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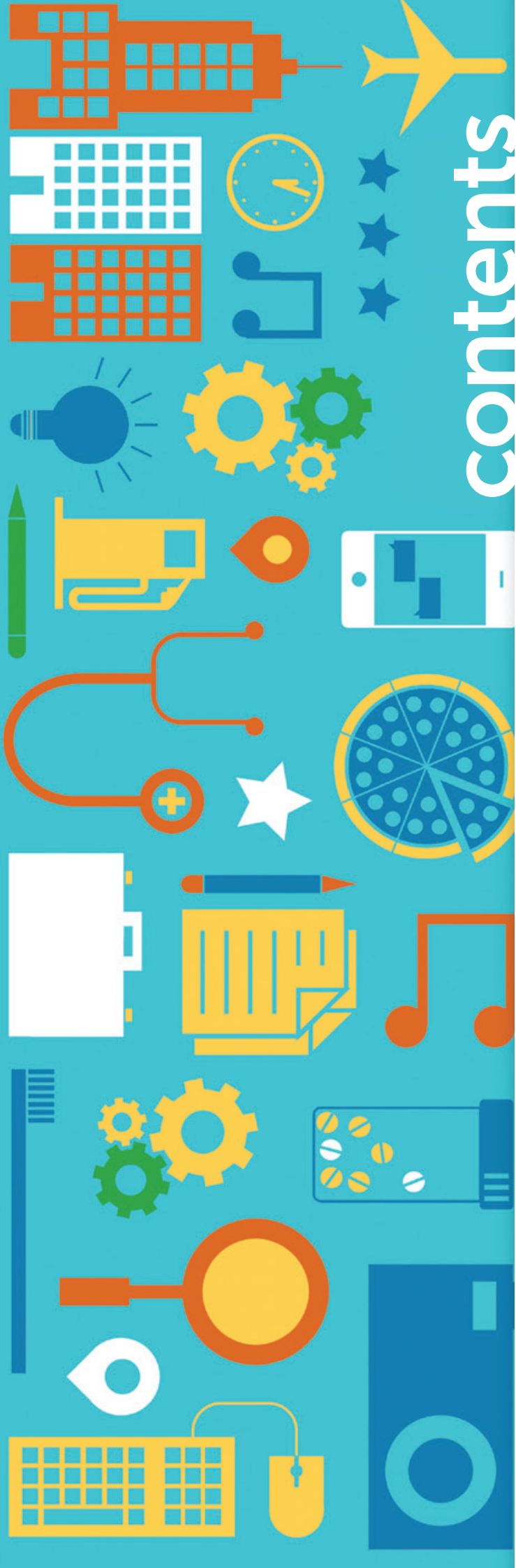
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nonprofit
NETWORK

Mapping your online media strategy

A guide for nonprofits



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Mapping your online media strategy

A guide for nonprofits

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about this guidebook

This ebook is for you if:

- you are a nonprofit leader interested in using social media, but you don't know which platform to choose or how to get started;
- you would like to use social media in a more structured and strategic way;
- you are trying to convince management to use social media in your organisation;
- you have dabbled in social media, or use it to a limited degree, but don't know what to do next;
- you are wondering if you're wasting your time on social media.

This ebook will guide you through the process of choosing social media platforms and developing an

effective online media strategy. It will provide an overview of a few popular social media channels in South Africa and how they work, so that you can learn about the potential benefits of these networks for your organisation. You will also learn how to develop a content calendar for you web and social media work.

This ebook is the first in a series of three. The next two books are:

- **Finding your way with online media:** An implementation guide for nonprofits.
- **Are we there yet? Evaluating your online media for nonprofits.**

We look forward to embarking on this journey with you!



about the nonprofit network

The Nonprofit Network is an online resource centre for nonprofit organisations, particularly those based in South Africa, that includes resources for nonprofits on using online media (websites, social media and newsletters). These user-friendly guides are available at <http://www.nonprofit-network.org>. You can also follow us on Twitter <http://www.twitter.com/nponetwork> and like us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/nponetwork> to be kept updated with online media tips for nonprofits.



**OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS**

We are grateful for the support of the Open Society Foundation's Public Health Programme: Health Media Initiative, without which this project would not be possible.

credits



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Written by Ruendree Govinder, October 2013

Edited by James Sleight

Designed by Kult Creative

With gratitude to Helen Joannides, Karen Peters, Ruth Faragher and Sarah Nicklin for their invaluable contributions.

1. social media and the spread of information

“If the Internet didn’t exist, Barack Obama would not be president of the United States. The fact that the most powerful person in the world wouldn’t be in that position without the Internet and organizing online says something.”

Ben Rattray, founder of change.org

These are the excuses I keep hearing from nonprofits:

- “Our constituents don’t have computers, so there’s no purpose in using computers to communicate our work.”
- “I don’t like computers, I don’t want to have to use them more than I already do.”
- “This is too complicated to understand.”
- “I’m too busy to learn something new.”
- “I’ve managed to communicate without it so far, and I can still do my job just fine!”

What were they talking about? **Email!** Yes, these are the excuses I was hearing 15 years ago from nonprofits unwilling to use email in their organisations. Yet today, can any of us imagine functioning without it?

Remember when e-mail pushed the boundaries of office technology? Yet somehow even the technophobes managed to catch up!

Now I’m hearing the same excuses about social media. Why are nonprofits so reluctant to embrace something new, even when the change is inevitable?

The question is not **“Should we use social media?”**

The question is **“How do we use it effectively to advance our cause?”**

A big obstacle is the belief that the online audience, particularly in South Africa, is still too small to invest the time and energy to communicate with. Not only is this a convenient excuse, it’s wrong. According to a Network Society study, one in three South African adults use the internet, and this is expected to increase to two in three adults by 2016.¹ [Read more about how South Africa connects on page 5.](#)

There’s no area of human life that hasn’t been touched and reinvented by the digital age, and none more so than the rapid spread of information. As activists and advocates for your cause, you need to position your organisation to take advantage of these trends and use the right tools to give voice to your mission.

Shift in power

Before the great Internet era, news corporations and large firms were at the top of the information pyramid. Ordinary people only had the information that trickled down to them from on high. Citizen journalism soon changed this system and gave individuals the power to create their own media and tell their own stories.² This is more than democratising: it’s radicalising. Through social media, the powerless are given the chance to create, collaborate and express to their concerns.

“The Internet destroyed most of the barriers to publication. The cost of being a publisher dropped to almost zero with two interesting immediate results: anybody can publish, and more importantly, you can publish whatever you want.”

Dick Costolo

The mobility of information

Social networks have been critical in crisis situations, providing real-time updates in situations requiring immediate evacuation efforts or crisis intervention. The impact on the Arab Spring is well documented. As one activist explained: “We use Facebook to schedule the protests, [we use] Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world.”³

But we don't have to wait for earthquakes or floods to experience its impact. During recent petrol shortages in Gauteng, motorists tweeted locations of stations with or without petrol, providing instant, valuable updates. Now imagine if those queuing for their grant payouts could tweet about waiting times at various pay points, or if there were any irregularities with the payouts, such as people soliciting bribes. Broadcasting such information empowers ordinary individuals to alter the course of their daily lives. How might you use this kind of power to further your nonprofit's mission?

The viral factor

Thanks to social media, the mere act of telling a friend about a cause you are passionate about is amplified by the existence of virtual friends and virtual social circles. Now this message has the potential to reach hundreds of thousands of people. It could even go viral (i.e. spreads widely and quickly), thereby potentially reaching millions. While going viral is not necessarily a good thing (see Kony 2012⁴), the sharability of social media lets you not merely spread the word, but actually create a buzz. Reaching millions of people at once is now a real possibility, something unheard of before Web 2.0.

