

We've also found it successful to make memes that **show breaking news through the lens of "people power"**. For example, we were once asked to make a meme that brought to life the great news that the 'Ison Rock Ridge Mountain' in Virginia had had its permit denied for mountaintop removal mining. Instead of just finding a photo of the mountain and layering the news on top of the mountain, we did some research and found a photo from a past rally to save that mountain, and then made a meme that showed the victory news below the protest photo. The meme turned out to be really popular - in part because it was good news, but also because people are hungry for the stories that show their own power (mainstream media rarely connects dots between the news and the people power that shapes the news - we can change that with social media.)

Where do you get a powerful photo for your meme?

1) Your photo library.

Maybe you've already taken a photo that would be a perfect fit for your next meme?

2) Google Images.

- Go here: http://images.google.com/
- Type in words that describe the kind of images you're looking for (i.e. - "tar sands protest")
- Protest photos are generally ok to use as long as you give credit to the photographer (activist photographers generally want their pics shared)
- Remember to always give photographer credit! Or better yet, *ask their permission!*
- See if you can find a larger resolution version of your chosen photo by selecting an image within Google's search results and clicking on the photo's dimensions, or clicking "Search by

image" and then "All sizes"

- If you are worried about licensing, check Creative Commons search tips below

3) Creative Commons Photos (photos you're allowed to use and re-mix)

- Search: http://search.creativecommons.org (we recommend highlighting "Google Images")
- Another search worth trying is "Flickr CC": http://flickrcc.bluemountains.net/flickrCC/index.php (This is a search for Creative Commons photos, or photos you're allowed to use, on Flickr. com.)
- Remember to give credit!

Time to Make Your Memes - using PicMonkey.com

1.) Uploading your image.

Visit   PicMonkey.com.   To upload an image, click "edit a photo". If we uploaded an image of an orange and a lemon, Figure 1 is what PicMonkey's image edit panel should look like.
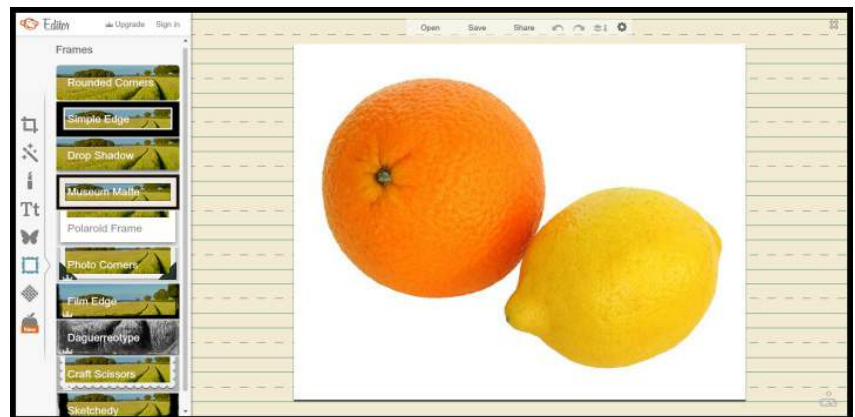
2.) Writing Text.

To add text, click the "Tt" symbol on the left. Then click "Add text". Now you'll be able to write on your image. You can also choose a font of your liking, alter the text size, change the font color, and move the text around, center it, and do other neat things.
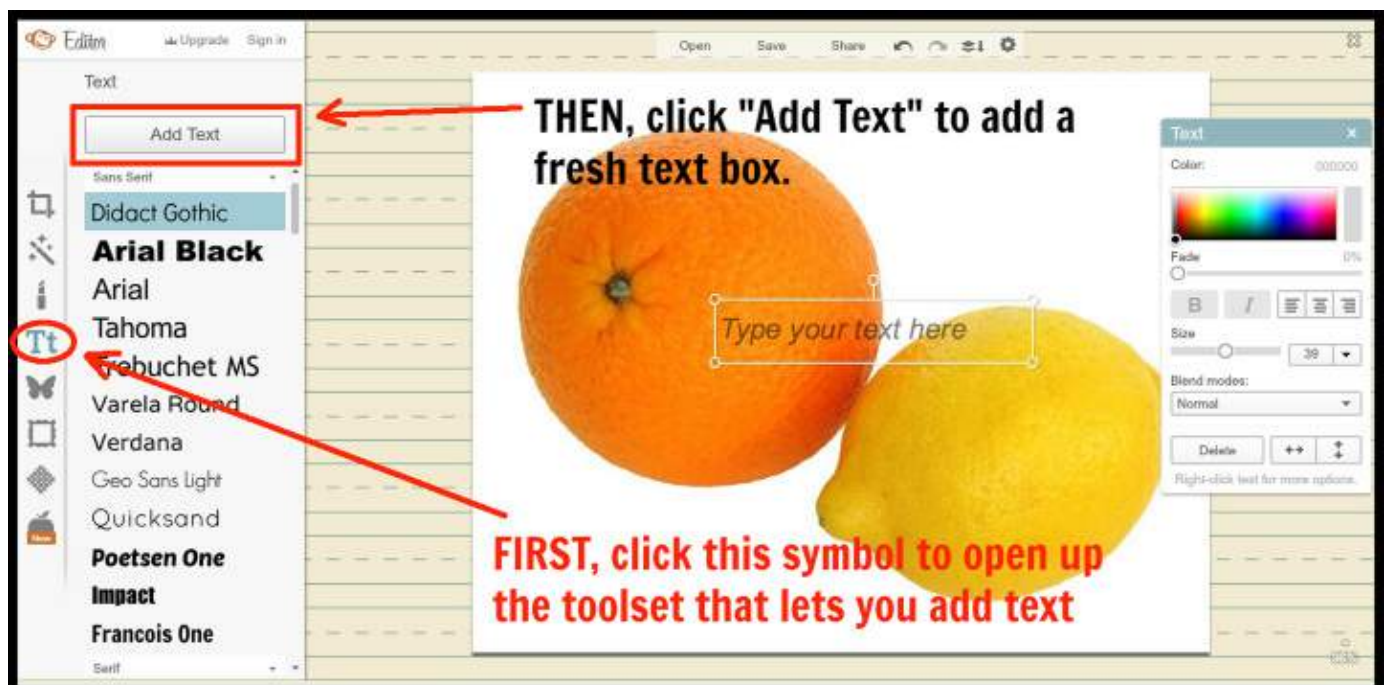

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

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Generally you want to use a lighter text on darker elements of your photo, and a darker text color on lighter elements of your photo.

Using this text feature, you might end up with an exchange of inter-fruit affection that looks something like this:

3.) Creating a pop up box to put behind text.

Figure 3.

Sometimes it can be challenging to choose a uniform text style and color that will stand out over all parts of a photo. This is especially the case with many pictures of groups of activists or mass protests! In these cases, we recommend adding a distinct color box behind your text to help your text pop out and stand out. Here's how to do that.

First, click the butterfly icon on the right, which is the symbol for "overlay" (Figure 4), then click "Geometric" (Figure 5).
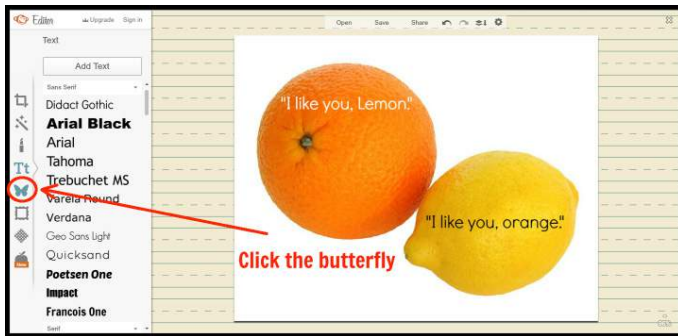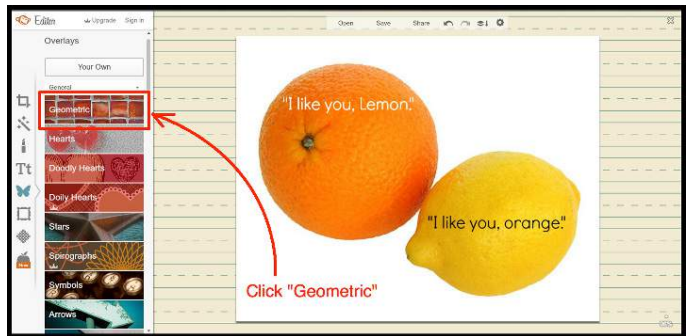

Figure 4.

Figure 5.

Then, choose the top left black rectangle (Figure 6). Now a black square should show up on your image. If your text is a light color, keeping this box black will be good. If your text is a dark color, it will be good to make this overlay box a lighter color (or white).

