

Social Media for Campaigns and Volunteers



Nate Lerner

- Executive Director of Build the Wave
- 60k followers on Twitter
- Sent 2 million texts to voters for 37 different Democratic campaigns
- Worked or consulted on over 20 campaigns

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Why Use Social Media?

1. Engagement!
 - a. You can't engage with a piece of mail, yard sign, or TV ad.
 - b. Obtain emails, phone numbers, donor, website visits, video views, etc.
 2. Data and Analytics
 3. Unlimited potential
 4. High ROI
 - a. 1 social media post vs 10 door knockers
 5. Validates and legitimizes campaign
 6. Message testing and informal polling
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Limitations

1. A phone call or face to face conversation is always better!
2. How many votes are you actually winning...?
3. Distracting
4. Noisy environment + limited attention spans
 - a. Average video watched for 6-8 seconds
5. It's a bubble and a race to the bottom

Twitter

Pros

- Highly engaged political audience
 - Politics and news focused
 - Lots of reporters and experts
 - Easier to go viral
 - Strong networking potential
 - Friendlier algorithm
 - Text focused
 - Anonymity
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Twitter

Cons

- Not many persuadable or new voters
- Significantly smaller than Facebook
- Limited features (e.g. events, groups, etc.)
- Ads aren't worth it
- Issues with image sizes
- Verification is incredibly difficult
- Anonymity

Facebook

Pros

- Massive audience - new voters
 - Majority of Americans get their news from Facebook
 - Increasingly older population
 - More localized (friends instead of followers)
 - Ads are effective
 - Extensive features (groups and events are great)
 - Great for videos and images
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Facebook

Cons

- Facebook is not your friend
- Young people leaving in droves
- More difficult for organic content to go viral
- Networking more difficult
- Lots of noise — not everyone on for politics
- Harder to break out of network

Instagram

Pros

- Full of young adults who are becoming increasingly politically engaged
 - Untapped market
 - Great for images and video
 - Every follower is valuable
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Instagram

Cons

- No hyperlinks!
- Limited actual or focus on politics
- Overwhelming competition from non-political users

Other Platforms

Overlooked and rightly so

Snapchat and TikTok

Overlooked, but worth a try

Reddit, LinkedIn Youtube

Best Practices: Campaigns

- Tell your story!
 - Record and capture everything.
- Social media is best for keeping supporters engaged!
- Look at what other campaigns are doing (e.g. Bernie Sanders, Warren, Andrew Yang)
- Give and take (ask for \$ and emails, but also provide a reason for people to follow you)

Best Practices: Campaigns

- Keep perspective
 - Mix up your content: news, graphics, videos, short, long, but always stick to your brand and voice.
 - 3-5 posts per day tops
 - Don't believe the #'s or get sucked into the social media vortex
 - Look at who follows you and engage with them!
 - Innovate, take risks, be creative!
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Best Practices: Volunteers

- Don't underestimate the value of a retweet or like
- Don't have a big following? Build it! Follow like crazy
- Start your own page or group
- Generate content for the campaign (copy, pics from events, swag, be creative)
- Learn skills to help campaigns. Video editing, graphic design, website building, etc.
- Organize offline events — phonebook, postcards,

Questions?