Controlling this process is another matter, as it is largely in the hands of the receiver, not the sender. Still, businesses invest big money in “viral marketing” hoping to control the infection as it were, and thus use the phenomena to spread their brand.

Think global

In social networking, the idea of word-of-mouth has been multiplied a hundred times over. It is now

simpler for people sharing the same passion and interest to participate in causes for the common good across geographic borders. Before the advent of social media, a community was based on proximity and locality, so the work of an organisation or cause was limited to a town, city or country. Social media has turned this idea on its head and changed the traditional definition of what a community is. The strongest organisations have communities with a national, international and global reach.

This is social media's biggest achievement: it has managed to make the world a smaller place and bring people closer together. By making us feel closer to events that are thousands of miles away, social media has made global events touch more people than ever before. Social networks have enhanced the flow of information by increasing the speed by which it moves and reducing the barriers along its path. As I write this I am following [#Westgate](#) on Twitter, the hashtag dedicated to the terrorist attack at the Westgate Mall in Kenya. By reading tweets from people at the scene in Nairobi, I am able to get a deeper understanding of the events, unfiltered by a mainstream media narrative. This is the power of social media.

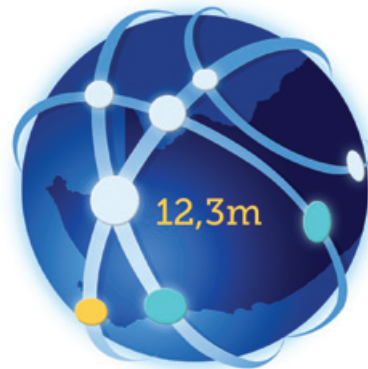
“Can a click make a difference in the world? By itself, probably not, but when combined with tens and even hundreds of thousands of other clicks, it may just have an impact.” Jeffrey Strain, *A Different Kind of Activism*

Whether your goal is to raise awareness about your mission, improve your fundraising, generate more media attention or lobby for a change in a parliamentary bill, online media can be a cost effective and powerful tool if used strategically – but you must have a plan and understand the potential of each platform.

How can your nonprofit embrace the power of social media?

2. how south africa connects...

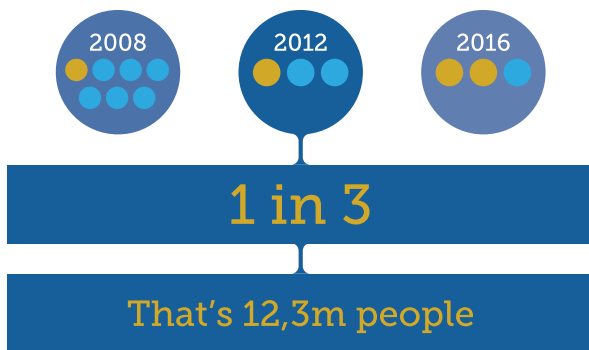
Some nine million people in South Africa are using social networks which are capable of virally spreading ideas, creating public spaces for discussion and debate, building communities of interest and providing platforms for organising action. New forms of online/offline activism are becoming possible.



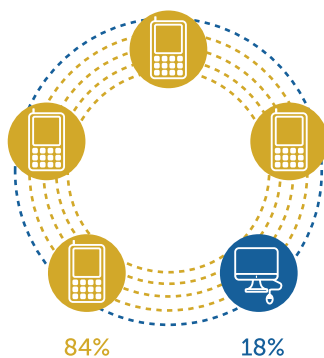
One in three adults use the Internet

12,3 million adults in South Africa (aged 15 or older) now use the Internet – one in three of the population. Internet use has more than doubled in the last four years. If this rate of growth is maintained, then more than half of the population will be online by 2014 and more than two out of three could be online by 2016.