Hovering your mouse over the edges of the square will allow you to stretch it so it covers your text. Don't forget to move it into place, as well. Check out Figure 7 for that.
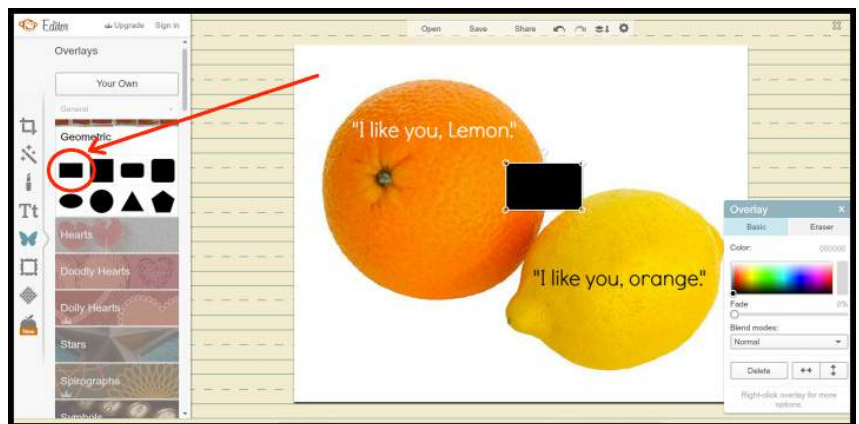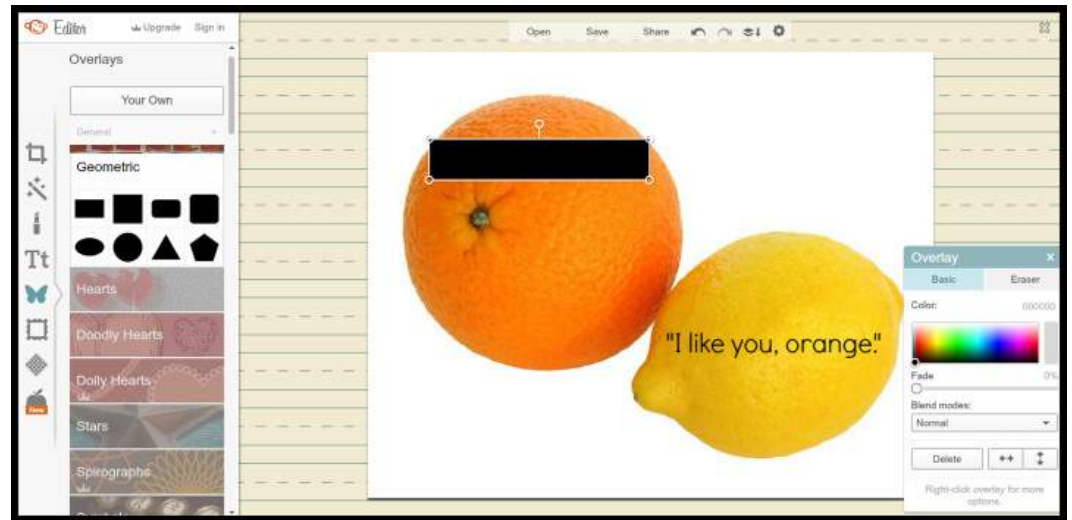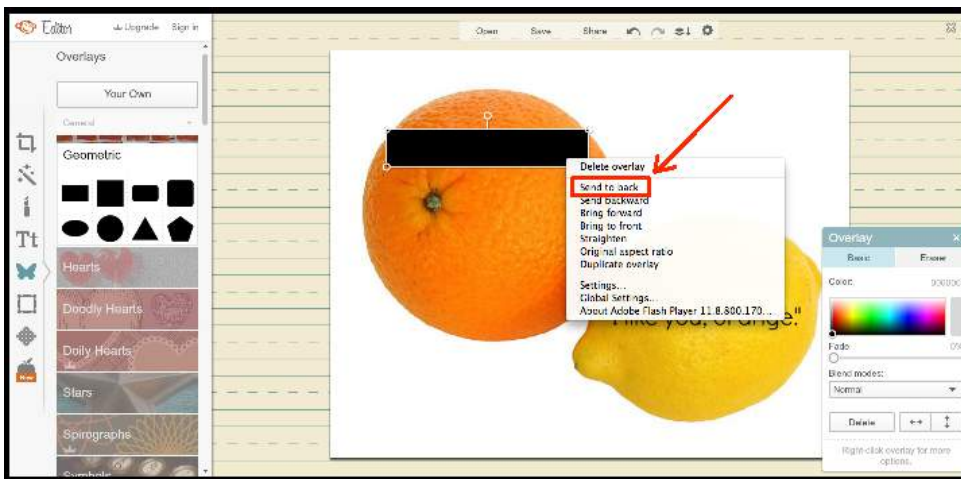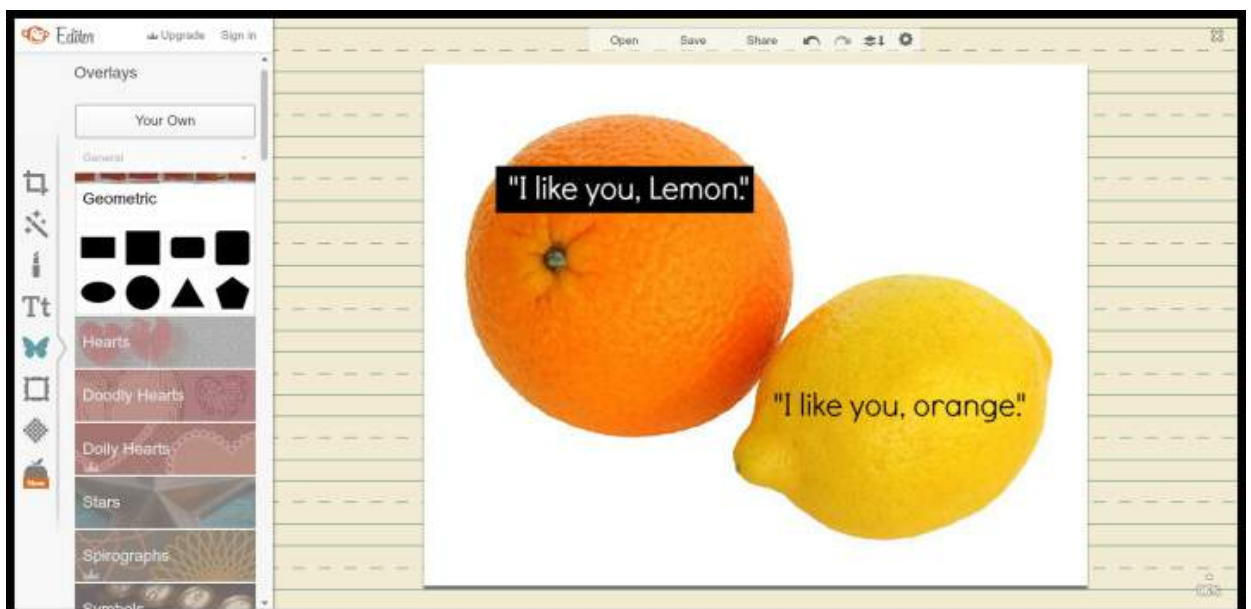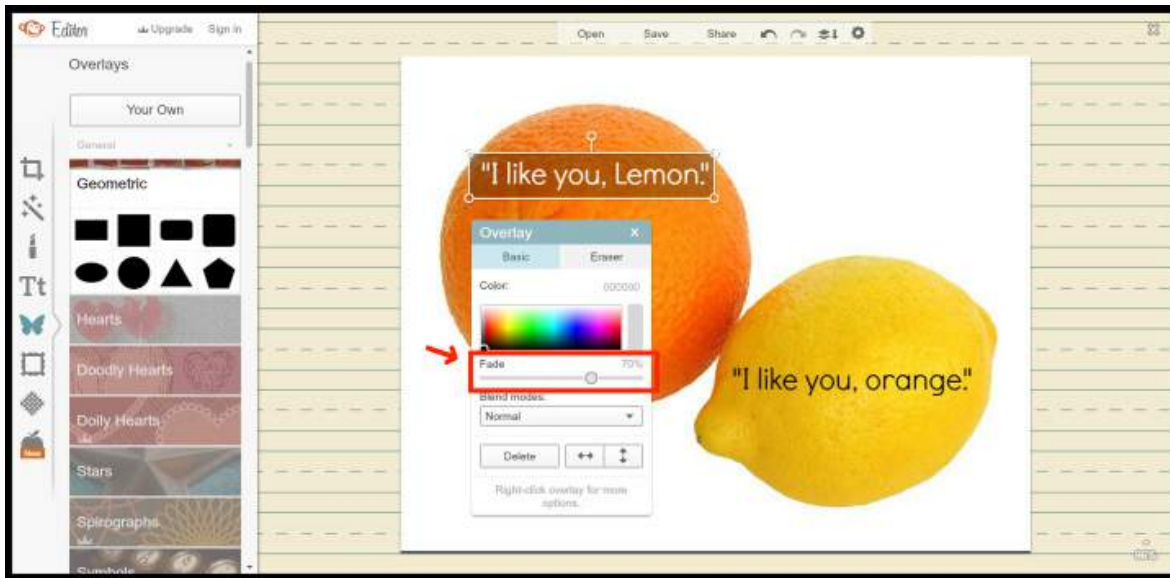

Figure 6.

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Figure 7.

Now right click anywhere on the black rectangle, and choose "Send to Back" (Figure 8).This is what you should see next in Figure 9 -- "Pop!"

Left: Figure 8.
Below: Figure 9.

You can also make the overlay transparent, by fading it, as shown in Figure 10. Usually a 20% fade is a good place to start. This is especially helpful when you've placed an overlay box on top of peoples' faces, and you still want their faces to be somewhat visible below the text.
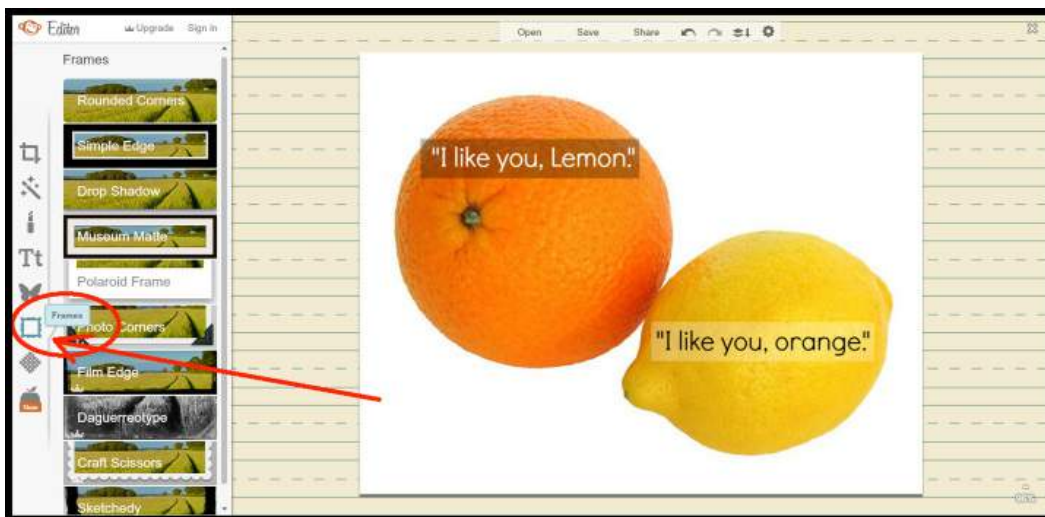

Figure 11.

4.) How to add a frame.

It's pretty easy to add a frame to your meme, and it can give it an extra professional polish that helps it stand out from the crowd.

Just click the frame symbol (Figure 11) from the left toolset panel. The frame we use the most is "Simple Edge". Simple Edge also lets you add a 'caption space', a la polaroid style. There are also lots of other great frame options to play around with.

5.) How to add your logo.

Make sure you have the logo you want to layer onto your image. In this case, we'll use the Green Memes logo.

First click the butterfly (overlay) symbol. Then click "Your Own" (this will enable you to upload a logo from your computer, or any image file.) Check out Figure 12 for a good look at this. You can move the logo wherever you'd like, and you can stretch it larger and smaller too.
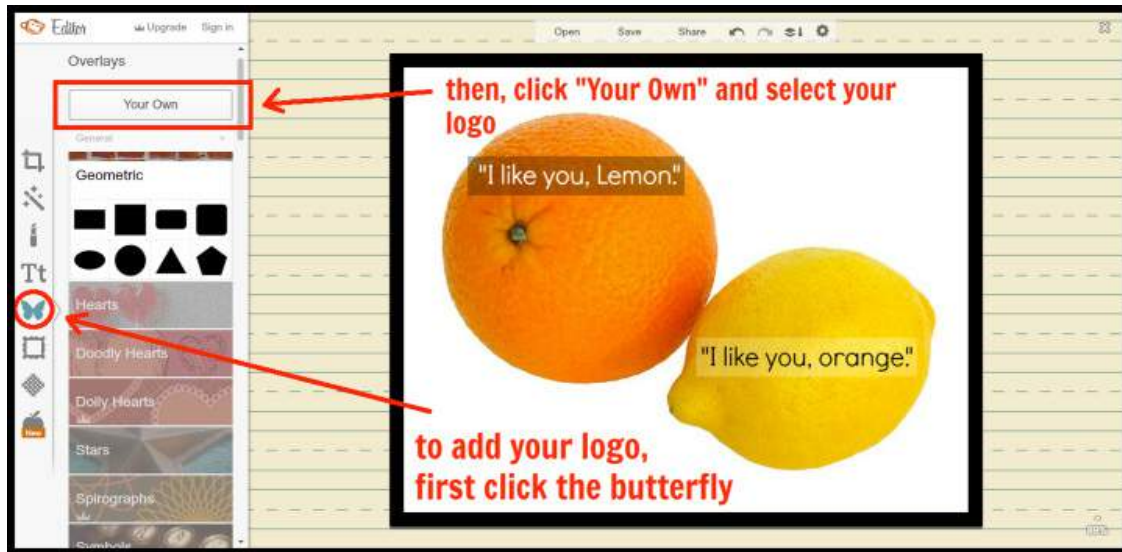

Figure 12.

6.) How to troubleshoot?

PicMonkey has a built in back button. Give it a whirl when something goes awry and you want to go back to how things were. You can hit it multiple times. See Figure 13.
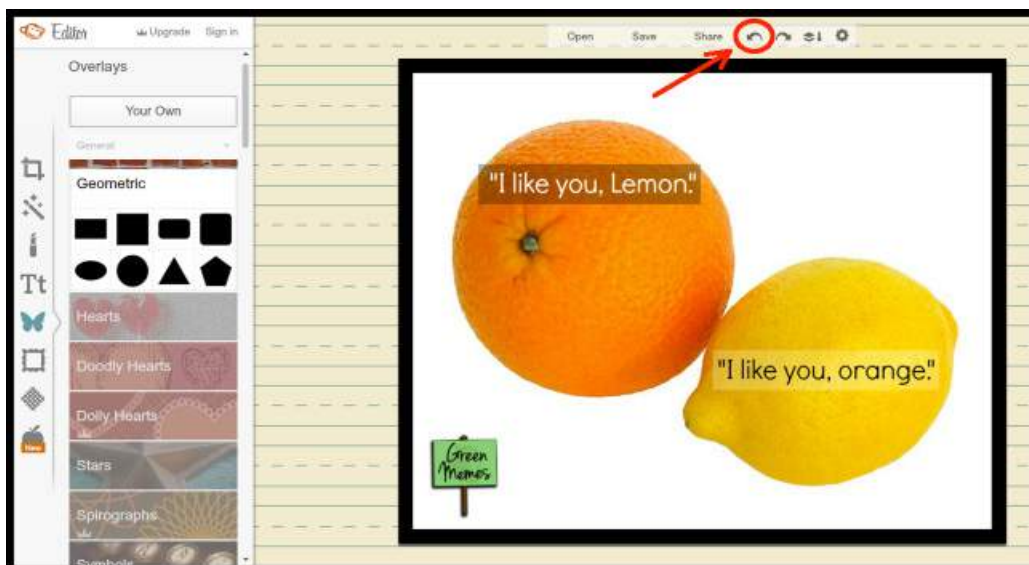

Figure 13.

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7.) Save and Download.

Once you're happy with your meme, click "Save" at the top of the window to save it on your computer. Then you can upload it to Facebook, or wherever!

Tip: Save your meme in the highest quality version.

Tip: When you upload the image to Facebook, make sure to give credit to the original photographer in the caption of your image. You can also give photographer credit in the meme itself by using PicMonkey's text feature.

Warning: One of the downsides of PicMonkey is that it doesn't host memes for later editing, so once you've closed out of your PicMonkey window, it's much more difficult to edit it again.

Ta-da -- you've just made an all-star meme!

There are plenty of other features in PicMonkey, from adding color effects and textures, to inserting arrows, mustaches and comic bubbles, and much else. Play around, experiment, take risks -- and you'll make memes that will stand out and maybe even take over the Internet.

MOVE THE WORLD:
ACE PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS & HOW TO ROCK OUT WITH FLICKR

By Shadia Fayne Wood

Planning for Photography

A lot of campaigns forget one very critical element to success, and that is photography. A campaign can be the most strategic, technically savvy, and logistically dialed and still fail if it has nothing to show for it -- if it doesn't have beautiful photos to demonstrate its power, ignite the media, and inspire its supporters.

We can't be online organizing experts without also being photography pros (or amateurs with a few tricks up our sleeves!). This chapter is both for potential photographers as well as for the digital/campaign teams that will be supporting them.

Here are 7 Quick Tips to Getting Great Photos

1) Photo Integration

In order to effectively tell the visual story of your event, you need to plan for that story by making sure a photographer is involved in planning conversations early on.

2) Aesthetics

Photographers are trained (either in school or on their own) to look at things differently. They view the world through aesthetics. This skill-set is incredibly helpful for action planning. Everything from site location, to the props, to the signs that are created, to the time of day of the action can all impact its visual success. Often these details if mildly adjusted can drastically change the outcome of your photos.

3) Trainings

If there are any trainings preceding an event/action, this is a good time for a photographer to introduce themselves and speak for a few minutes. Being at the trainings allows us to develop a relationship with the participants – they know who we are and our role, we can instruct them to look for us and at our cameras, we can provide insight as to what might be helpful while people are in formation. Participants of an action should also be instructed to match the mood of the main message otherwise the photos will be hard to share afterward (i.e. if the mood of the protest is somber and everyone has super big smiles in the photo, that can be disconcerting).

4) Contracts

Take time to write up a simple contract. It helps everyone to be clear on the terms of use for the

images during and after an event. Even if there is no payment for the work, it is important to know how the images can be used, by whom, and that photographer credit will be ensured.

5) Shot List

Before you begin shooting, create a "shot list." This is a list of images that you are anticipating you will shoot. Generically this can include: speakers, any notable participants, close ups, crowd shots, sweet children, poignant signs, behind the scenes organizing, pamphlets or materials laid out.

6) Who's Shooting?

It's very important that you know who is shooting photos at your action. It's very easy to think 'someone' will take photos, and that the media team will surely end up with them. This is a recipe for disaster. Know who your photographer(s) is, and have a plan beforehand. And if you are the designated photographer, you should assess if you need help. If you have a team of photographers, then it's good to plan out where each of you will be throughout the event to ensure your shots are varied.

7) Photo Timelines

Have a clear sense of when your images need to be up online and how long the shooting and editing will take. It is often the case that we need images either in real time or shortly after the action is complete. I manage this in a couple of ways.

1) Upload 5 images onsite using either a mifi device or a phone that tethers to the internet. After the first hour of the action, take a break (this is where having multiple photographers comes in handy) and look through your camera to find the best 5 images. Edit each image, taking no more than 5-10 min and then upload them to flickr, making sure to credit the image.

2) Get volunteers to help. Enlist the help of a card runner and an editor. The card runner meets you and any other photographers you are working with at a pre-planned meeting spot and picks up your camera's memory card and writes down the file number of the 10 best images you've identified. They then 'run' these to a "photo editor" to process the images and get them up online. This process requires you to have multiple cards.

IMPORTANT: Action photos depreciate quickly over time - they are almost always most impactful in the first few hours or day after a protest has happened. So make sure you have a plan for uploading quickly!

Editing

So you've got your first images up online and you've just finished the shoot. Now you want to get to a quiet space where you can edit and upload the rest of your images as quickly as you can.

Picasa - http://picasa.google.com/
- Free software
- Desktop based operating system
- Integrated with Google+ - Can tag photos and share with circles
- Editing options and filter options, including online editing

Before editing, I go through all the images and "flag" the best ones. Don't try to weed out the ones that are suboptimal; you'll waste time debating with yourself. After I have selected my batch I begin editing.
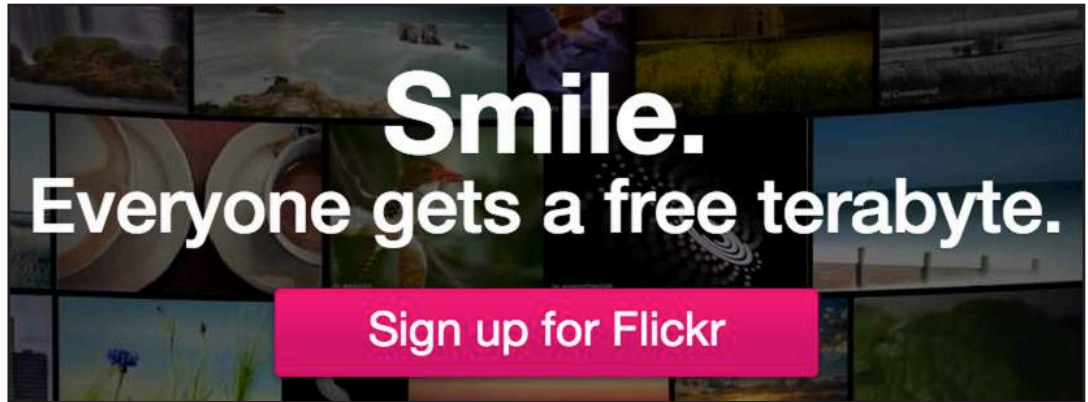
When just starting out, try Picasa. For folks who are ready for a more robust system— I recommend Photoshop and Lightroom.

Uploading to Flickr

Flickr is the photo storage and organizing platform that I have used to curate and organize nearly 100,000 photos. While it has its flaws, it really does a lot for a small price, granting you a terabyte of storage for $25.00/year. Flickr is often used as a photo search engine so that is why it is important to tag and caption your images. It is also easy to direct mainstream media to a flickr set where they can download images of an action. You can also embed Flickr slideshows onto your site and link to a highly curated set of your best images in an email blast.

Sets

"Sets" on Flickr are similar to photo albums. For an event you want to start with two sets—a general set of all great images and a best of set that includes only your very best images. Within each set make sure that the best images are at the top of the page.

For the general set, which is often titled the name of the event or action, I choose no more than 100 photos. I arrange these photos in a way that tells the visual story of the event, making sure to intersperse crowd shots with close ups.

With your 'best of' set I recommend using the title of the event followed by the words, "Editor's Choice: Name of Event." This should include no more than 45 of your best eye-popping images. Make sure each image is high-res, of the best technical quality, and paired with immaculate captions. For larger actions, we have created additional helpful sets sometimes including: youth, indigenous peoples, kids, speakers, regions, etc.

Captioning, Titling, and Tagging

Each image should be tagged, titled, captioned, and credited. This brings a level of professionality to your work, which will elevate your work in the eyes of mainstream press and also helps more people find your images when doing general searches.

For titles, describe the photo in a few words, identifying any major figures. For example: "Jihan Gearon Speaks out About the Keystone XL Pipeline."
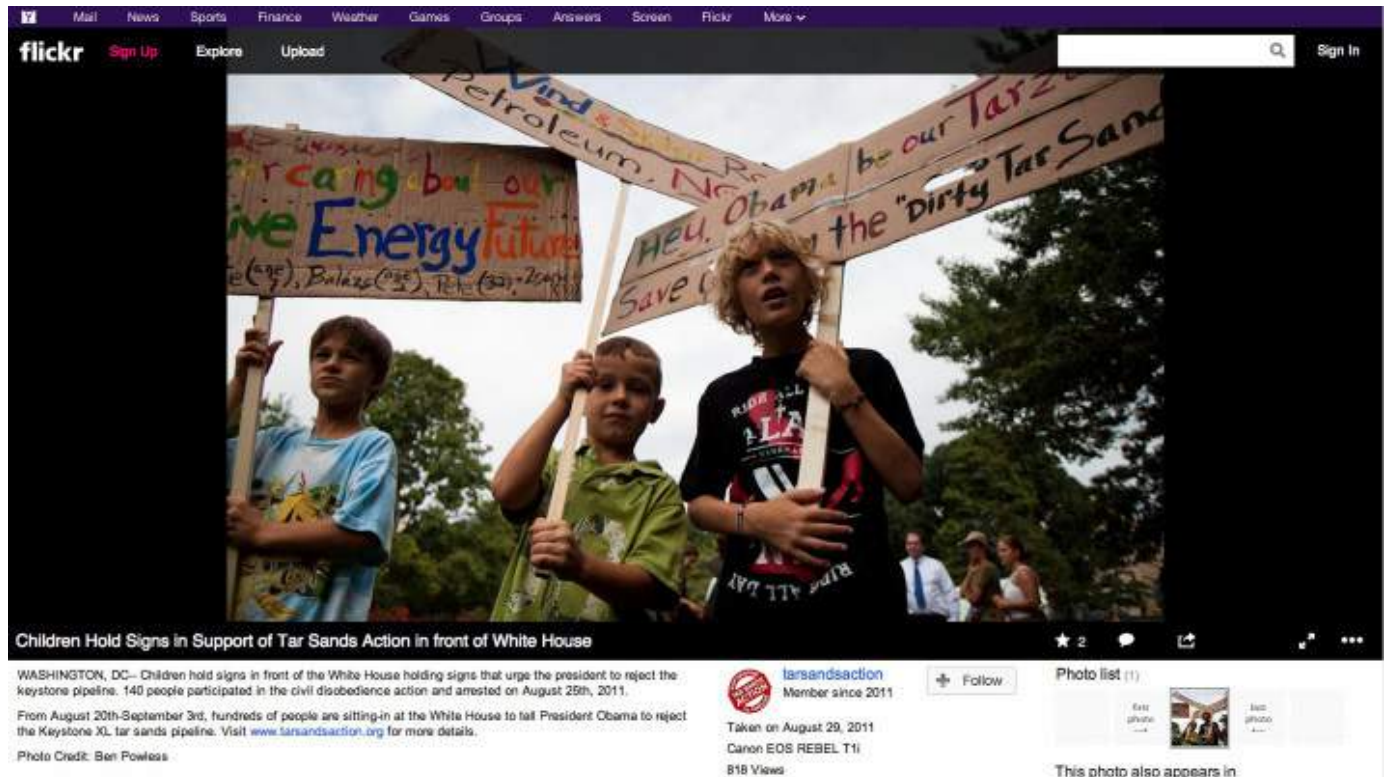
Captions are a bit more involved but super important because most mainstream media will not use a photo that doesn't have a proper caption. Also, captions help tell the story of our events. A complete

caption has at least two sentences. The first tells the story of the photo by tying together elements in the image and gives a bit of context. The second describes the overarching intent of the event.

Checklist to help you construct your caption:

☐ Where? Include city and country.

☐ When? The DATE, including the day of the week, date and year must appear in the body of all captions. Your images will be history some day.

☐ What is in the picture? Write so that you're completing a story, not just describing literally what's in the picture.

☐ Who? This is not always possible but try to include the names of people and why they are significant. All names need to be spelled correctly. Identify people from left to right.

☐ Why? Explain the circumstances and why the photo is relevant or powerful.

☐ Don't Forget: Each photo should also have a photographer credit or by-line.

For an example from Flickr - including the title and caption, see below!

The image above shows a picture on Flickr with a proper title and caption.

A Note on Tagging: For every photo you upload to Flickr, you can add an array of 'tags' - keywords that describe various facets of your photo. These tags can help people discover your photo from search engines. For the photo on the previous page, we might use the tags: nokxl, tarsands, keystonexl, protest, whitehouse, climatechange, children, etc.

Facebook

Facebook is where you want to share your images with your community of supporters. People can't always travel long distances to participate in actions but we can still grow our movement and inspire others to join us by sharing these images.

During Keystone XL protests in August 2011-September 2011, people saw our images on Facebook and immediately signed up to get arrested. I'd recommend sharing no more than 30 images on Facebook. Captions and credits on Facebook are also very helpful.

You can also use Facebook to 'tag' the people in your photos, which can help the photos get shared and take off.

Conclusion

Powerful photos can make a movement soar.

What if Rosa Parks never had a photographer? (Yes, she did - and that iconic image we have of her sitting in front of the bus wasn't an accident)

If you have a decent camera, a solid plan, and a good eye, you're well on your way to taking our movement's next iconic images.

Shadia Fayne Wood is the founder and Director of Project Survival Media, and a Brower Youth Award winner. She has managed photography teams for mulitple 350.org days of action as well led media teams for all the national summits on climate change Power Shift '07, '09, '11, and '13, as well as coordinated the media team for the Youth Delegation at UN Climate Negotiations in '08 and '09.

GMAIL THERAPY FOR ONLINE ORGANIZERS:
BREAK OUT OF YOUR OPPRESSIVE INBOX & ACHIEVE EMAIL BLISS

By Jon Warnow

Email is the stalwart veteran of online organizing. Social networks and shiny new tools may come and go, but email is here to stay.

If you're anything like me, you have a love-hate relationship with email.

Love: the ease, speed, and simplicity of it.

Hate: dealing with a sprawling, overwhelming inbox that distracts you from your real work.

A couple years ago, I realized that I was spending hours every day in my inbox – and that every wasted hour on email was one less hour I had to focus on my true goals. I wasn't sure exactly when things changed, but one thing had become clear: my relationship with email was on the rocks. I had gone from loving email's efficiency to dreading the soul-sucking vortex that was my inbox. Email had become an overbearing, naggy, time-wasting, oppressive, stress-inducing force in my life.

I know: it sounds like I'm describing a broken relationship. I thought the same thing, so I decided that email and I needed some couples' counseling. I went on a quest for email bliss: I scoured the web for best practices, asked my friends for tips, and closely monitored my own habits and patterns.

And at the end of it all, I can legitimately claim that my relationship with email has transformed: we're a happy couple once again.

My rocky relationship with email has won me some hard-earned lessons. Below is a collection of tips, tools, and tricks to maintain a lean, mean inbox and make email work for you.

Tips, Tools & Tricks

Keep it Lean and Embrace the "Archive"

Our basic goal here is to keep your inbox lean and manageable, so that it only contains the messages that you actually need to deal with. The key function to help you stay lean is "Archive." Archiving a message gets it out of your "Inbox" but,

> **The Fine Print :)**
> 1) This section was written with the assumption that you use GMail, Google's web-based email system. It seems most online organizers already use GMail – but even if you've chosen not to you should be able to glean some useful tips from the section below.
> 2) The tips below reflect how I work with GMail and what works for many of my colleagues -- but of course there's no single One Right GMail Way for everyone, and I'm still learning lots as I go.

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "There's no secret. You have to do the work. If you want to grow an online community, be a part of that online community. Show up, comment, post, tweet, day in and day out. Grow over time so that when your big issue comes up, you have an online army."
>
> Christy McConville, UNAC/UHCP

unlike Deleting a message, it remains in your "All Mail" folder. This means you can easily search for it later if you need it – but until then it's out of your inbox and out of your mind.

Start Fresh and Purge the Past

It's hard to even contemplate keeping a lean inbox if you currently have tens of thousands of accumulated emails staring at you in the face. That's why I recommend a "great inbox purge" to get you started. Here's how:

1) Archive EVERYTHING in 3 Steps. Seriously, to start, just follow steps 1-3 in the image below.

Step 1: Archive everything.

2) Un-archive recent messages that you still need to deal with. Go to your "All Mail" folder, and scan your most recent messages for important important emails you still need to deal with. Select those messages and move them to the inbox.
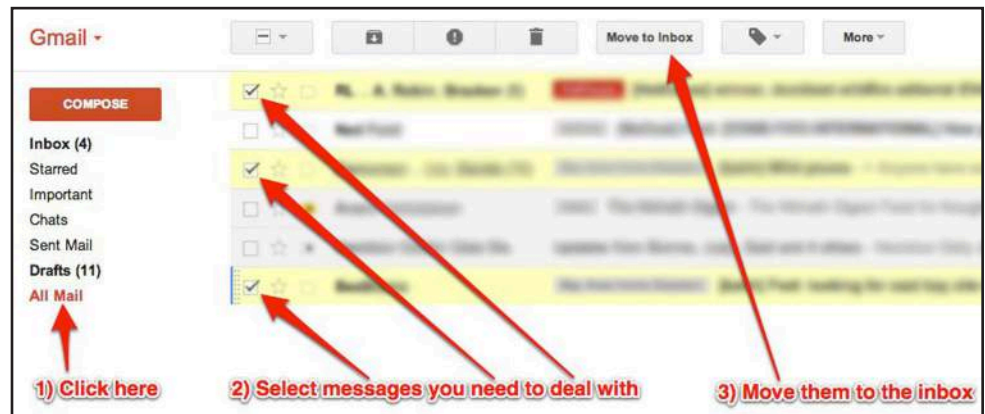
Step 2: Unarchive select emails.

Use Shortcuts
Rather than relying on your mouse to do all the work, master a few "keyboard shortcuts" in GMail. Shortcuts can be turned on in GMail Settings, and enable you to charge through your inbox in overdrive. I'll spare you the full list here, but the most useful shortcuts are:
Y = Archive
J = Older
K = Newer
] = Archive + Next
[= Archive + Previous
Tab + Enter = Send
S = add/remove a star
U: return to your inbox
? = Reveal all Shortcuts!

Work it With a Workflow

Now that your inbox has been purged, it's time to establish a standard email workflow – that is, a go-to procedure for how you deal with incoming emails. While there's no single "right way" when it comes to email workflow, the flow chart on the next page represents an efficient method for dealing with your inbox.

After you've used the workflow, your inbox should only contain messages that you need to deal with – and the really important ones will be starred. Deal with those first so you make sure they get handled, and then move on to the rest until your inbox is cleared out.

Does this message require my attention or a reply?
- Nope → **Archive It!**
- Yup → **Do I need to deal with it today?**
  - Nope → **Defer it and deal with it later**
    - Nope → **Is this message very important?**
      - Yup → **Add a star to mark it as Important**
  - Yup → **Will it take 3 minutes or less?**
    - Yup → **Deal with it now and archive it!**
    - Nope →
- **Move on to the next email**
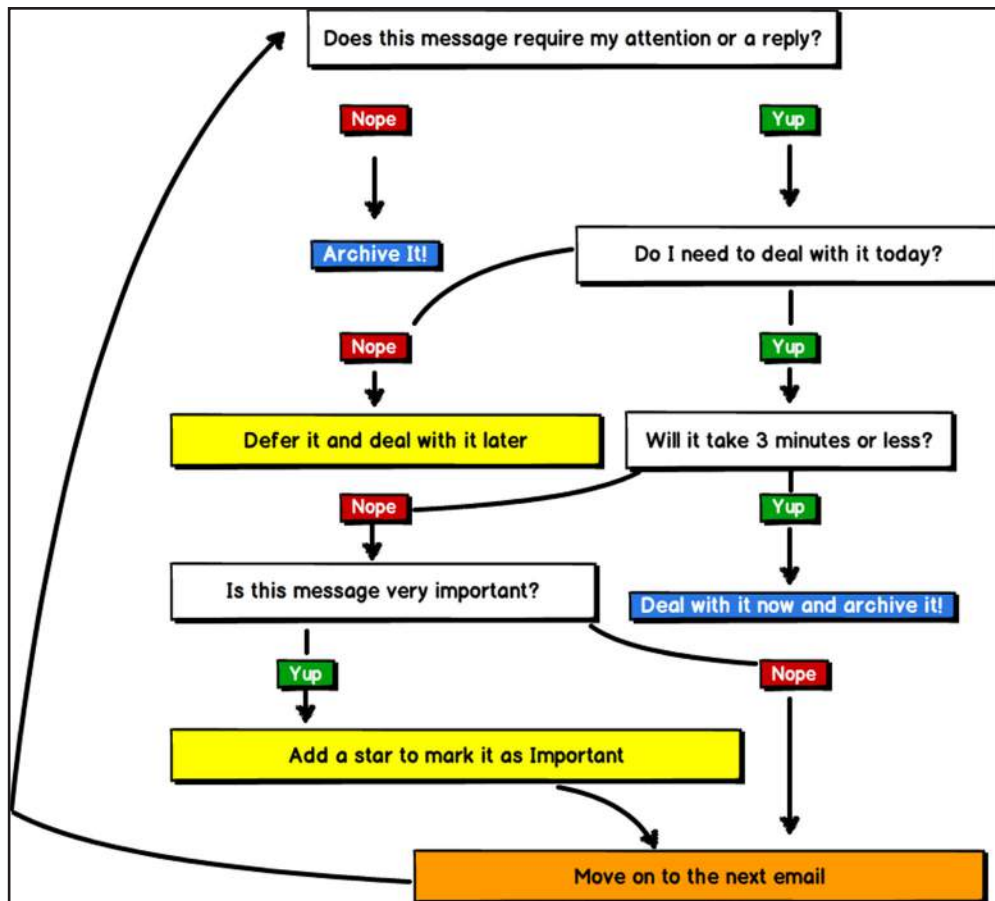
Fight the Addiction: Sprints, and Blackouts, and Interruptions

Our hyper-connected times have created a sickness of epidemic proportions: information addiction. Online organizers -- conditioned to be "always on" as we monitor our feeds for breaking news -- are especially susceptible.

Acquiring new information releases a pleasure chemical in the brain called dopamine, and even a boring email gives our brain the fix it craves. This means that it's incredibly tempting for us online organizers to check our email constantly, digital fiends jonesing for our next dopamine hit.

Of course, this isn't healthy – but just as important, it's incredibly inefficient. Study after study shows that multi-tasking is impossible: that when we're refreshing our Twitter feeds while composing an email blast while checking our inbox, we're actually just switching between those tasks rather than doing them all at once -- and when we switch tasks, we lose time.

Here's how to fight the addiction:

● Work in sprints. Don't do email as a constant background task, but rather tackle it in focused blocks of time.

A note on Inbox Zero
There's a growing obsession with getting rid of ALL the emails in your inbox and attaining a state of digital nirvana known to some as "Inbox Zero." While the aspiration is well-intentioned and understandable, it can have nasty unintended consequences. If we all start treating Inbox Zero as an end goal, I fear we'll find ourselves in an email arms race that doesn't serve our larger visions. Already, I see people ping-ponging messages back and forth with ruthless efficiency, desperate to get emails out of their inbox and tasks off of their plates. This ignores a fundamental fact: our goal isn't to zero our inboxes, it's to get important stuff done so we can build a better world.

● Create blackouts. This is the obvious corollary to sprints, but it's good to name it as a separate point. Create blocks of time when you are NOT on email – sometimes it's useful to put them in your daily schedule or even in your email signature (i.e. "NOTE: To reclaim my sanity, I now check my email three times a day at 10 am, 1 pm, and 4 pm – please don't expect an instant response. :) ")

● Eliminate interruptions. This means turning off any and all notifications of new emails – whether it's a buzzing phone, a chirping computer, or a pushy pop-up message alerting you that your next dopamine fix is ready. Resist the temptation! If you're getting GMail's built-in notifications, you can turn them off like this: click the "Gear" icon, click "Settings", and scroll down the page to the "Desktop Notifications" setting and select "Mail Notifications Off".

● Use a watchdog. There's no shame in enlisting a digital enforcer to micro-manage your time. If you really can't seem to stay out of your inbox, install a browser extension like "StayFocusd" or the Mac app "Self Control," which limits the amount of time you're allowed to spend on websites of your choosing.

Reduce the Inflow

1. Unsubscribe From Useless Mailing Lists

The easiest way to do this is through a web service called Unroll.me -- once you grant it a slightly disconcerting level of access to your inbox, it will search your messages for all the lists and groups you can unsubscribe from, and allow you to quickly unsubscribe from each one with just a click. Alternatively, you can just search your inbox for the word "Unsubscribe", which should bring up a pretty complete list of recent emails from listservs and mailing lists. Go through each one and click your personalized Unsubscribe link.

2. Mute the Madness

Is there an endless email chain that has no bearing on your work, and that you want to just opt out of? Well, just select "Mute" from the "More" menu (or press the "M" button if you've turned on keyboard shorcuts) to silence that email thread.

Become a Search Master

With your inbox lean and mean, you're going to need to learn how to find the messages you need by searching. There are a few "search operators" that are especially handy:

● from: [email address or name of recipient]

● to: [email address or name of recipient]

● has: [attachment]

● subject: [words in the subject you're looking for]

● after: [date in YYYY/M/D format]

Flustered? Worry not: The easiest way to construct more precise searches is to click the tiny down arrow in the search box. This magical arrow reveals an array of new search options that let you search by date, sender, subject, whether a message has an attachment, and more.

Forget About Folders

Now that you're a search master, it's time to forget about folders, labels, tags, and all other time-intensive email sorting habits. In the age of advanced search, you probably won't need them anyway – you can just use search to find the email you need. In this brave new world, the mantra of information management is "Search, don't sort!"

Filter the Clutter

GMail filters let you control what happens to incoming messages – you can use them to label, star, forward, or archive certain messages. Perhaps the handiest use of filters is to automatically label and archive certain mailing list messages – it's the one time I recommend using labels. Your labeled and archived mailing list messages won't clutter up your inbox, but they'll be waiting for you in "All Mail", and are just a click away. To setup a filter, search for the kind of message you want to filter, and select "Create Filter" from the "More" menu (see right).
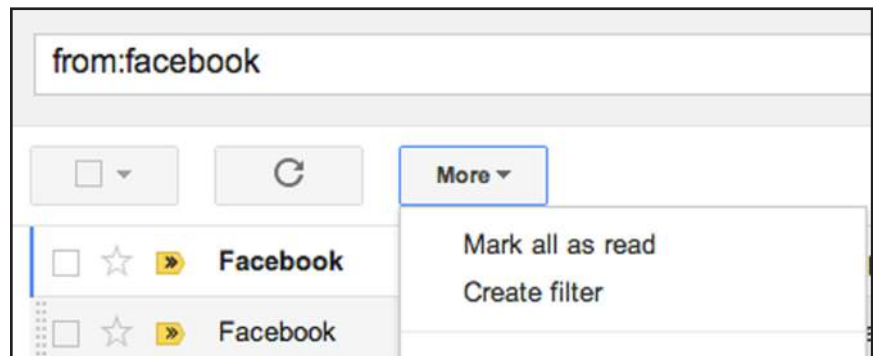
Go to the Labs

GMail's labs contain some experimental features – a few of which are quite useful for keeping your inbox lean:

● **Send & Archive:** creates a button to automatically archive a thread after you send a message.

● **Undo Send:** gives you a short window to cancel sending a message – useful in that "d'oh" moment after you send a message and realize a mistake or omission.

● **Canned Responses:** if you find yourself writing the same email repeatedly, Canned Responses does what it sounds like and is a life-saver.

Throw an Email Boomerang

Boomerang is actually a browser extension (available at www.boomeranggmail.com) that lets you do a few useful things:

● Schedule an email to be sent later -- good if you don't want to clutter someone's inbox on a weekend.

● Return an email to your inbox at a given time – helps deferring a non-urgent email to a later date so you can keep your inbox clutter-free.

● Return an email to your inbox only if nobody replies – useful if you think you'll need to follow-up with someone flaky. :)

Write the Emails You'd Want to Receive

As online organizers, we need to work together to set a high standard of online best practices. For writing email, this means crafting messages that are:

☐ Clear and concise. Speaking generally, try to keep email to a few short sentences, bolded action items, explicit deadlines, and clear next steps.

☐ Cordial. It's a good rule of thumb not to write emails when you're worked up.

☐ Personal. Don't be afraid to show a bit of personality in your emails, lest we all become ultra-efficient email automatons in dogged pursuit of a clean inbox. Remember, email was created to help us connect – so take full advantage!

Conclusion

Phew – that's about it. Follow the steps above and you'll be well on your way to email bliss! Of course, I'm just scratching the surface, and am still learning how to make my inbox work for me.

If you have questions, tips, or tricks that you think should be included in the next edition of this book – let me know! You can, um, email me at jwarnow@gmail.com -- I promise I won't filter you out. :)

Jonathan Warnow is the Digital Director at 350.org, where he works to empower a global movement to fight the climate crisis. He likes tiny houses, strong coffee, and joyful revolutionaries.

MOVING IT OFFLINE:
WHY REAL WORLD MATTERS & HOW TO HOST A MOMENTOUS MEETUP

By Dana Kuhnline

Phew, I'm sure your brain is brimming with new ways to use social media and the internet to bring your activism to the next level! Once you have your on-line base raring to go, however, your work will likely involve a group of humans gathering in one place to talk to each other. So, let's take a minute to focus on how we work together in the real world.

Meetings are important to me because I believe that when people work together in honest and democratic ways, they are smarter and more strategic. **#MorePeopleMoreSmart #MoreSmartMoreWin**.

While it can be quite pleasant to moan and groan about how social media has ruined our society for real-world interactions, in my humble opinion (IMHO) the prevalence of social media in activism has made the impact of real face-to-face interactions extra-super-powerful!

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "Social media is NOT social change! You gotta go out and do it!"
> Cindy Spoon, Tar Sands Blockade

Why meetings?

People generally come to meetings/events for one or both of these reasons: (A) to socialize and network (B) to get stuff done and achieve goals. Sometimes there are more nefarious motivations, but we'll save those for a different essay.

Don't underestimate the power of each of these motivations. **We live in an isolating world and if you are passionate about hard issues like climate, poverty, migration or all three, holy crap that is some scary hard work.** It can be powerful to create in-person spaces for authentic connections, hard work, and maybe even, you know, some fun and laughter.

Getting people there:

● **One-on-one interaction:** When was the last time someone called to invite you to an activist event for a cause you're not super involved in? Oh, do people call you all the time about activist events? OK Mr. Popular, stop bragging! For the rest of us, a phone call, personalized chat, or in-person check-in is super-motivating and, let's be honest, flattering! Be sure to ask: "So will I see you there?"

● **Use their time well (or they won't come back):** The amazing folks who want to come to your meetings are likely living their life at a dead sprint; it's great to respect their time with tight agendas and a plan (aka agenda) to work together democratically and efficiently towards a goal.

● **Reminders:** Say, texting them a reminder a few hours/days before the meeting? Some people don't check their email every 20 minutes, so do try and avoid last minute plans and

changes. Plan well in advance and be kind with friendly reminders.

● **Research the community:** If someone seems interested but never comes, ask them, "So, how do you like to receive reminders/updates?" If you are in a new community, ask around and see how people actually prefer to communicate with each other.

During The Meeting:

Having a democratic structure written down on paper isn't enough – radical democracy is a way of life! You need to be constantly encouraging folks to participate, give their input, and feel a part of the group. Hang your goals and mission on the wall so you have to look at it during your meetings!

Here are a few key roles to fill at each event:

● **Facilitator:** The facilitator isn't the boss of the meeting. Their job is to keep the group moving forward in an inclusive way. Set up the agenda in advance and check-in with key folks to make sure the agenda works for the goals of the group and the goals of the meeting. If your group and/or your meeting doesn't have goals, hmmmm…you should think about getting some.

● **Note-taker:** Don't just take notes – write down the responsibilities people signed up for, clearly note key decisions, write down when and where the next meeting is, and then be sure to share these super-functional notes with everyone in the group – especially the folks who couldn't attend!

● **Host (aka vibes-watcher):** This person catches up people who arrive late, keeps an eye out for someone who looks uncomfortable or unsure, shows people where the bathroom is, and other basic kind and civil things.

● **Good facilitation prevents you from:**

- ✔ Losing ideas—from quiet folks or alienated folks
- ✔ Losing members – #unproductive meetings = #sadness
- ✔ Losing patience – some conflicts are great and crucial to helping groups grow and refine their mission and their work. Some conflicts are pointless and soul-destroying. Good facilitation will help you know the difference.
- ✔ Losing commitment – The more involved folks are in the process, the more committed they will be to seeing it out – and the better it will be!

Six Facilitation Tips

(For more than 6 thoughts on facilitation, check out this lovely resource from Training for Change trainingforchange.org/meeting_facilitation)

1. Have a Goal: A facilitator's job is to help move the group forward to accomplish a task - but if you don't have a goal or task to work towards, your meeting will spin in circles. Say the goal of tonight's meeting is to decide on a date and time for your big rally: "I think we can delegate some of these conversations to committee, but we all agreed that we need to discuss the rally time and date as a full group and come to a decision tonight."

2. Plan in Advance: You are not a magician (though maybe you are!) and facilitation isn't magic. It's actually pretty hard work, and it's really helpful to think about all the issues you may run into, and work on them outside of the meetings. For all your facilitation problems, the first question to ask is: "How can I work on this problem outside the meeting via one-on-one conversations with group members and more advance meeting preparation?"

3. Be Transparent: You have a goal and you planned out an agenda in advance of the meeting - now be transparent to the group about your choices as a facilitator. You don't need to overshare every little detail, but transparency helps to build trust. People tend to participate more freely if they know why they are being asked to do something. "We're going to break up into small groups now, because I think some smaller discussions would allow us to get more in depth with this important topic."

4. Try Small Groups: Small groups aren't just awesome because they give the facilitator a chance to run to the bathroom, they also give people more opportunities to talk in a safer space. Small groups let quieter people speak up, allow people to have more in depth conversations and make better personal connections. If the room is low energy, switching to small groups can blow it up!

> *Hot tip:* Give groups *a goal for the discussion* (ex: instead of "discuss potential campaign targets" try "narrow down to your top two campaign targets") and a *formatted reportback structure* (ex: "Now each group will share their top two targets with a few reasons each why they chose them") to make small group time especially productive.

5. Build From Key Shared Values: Sometimes I start discussion of big topics by asking, "What are the VALUES we'd like to see present at this rally?" A list of values might include, say, that we want the rally to be led by impacted people and that we want the rally to be accessible to families with children. *Once these values are established, encourage people to use them* to guide discussion, "We all agreed we want this event to appeal to families, so with that in mind, when is a good time for the rally to start?" Shared values can also support more efficient committee work: "The media team is empowered to draft up a press release using the values we all agreed on as guidance."

6. Remember: #morepeople = #moresmart = #morewin: It's not just polite, it's actually strategic to make sure you're hearing from everyone in the room. Make space for quiet people in your group. If someone isn't talking, check in to see if there's a reason why. Giving folks a few minutes to write/draw/think quietly before asking for input is a great way to let deliberate thinkers collect their thoughts. Also, see: 'Try Small Groups'

> *Hot tip:* Use the magical phrase: *"Lets hear from…"* It's a classic phrase for a reason! Use it like this: *"Let's hear from people who haven't spoken yet…the left side of the room…some people who have never been to one of these meetings… women…young people...Everything we've heard so far is has been on the same page...Let's hear from people who have some opinions/perspectives that are different from what we've been hearing so far."*

Question Everything!

Ask yourself some questions – what makes a meeting awesome? What groups do I love being a part of? What do I hope to get out of this meeting? Then, call some people on the phone or meet up with them for coffee and ask them the same thing! Remember: More People=More Smart.

Who is coming? What cultures are represented? What kind of building, parking situation, music, food and socializing do these cultures see as comfortable and normal? How do those people get information about your next meeting?

Some real advice using #FakeMath:

● **Rule of Halves:** Half of the people you Facebook invite to your event will "join"; half of those people who "join" are actually planning to come and half of those people actually attend... So if you

want 20 people at your party, you need to invite 160! And then call/email/text to remind them!

● **Timey-wimey…stuff:** When you waste 10 minutes in a room with 100 people, you've just wasted 1,000 minutes of collective time! Ergo and thusly, according to my math skills, an hour of pre-planning can save hours of collective time.

● **3.14:** Pie is awesome – as are all snacks. Also, pi is the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter and you should always endeavor to set up your chairs in a circle at meetings.

● **(Cp) = 5/2 Nk = Cv + Nk:** What does that mean? Who cares? Don't use jargon! Try and avoid activist alphabet soup, however delicious and efficient it may seem. Don't assume people know stuff – including twinkle hand signals, etc.

● **[inclusive, intervals]:** Have concrete ways that people can plug into the work -make a sign for the protest, bring food, share this meme, join this working group, tell jokes, etc.

Ok, Time to Shut it down!

The ending of a meeting has a huge influence on people's memories of the entire event. So here are some hot tips for happy endings:

● **Keep in touch:** Pass around a sheet to collect contact information! Don't immediately lose this sheet – instead add it to a spreadsheet (oooh, spreadsheets!) and keep track of your people.

● **Re-cap–** Remind folks that they accomplished something and affirm what their responsibilities are moving forward! Did you meet your goals? What are the next steps? Who's doing what?

● **Evaluate** –How did it go? I like a Five Finger shoot – hold up 1-5 fingers based on how well you think the meeting went. Any suggestions for next time?

● **Assign and Schedule** –Who is facilitating the next meeting? When is it? Don't let your people go without telling them what the next awesome thing is!

● **Celebrate!** End on a positive note! Talk about a success! Talk about someone in the group that was super awesome recently! If it's an ongoing meeting, create a ritual – a song, a secret handshake, an inspiring story, a challenge to feats of strength… For real – activism is hard work! But a group of people getting together to work on something is always a victory, and we should practice acknowledging our success.

● **Party!** Why not have an optional meet up afterward at some place that's culturally and economically feasible? The gluten-free beer isn't going to drink itself, after all.

Dana Kuhnline enjoys thinking about how humans work together with other humans to get things done. She has been active in the movement to stop mountaintop removal coal mining since 2005. It has been her honor to be a part of numerous cross-movement collaborations as a facilitator and logistics person. She loves healthy communities, clean drinking water, and exciting stuff like travel coordination, meeting planning, multi-colored spreadsheets and well-facilitated conference calls. She blogs about meetings at roundrobinfacilitation.wordpress.com and about sewing at waterpenny.net.

CASE STUDY:
TAR SANDS BLOCKADE
FIGHTING THE KEYSTONE XL IN RURAL EAST TEXAS

By Will Wooten

The Tar Sands Blockade (TSB) is a sustained nonviolent civil disobedience campaign that began in Texas as a response to the southern leg of the Keystone XL's approval and construction.

One of the most iconic banners of the Tar Sands Blockade.

Beginning with a single landowner and a small group of climate justice activists from Denton, TX, the Tar Sands Blockade has brought national attention to the struggle of East Texas landowners, refinery communities in Houston, and indigenous groups in the path of the Keystone XL pipeline.

One of the key goals of building a following on social media was to grow our numbers and spread the word about upcoming trainings and action camps. TSB recruited activists from around the country to participate in actions in Texas including through online organizing. The second major goal was to create our own media system to tell the story of East Texas landowners and activists without relying on traditional media. That goal has expanded over time to include telling the story of many different frontline communities fighting extreme energy extraction.

How we broke through the noise online

Tar Sands Blockade announced its existence to the public by launching our website, Facebook page and Twitter account all on the same day. This launch was timed to coincide with a big boost from a large ally we had made through previous activism. We asked this big ally for help and the result was a blast email sent to tens of thousands of people asking for funding and directing them to TSB's website and social media.

One email from the established organizations felt like a big ask coming from a small group of activists,

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[Nugget of Wisdom]

"Social Media is an art form, never lose sight of this. The better you choose your words, the more aesthetically pleasing your meme is, the more evocative your pictures are, all play in to how well it performs. And ultimately, how well it conveys the beauty and power of our movement."

Patrick Kennedy, Energy Action Coalition

---

especially a fundraising pitch. Activists kept in good communication with some of our bigger allies for months leading up to the public launch. The result of the trust built was an email blast that brought us badly needed funding, an email list with a few thousand addresses, about 300 Facebook followers and 100 Twitter followers. That might not seem like much, but it was enough to break through the noise and communicate with supporters directly. Those highly active supporters (they got an email, read it, clicked through to our social media pages and

Banner used in a TSB action.

followed us) became the base which could spread memes and information to a larger audience as real actions began. When the email was sent out, it attracted so many hits our website crashed and we likely lost hundreds of good contacts. The lesson learned was to always keep traffic levels in mind and know exactly what to do if the website crashes.

How we got our first national coverage and stole the show

Tar Sands Blockade's first protest was coordinated with a social media day of action that earned our first national media coverage in the Los Angeles Times. Construction of the Keystone XL pipeline began in August 2012, but no major press outlets had reported that fact (likely because TransCanada did not send out a press release). TSB decided to take advantage of the situation and break the news ourselves. Nothing spreads on social media quicker than breaking news, and our small group of activists scooped the entire mainstream media. We wrote a social media plan, putting an embargo on the information while reaching out to our movement allies with large followings asking them to break the news with us.

Our allies would share the breaking news along with pictures of rolling banner actions across the region as soon as we gave the green light. Links, pictures and available media were organized into an online document which we shared with our allies. At the very top highlighted in bright red it said "EMBARGO IN EFFECT." As soon as our social media team got the all clear we changed the heading the bright green and said "GO." To make sure our allies saw the information we sent out a reminder email to their social media organizers. Throughout the next couple hours allies with 20,000 – 250,000+ Twitter and Facebook followers each shared our already provided links, pictures and breaking news. The start of Keystone construction was a big story, and the Los Angeles Times picked up on it, focusing the coverage on our protests. With this action came the opportunity for TSB to announce its existence to a larger audience, as well as the movement as a whole getting the opportunity to frame the start of construction.

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How we used social media to expose a tar sands spill

In an unexpected turn of events, the Exxon Pegasus tar sands spill in Mayflower, Arkansas became an important moment for the campaign. The 375,000 gallon spill was closely guarded by Exxon, who locked down the area threatening mainstream reporters with arrest. Activists ignored the threat and risked arrest to get photos and video of the spill. These pictures and video were by far the most shared and viewed posts Tar Sands Blockade has ever made. Without pictures and video taken by activists and shared through our social media, the spill would have gone mostly unreported (larger tar sands spills have happened since then and received no attention since there were no pictures or video available). Twitter was used to bring the spill to the attention of mainstream news by tagging major blogs, journalists and TV hosts.
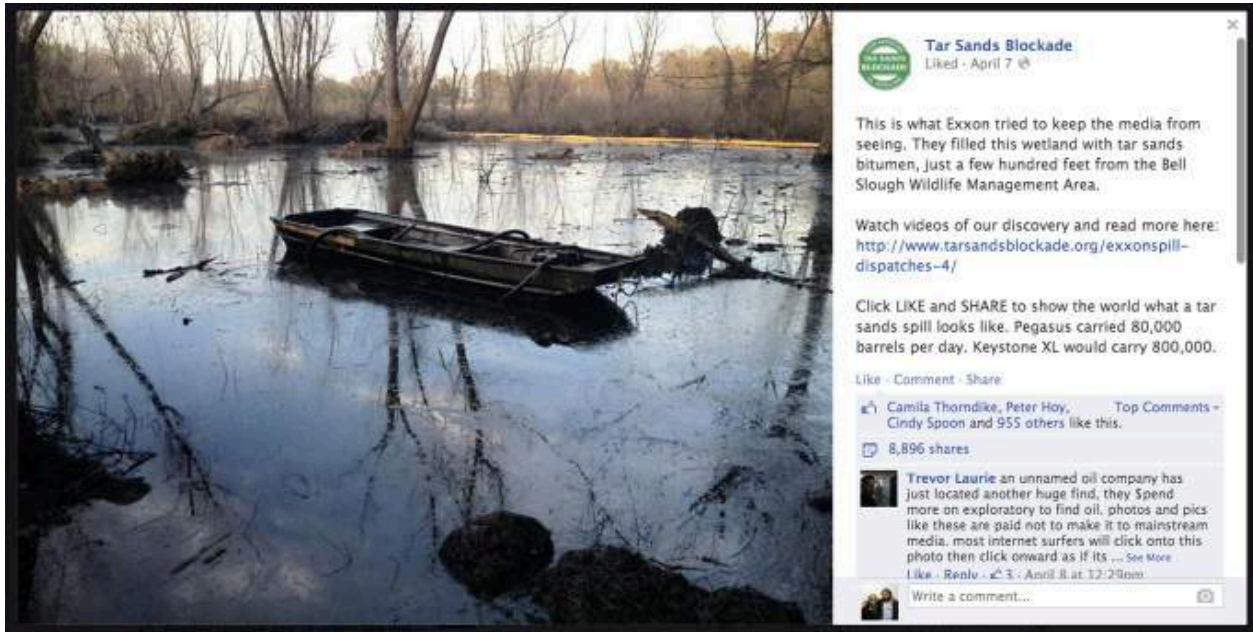
The video taken by activists and first posted by TSB social media accounts ended up on the Rachel Maddow Show and the Colbert Report, who likely found it on social media or one of the many blogs who picked up the story after we brought it to the blogs' attention.

The NPR news director in Little Rock, Michael Hibblen, conducted an interview where another reporter, Stephen Malagodi, described his experience on social media. Hibblen had posted a photo album of green, Exxon-approved pictures of clean up efforts on Facebook. At exactly the same time, directly adjacent to the NPR photo album, Malagodi saw our pictures of the wetlands filled with tar sands. The contrast could not be clearer and Malagodi wondered if the mainstream media wasn't doing its job. TSB's social media created our own narrative about the spill and hurt Exxon's attempts to hide the true cost of the spill.

[Nugget of Wisdom]

"Your audience is intelligent! Don't dumb down your message. Be profound and brilliant, and your supporters will appreciate and respect you for it."
Kimberly Ellis, drgoddess.com

How we pay it forward and help out our friends

The campaign's success on social media is largely due to the help of allies large and small. The larger movement helped build our social media capacity as much as our organizers, so in a way the campaign belongs to everyone that has helped us along the way. Without established groups like 350.org, Occupy Wall Street, Greenpeace, Peaceful Uprising, CodePink, Veterans for Peace, YourAnonNews and other grassroots activists discussing the campaign on social media and sharing our story, our reach would have been far smaller and the campaign might not have been as successful. To reach such a variety of groups and concerns we connected our fight with theirs, talking about their issues as well as our own. Our fight for climate justice is tied with racial justice, with environmental justice, with patriarchy and class struggle. This is the larger story we are telling and social media is a megaphone we use to connect the dots.

After getting so much help from our allies for the past year, we are now in a position to help out others. Whether it's supporting Fort Lucero, a foreclosure defense direct action related to Occupy Los Angeles, or helping drive comments to the State Department with the Sierra Club, or raising a few dollars to help independent media organizers, we help our allies as they helped us when we got started. It's about solidarity with our friends who use similar tactics, or have similar goals, or who have made contributions to our cause in some way. We remember how great it felt as a small group to have 30 million views in 5 months on our social media. It gave the campaign confidence people were watching and supporting us. If we can help out others and make them feel like we did, then that's a great way to use the social media TSB and the movement has built, together.

Will Wooten helms social media organizing for the Tar Sands Blockade. He has been an organizer with Democracy for America, Occupy Denton, Obama for America, Alliance for Climate Protection and Rising Tide North Texas.

5 Social Media Lessons Learned
from Tar Sands Blockade

with Ethan Nuss

1. Go do it! What's the best way to get people to share your stuff online? Get off of your laptop and go do something amazing! Photos of ordinary people doing bold, audacious actions make for some of the most viral online content. Tar Sands Blockade owes much of its social media success to the bravery of our activists and the powerful stories from impacted community members.

2. Solidarity! We've found that giving shout outs and sharing other organizations' content helps create a really compelling larger narrative of our interconnected movements. Remember: most people don't "like" your page to subscribe to a solitary organizational voice - they want to hear your movement's heartbeat. Plus, if you share your allies' content they'll likely return the favor.

3. Breaking - Breaking posts fly the furthest. Be the first to break the story but balance that urgency with quality content. We've found it's often worth waiting several hours after an action is initially deployed to make sure your first facebook post features an iconic high res photo that will hopefully go viral.

4. Plan - Good organizing requires good planning. Online organizing is no different. Tar Sands Blockade crafted a specific message, prepped sample content, and set goals with the intent to tell a comprehensive story that amplifies the struggles of impacted people.

5. Photos - Images have been instrumental for Tar Sands Blockade to convey what direct action is all about. We've been able to directly show the ugly reality of the industries' impacts, put a human face to those living on the front lines, and highlight the direct confrontation between these forces. A good image, like a good action, can convey this complex story in a single sharable shot.

Tar Sands Blockade Facebook Page: A Timeline

Tar Sands Blockade

Daily New Likes

Events marked on the timeline:
- Launch/350 Email
- Construction Begins/ Social Media Day of Action
- 1st Lockdown
- Winnsboro Tree Blockade
- Daryl Hannah Arrested With Landowner
- Monopod
- Oct 15 Mass Action
- Jill Stein Arrested
- Nov 17 Mass Action
- Blockade Inside Keystone XL
- Jan 7 Mass Action
- Mayflower Tar Sands Spill

Total likes values (bar graph): 1758, 3463, 6583, 13303, 16416, 19186, 21699, 23758, 26331, 29693, 30863

Timeline months: July 2012, August 2012, September 2012, October 2012, November 2012, December 2012, January 2013, February 2013, March 2013, April 2013, May 2013

The graph above shows a timeline of Likes on the Tar Sands Blockade Facebook page. The bar graph shows total likes, and the line graph shows new likes daily. Important events are identified with arrows. Graph created by Will Wooten.

CASE STUDY: OPENMEDIA.CA
DON'T MESS WITH THE INTERNET

By Lindsey Pinto

Introduction: What Was All The Fuss About?

It's a fairly well-known fact that Canadians pay much more for the Internet than we ought to. Our Internet service market has, for a long time, been dominated by just a handful of big telecom companies that have taken liberties with our wallets, knowing that users hardly have anywhere to turn if we're unhappy.

So when policymakers at the CRTC (Canada's telecom authority) approved a move that would further stifle choice—one that would allow Big Telecom to control Internet pricing, and impose a punitive billing model that would effectively put a pay-meter on everyone's Internet—and prices began to climb even higher, Canadians were just about ready to storm Bell's headquarters. As a result, thousands participated in our Stop The Meter campaign and did what we half-jokingly refer to as "using the Internet to save the Internet". Instead of trying to force change from the top down, we built our community from the ground up. Here's how:

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
>
> "Take smart risks. Be the first to say what everyone's thinking, but nobody can quite say."
> Cayden Mak, 18millionrising.org

More Than A Petition

Stop The Meter started with a petition. Well...arguably four petitions. The first was on the OpenMedia website, and had all the makings of a standard online petition (first name, last name...you know the drill). But from the very start, next to that online form were three links: "Sign the petition on Facebook", "Sign the petition on Twitter", and "Download the petition and pass it around".

Above: Twitter version of the petition.

Facebook

The "petition" on Facebook was a "note" hosted by our organization's page, that people could "sign" by liking or commenting. This step also had the unexpected result of

growing our community by the thousands, and giving them a more direct means to reach us and each other.

Twitter

The Twitter action was a bit less conventional. Through most of the campaign we used a third-party tool called act.ly, a Twitter-based advocacy tool that allowed us to specify a target (then-Industry Minister Tony Clement) and specify a message to tweet to that target. When someone would take action by sending the tweet, the tweet would link people in their network back to the petition page where they would be encouraged to join the call-to-action.

Print

In an attempt to allow on-the-ground actions to complement the actions taken online, we at OpenMedia created a version of the petition that could be printed, passed around, then mailed back to us. Despite our community being largely Internet-based, hundreds of completed forms were mailed in.

Collecting signatures for accessible and affordable Internet in Canada.
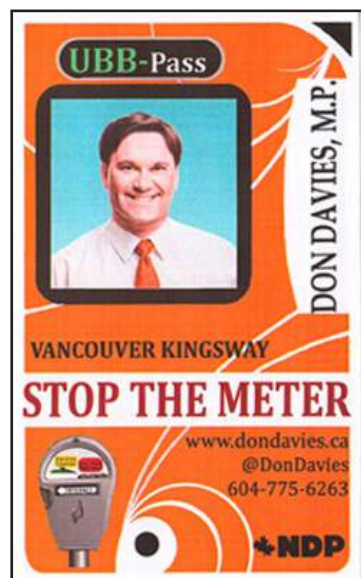
Below left: Poster made for the campaign.
Below right: Politician support.

"What Else Can We Do?"

After a certain point, the petitions weren't enough. The momentum was undeniable, but those who had already taken action via petitions were starting to ask, "What else can we do?"

The answer came from the community. Whether they were professional or *cough* notably unprofessional, volunteer-made shareables of multiple kinds (videos, posters, images) came rolling in through our online channels, and we began to rebroadcast them to our community.

Flexible Messaging: Be Ready To Listen, Not Just Defend!

As we experimented with content, we quickly learned it was best to listen to our community's responses and adjust accordingly, rather than trying to force messages they couldn't get behind. We de-prioritized our own internal strategy sessions, and began to look to our community.

In February 2011, for example,

CRTC Chairman as an Internet hero.

when we suggested that people ask the CRTC Chairman to "become an Internet hero" by standing up to Big Telecom, our community responded quite negatively – they were upset with the CRTC and were appalled that we were prepared to frame them as such a positive force. We tried to explain ourselves at first but ultimately, based on the strength of the community's reaction, we moved onto another set of messages that better resonated with our base.

Demonstrating Momentum

Throughout the Stop The Meter campaign, our communications were progress-oriented: we celebrated milestones in our community's growth, we got publicly excited about our media coverage, and we celebrated influencers—from city councillors to federal opposition parties—who stood behind our message.

Most importantly of all, we always made it clear to our community that they were the ones responsible for successes – we were only facilitators. Community members took this messaging as a sign to do the same – they supported one another, and reinforced the idea of momentum.

Reaching Leaders

While the Facebook version of the petition didn't reach decision-makers directly, the petition on the website and the Twitter action were especially useful tools for turning the heads of decision-makers. Clement had no choice but to respond as the number of tweets sent to him through the act.ly tool alone reached into the thousands. Decision-makers were hit hard with the message, "stop the meter", as each petition signature also sent them an email (to do this we used advocacy software called Salsa, but it's also possible to do this using simple and free tools such as Drupal webforms).

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "If you launch an attack on a target's Facebook page, ask people to submit comments under the most recent post that their followers are seeing now—anywhere else is essentially a black hole."
> Lisa Vickers, Avaaz.org

But even without this direct targeting, it was more than notable that the Stop The Meter campaign engaged hundreds of thousands of Canadians – they shared the campaign, they had discussions online and in their communities, and they began to follow related news. The mainstream media couldn't ignore it for long. A wider net was cast by this coverage, and more people joined the campaign. Politicians and policymakers couldn't ignore the momentum—the discussions that were taking place around them and in the media—and the pressure on them grew.

Lessons Learned

Of course, we at OpenMedia didn't conduct this campaign perfectly. But looking back, we were at our best when we followed a few key rules:

1. Explain the theory of change to your supporters

Online activism is not always seen as an effective way of making change. The best way to combat

that is to make your reasoning clear: Internet users can leverage their communication powers as constituent power. As Macleans writer Jesse Brown put it: "thousands of Canadians are against what you're doing. Right now they are angry in their homes, at their computers. Proceed and they may be angry at your door, or at the polls." The Stop The Meter campaign something about online activism: that it can matter, that it can create and empower a community, and that it can change politics and policy.

2. Don't hog credit: be the wind under your community's wings

Our community—and I'd guess any community—takes action when they know they're important. OpenMedia has done nothing alone, and we wouldn't be at all effective without a large and engaged community backing us – by reminding our supporters of this, our campaigns have ended up by and large successful.

3. Meet people where they are

By this, I mean we've been most successful tapping the networks that exist on already-popular platforms—mostly Facebook and Twitter for now—and that our strongest success has come when our messaging was simple and understandable. People can be smart and engaged without being lawyers or even generally geeky about policy – no one should feel under-qualified to participate in a movement.

What Happened To The Stop The Meter Campaign?

What happened? In short, after the November 2010 launch of the now-famous petition, it took four months to go from one thousand to four-hundred thousand participants. By the end of February 2011, the government—through both Industry Minister Clement and Prime Minister Stephen Harper—had ordered the CRTC back to the drawing board on usage-based billing. By the following November, the half-a-million strong community had come out largely victorious.

We still have a long way to go before Canadians get access to a truly open and affordable Internet. But the Stop The Meter campaign was more than a small victory for Internet pricing – it changed the way digital policymaking is done here in Canada.

Lindsey Pinto is the former Communications Manager of OpenMedia. She aspires to put Canada on the map as a leader in Internet freedom and accessibility, and the effective use of independent media for political communication. Her work centres on advancing informed and participatory digital policy.

CASE STUDY:
IDLE NO MORE
AN INCLUSIVE INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT

By Leena Minifie

Idle No More (INM) is a movement in which Indigenous and Non-Indigenous supporters have united in order to fight against the Canadian government's attempt to gut Indigenous rights and environmental protections in Canada. This anti-Harper-government and anti-colonial-Canada movement fights for the land-based rights of Indigenous people and environmental protections. INM dawned upon the icy, snow-covered plains of Saskatchewan in October 2012. Four women, Jessica Gordon (Cree and Saulteaux), Sheelah McLean (Non-Native), Sylvia McAdams (Cree) and Nina Wilson (Cree), held a teach-in in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan to address Bill C-45, an omnibus budget bill that removed Canadian waterways from federal protection and changed the environmental assessment processes. The women taught communities about this bill and others that were pushing the country toward an era lacking in respect for environmental protections and all Indigenous rights.

History Repeats Itself

In the 1960s, the Canadian government wanted to push First Nations off what was left of their land and curtail their rights for the sake of garnering more profit from resource extraction. Decades later, Prime Minister Harper is implementing the exact same policies for Indigenous peoples as Jean Chretian and Pierre Trudeau attempted to in the 1960s. The proposed 60s legislation spurred Indigenous unification and direct action across Canada just as the present legislation provoked the rise of Idle No More (INM). A distinct difference between the Native movement of the 1960's, and INM today is that INM it is women-led and focuses on educating the public about the issues at hand through in-person teach-ins, online meetings and social media.

[Nugget of Wisdom]

"Use social media to help identify potential new volunteers. The more someone 'likes', shares, or comments on your content-- the more likely they will volunteer with your group in the real world. You just have to ask!"

Michael Grenetz, The Sierra Club

Education Spawns A Movement

Malcolm X said you can't have a movement without an educated population, and INM has taken this to heart. The physical on-the-ground campaign for INM came before any online action. Offline events were (and still are) more important than online events as the movement is focused mostly around education (teach-ins), rallies, meetings and protecting the land. In the beginning (Fall 2012) these teach-ins targeted prairie nations where most Canadian Treaties exist. These
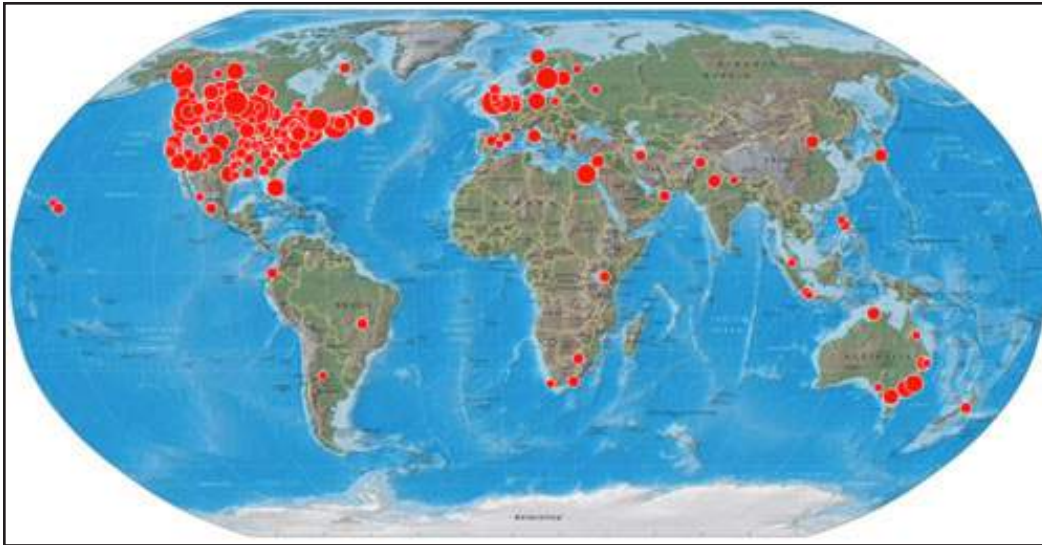
The global Twitter heat map above shows where tweets originated from in the first two months of Idle No More (map created late January, 2013). The more dense the concentration of issued tweets, the larger the red dot. Map is from Mark Blevis.

sessions outlined the legislation in question, its impacts on land, and how it infringed upon Treaty rights. As a group and individually the four women named above organized meetings in small communities and traveled to host talks or seminars and to answer questions. Others followed suit and started to do this in their communities.

The Moccasin Telegraph meets Social Media

INM as a movement grew, in part, because of the strengths of its existing offline social networks, but this strength was multiplied through the use of social media. As the INM movement snowballed with an increasing number of days of action, increased online presence was a crucial and necessary component of the campaign, and this is the reason the movement evolved into what exists today. Days of action were planned in treaty areas, then nationally, then caught on internationally when the news of all of these actions began to spread via social media (primarily Facebook and Twitter). Native activists from rural to urban were touching base, contributing skills, sharing work, and organizing actions. It is important to note that this movement would have existed without social media. However, we would have not garnered the numbers as quickly, had as many events, organized national days to be as successful as they were, or gotten media attention without social media. It is not about beginning a new campaign solely for social media, but using it as a tool for an already existing grassroots campaign.

> **[Nugget of Wisdom]**
> "Our social media messaging needs to be as diverse and interconnected as the issues we cover."
> Monica Christoffels

Days of Action

The first National Day of Action coincided with Amnesty International's Human Rights Day, December 10th. These international days were purposely planned to coincide with days of international observance, such as International Women's Day and Earth Day, in order to demonstrate how these issues were connected to the issues raised by INM. A post was made on Twitter and Facebook announcing the date with Native graphic designs being done by Native graphic designers from the prairies and from the west coast. The designs attracted youth and professional artists that would adapt their cultural images and Native motifs in elements of design, which would be shared across Facebook, Twitter, and the official websites. The December 10th day of action was the 1st day scheduled. Due to a lack of coverage by the mainstream media, another day of action was organized for December 21st. Local demonstrators organized "flash mobs" that were being held mostly in malls, as the Christmas season provided huge audiences in warm and covered public spaces. INM Facebook pages then posted videos of the daily news, photos and info from those events,

and the videos of these large round dances and gatherings. These videos and pictures helped to inspire others and spread the message.

The INM Official Facebook made posts about the days of action, as well as @idlenomore4 Twitter. These 2 spaces act as a source for posts and then other groups (over 1,000 FB groups amassed during the peak) spread the word of those source messages. Days of action were not exclusive, an action could be done any day outside the days of action too. Flash mobs and protests were happening everywhere multiple times even in one city in one day. It was the lack of central control and a more equal flat style network of organization (de-centralized) that inspired many to pick up and organize for themselves, as everyone owned this movement.

Lessons Learned

1) People began seeking out celebrities, big names, academics and elite to speak at events rather than the ones living the effects of systemic racism, oppression. We have to advise and provide names of people to talk to that know the issues. A media contact list is helpful in doing this, also helpful is educating the "celebrities".

Image from Dwayne Bird
Partner
Moden Clan Marketing Communications

2) Honeycomb style networking, is equal and allows for everyone to "own" the movement. Whereas a centralized hierarchical, organization structure is more western, and top down. There is a struggle to accommodate egalitarian techniques and be inclusive which is more indigenous style of network and trying to also keep the original mandate in focus, so newcomers who are not educated yet do not completely change the meaning and focus.

3) Social media was a way for people to unite with people, letting anyone use the name, we had 1000 new pages created for different territories, cities and supporter groups.

4) More education is always needed! The journalists, the mainstream media, children, adults,
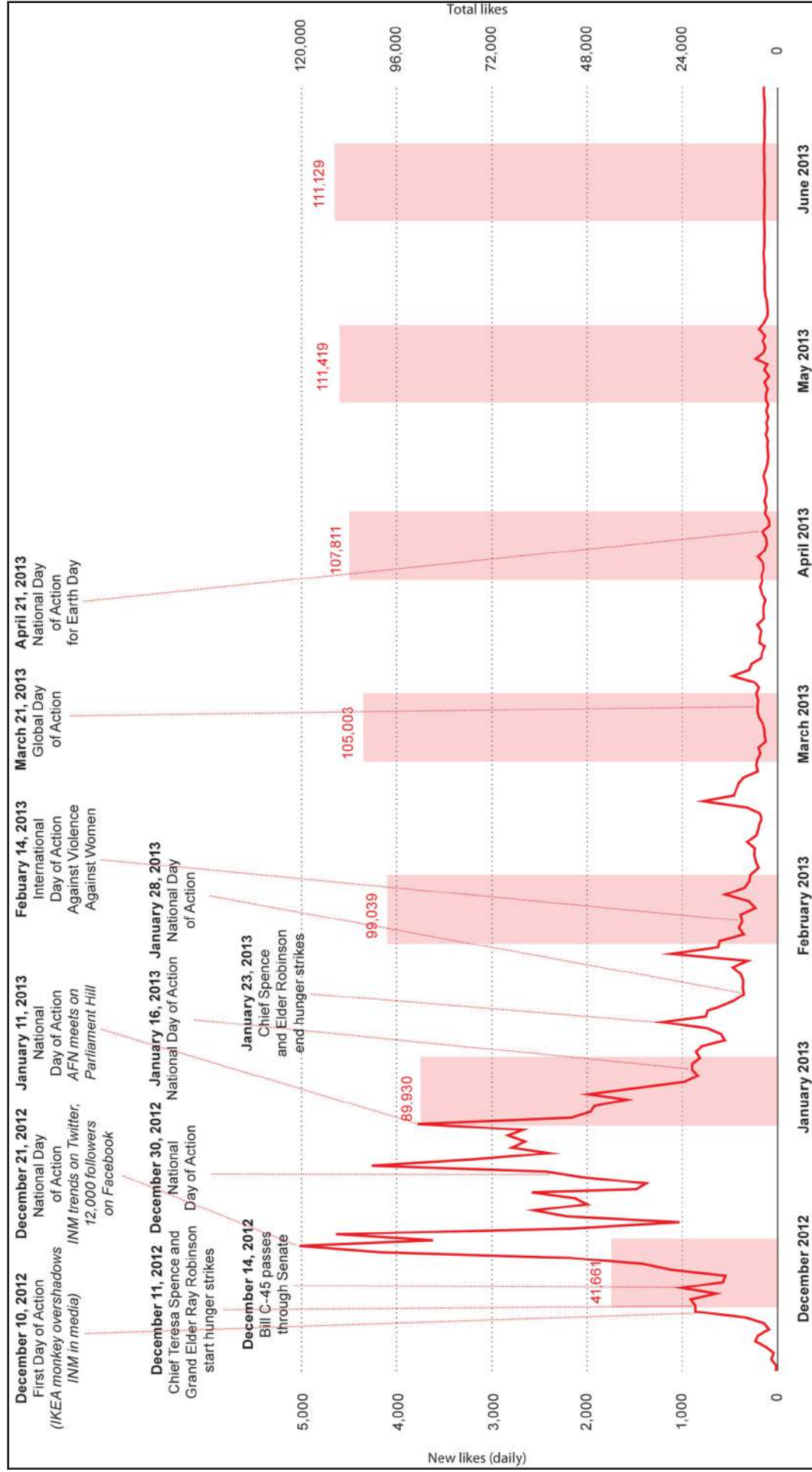
neighbors and friends are all purposely not taught the history of Indigenous peoples so education falls upon our shoulders. We need to educate supporters there to tell their own communities about the issues outside of First Nation populations.

5) Keep the door open for communication, you can use social media and online forums and video chats to connect and bring together grassroots communities and supporters to keep dialogue open for suggestions and criticism.

Leena Minifie (Gitxaala/Tsimshian/Settler), a figurative balancer of plates and wearer of multiple hats, prefers to teeter on the cutting edge while performing dance for her community. This artist, activist, journalist, social media manager and administrator likes to find enough time sleep and garden when not typing away madly about social change and Indigenous rights. She has worked for Aboriginals Peoples Television Network, Redwire Magazine, Canadian Broadcast Corporation, and Native America Calling.

Idle No More Facebook Page: A Timeline

Total likes

120,000
96,000
72,000
48,000
24,000
0

New likes (daily)

5,000
4,000
3,000
2,000
1,000
0

111,129 — June 2013
111,419 — May 2013
107,811 — April 2013
105,003 — March 2013
99,039 — February 2013
89,930 — January 2013
41,661 — December 2012

December 10, 2012
First Day of Action
(IKEA monkey overshadows INM in media)

December 21, 2012
National Day of Action
INM trends on Twitter, 12,000 followers on Facebook

January 11, 2013
National Day of Action
AFN meets on Parliament Hill

Febuary 14, 2013
International Day of Action Against Violence Against Women

December 11, 2012
Chief Teresa Spence and Grand Elder Ray Robinson start hunger strikes

December 30, 2012
National Day of Action

January 16, 2013
National Day of Action

January 28, 2013
National Day of Action

January 23, 2013
Chief Spence and Elder Robinson end hunger strikes

December 14, 2012
Bill C-45 passes through Senate

March 21, 2013
Global Day of Action

April 21, 2013
National Day of Action for Earth Day

The graph above shows a timeline of Likes on the Idle No More Facebook page. The bar graph shows total likes, and the line graph shows new likes daily. Important events are highlighted at the top. Graph created by Kelly Nicoll.

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BONUS AWESOME RESOURCES

Looking for more amazing resources to support your kick-ass online organizing skills? Check out some of our faves below:

NOI's "Online Organizing Toolbox" — Check out the New Organizing Institute's great suite of training videos on a wide spectrum of online organizing topics.

Graphic Design Hacks for Non-Designers — by NOI's Sarah Baker and Eric Ming - Lots of really fabulous resources here for taking your design work to the next level.

"Beautiful Trouble" — Check out this treasure chest of case studies, lessons, and stories for how social movements have used creativy to push for change. Lots of great digital examples are in here too. Available as a book, but also free to read online!

"The Networked Nonprofit: Connecting with Social Media to Drive Change" — Great primer by Beth Kanter and Allison Fine for getting your organization wired for the networked age.

"Social Change Anytime Everywhere: How to Implement Online Multichannel Strategies to Spark Advocacy, Raise Money, and Engage your Community" - by Amy Sample Ward and Allyson Kapin - A great practical and tactical guidebook to leveraging the power of the social web to support your campaigns.

"An activist's guide to live tweeting" - by Abraham Greenhouse - Just what it sounds like, a blow by blow guide with weathered tips for live-tweeting

Tactical Tech - Check out this rich set of toolboxes for visualizing information for change, as well as for increasing your online security.

Mobilisation Lab - Check out this Greenpeace project for the latest case studies of how activists are innovating with social media around the globe.

†HANK YOUS

(Hey, look! It's a screenshot from the original Kickstarter funding video! Thank you Ellie Seitz for putting together the Kickstarter video that got this whole journey started. We think you're great!)

We owe a whole lot of thanks to all sorts of folks who helped make this guide possible. Seriously. So many people chipped in in so many different ways.

First, we've got to give some super huge shout-outs to everyone who dropped money through Kickstarter. All 74 of you. Your generosity blew us away! Thank you!

And we've got to give some extra big love to our sponsors, who went above and beyond the kick-starting duty to see this project through: 350.org, Action Sprout, Babble on Communications, Better Future Project, Energy Action Coalition, FSI Consulting, Main Street Landing, Mobilisation Lab, NetSquared, Rainforest Action Network, Resource Media and Salsa. Thanks for taking such a big leap of faith on us.

And we've also got to thank the kind folks who hosted the Green Memes Road Trip – a 7 state road-trip Megan and Joe went on this past July to train grassroots organizers on the latest social media engagement tactics. These road trip experiences led to some real breakthroughs in our understanding of social media and led to some real fodder for the guide. Thank you Eva Westheimer for hosting us in Asheville, Ricki Draper, Erin Bicknese, William Isom, Kelsea Norris, and Tom Torres for hosting us in Knoxville, Arielle Klagsbrun, Jeff Ordower, and Ryan Halas for hosting us in St. Louis, Jennifer Carrillo, Zachary Kirkton, and Illinois Peoples' Action for hosting us in Bloomington, Dan Suder, Addie Chris, and LVEJO for hosting us in Chicago, Denise Snyder-Markovich, Patrick Kennedy, Katie McChesney and the Don't Frack Ohio crew for hosting us in Ohio, Kathryn Hilton, Melissa Troutman, and Mountain Watershed Association for hosting us in western PA, and Jim Sconyers and the WV Sierra Club crew for hosting us in West Virginia.

And of course we owe a deep debt of gratitude to all the authors of this guide – from the in-depth chapter writers who pained over many of the details to the "nugget writers" who generously honed their wisdom for this guide.

And just to say it again, we owe thanks to you, the reader. We know this guide is imperfect -- and that's the nature of social media and organizing too: it's an ever evolving art. It gets better as we all chip in and evolve these tactics, point out what's not working, and push the boundaries of what is. The era of there being a few "social media gurus" is over: there is now a widespread rising generation of community organizers who are wired, plugged in, and figuring out how to build ever more powerful social movements, backed up by the power of the web.

We hope this guide offers a bit of a boost in your organizing work, and that you'll push us far beyond its original borders.

Joe would also like to thank the friends who cheered him on along the way—like Catherine Moore, David Stember, Cathy B, Eliot Grace, Cathy Kunkel, David Braun, Jess Grady-Benson, Elijah van der Giessen, Whit Jones, Jeff Mann, Dylan Petrohilos, Michael Silberman, Billy Bicket, Joanna Russo, Valerie Elizabeth Woodhouse, James Blakely, Allyse Heartwell, Amanda Levinson, Nick Katkevich, Amy Sample Ward, Jason Mogus, David Baghdadi, and many more.

Megan just wants to thank Joe, for getting her into this whole thing in the first place.

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Mainebob Oconnor
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Michael Grenetz
Michael Silberman
Michael Trollan
Morgan Goodwin
Nate Westheimer
NEW NOISE
Nicole Lampe
Nina
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Please direct questions and comments about this guide to team@greenmemes.org. Spot any typos? Formatting issues? Out-of-date info? This document will always be a work in progress; please point 'em out!