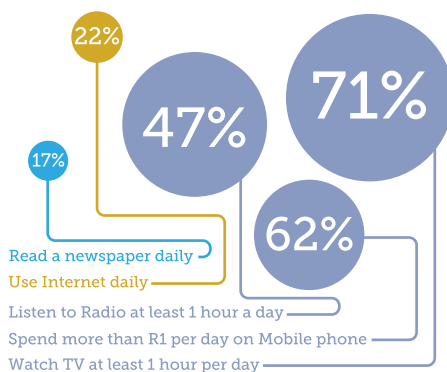
INTERNET USERS IN SOUTH AFRICA



% OF ADULTS WHO OWN A COMPUTER VS % WHO OWN A MOBILE PHONE



MORE POPULAR THAN NEWSPAPERS



Internet use is becoming part of daily life

Those with access are also going online more often. Almost two-thirds of them use the Internet daily (or almost daily). More people now use the Internet every day (22% of all adults) than read a paper every day (17% of all adults). Two out of three Internet users (66%) speak an African language at home, most of them have not been educated beyond school level, and four out of ten live on less than R1,500 per month. Most (54%) learners at school or college are now Internet users.

Mobile connectivity continues to grow

Almost three quarters of Internet users use their phones to connect, though only a minority are entirely dependent on mobiles to get online. Most users don't own computers but use Internet Cafes or other public or shared facilities to connect to the internet.

From The New Wave (c) 2012 University of Witwatersrand, Author Indra de Lanerolle, Design Garage East, www.networksociety.co.za

3. are you wasting your time with online media?

Do any of these sound familiar?

- You've left social media content to your resident 'techie' or intern to manage
- Your organisation has opened accounts on multiple social media channels, but you're not sure why
- You open a new Twitter account when you want to tweet about a campaign or event
- You are rarely 'retweeted' on Twitter or 'liked' on Facebook
- You have less than 100 Facebook or Twitter followers, despite having accounts for more than six months
- You don't track social media metrics or website traffic
- Your website is rarely updated
- You haven't looked at your website on a tablet or mobile phone
- **You're working without an online media strategy**

If even one of these hits home, you need to re-think your online media plan. If it's more than a few, then you really are wasting your time. Here are some of the biggest of the red-flag issues.

If you don't have an e-communications strategy you are wasting your time on social media. It goes further than this: your website is likely ineffective as well. If you don't know why you're doing something or how you intend to do it, how can you be successful?

If you are not monitoring and evaluating your social media work to gauge its effectiveness, you are wasting your time on social media. Without tracking the reach and engagement on your social networks, how do you know if your investment is worthwhile?

"Social Media is about sociology and psychology more than technology."

Brian Solis, Principal of FutureWorks



If your interns are managing your Facebook and Twitter feeds, you are wasting your time on social media. After all these years I still encounter nonprofits who inexplicably leave their social media work to their interns or 'techies' to manage. This completely disregards the level of communications skills required, and trivialises social media work. Unless they are some kind of communications savant (which is unlikely), you risk damage to your brand as they send out ill-conceived, poorly edited messages in your organisation's name. Worst of all though, you will be wasting considerable time and effort randomly sending out messages and hoping that it reaches someone. And even if you find a skilled intern who can handle these responsibilities, what happens when they leave?

Think about it, would you let your interns or IT support staff write your media releases or conduct interviews? Why then would you put them in charge of your message that could go out to thousands of people? Your social media manager (yes, your organisation should have a social media manager) must have a clear and solid understanding of your work and your brand, and be an effective online voice for your organisation. This doesn't mean interns and techies can't be involved. Their involvement just needs to be part of a well thought out plan and chain of command. *Read more on how to manage your social media staff on page 45.*



“Think of social media as the Internet. I can’t think of anyone betting against the Internet in 2012.”

Gary Vaynerchuk

If your social media manager does not fully understand your programme objectives, you are wasting your time on social media.

Perhaps because senior managers are not engaged in social media themselves, or at least do not appreciate how it can be used in a professional context, there is often a disconnect between the work an organisation does and its social media platforms. Ideally, programme staff and senior management should be actively engaged in social media as they are best placed to engage in conversations about the issues you care about, what you are going to do about them, and get your organisation’s core message across.

Now, just because you may be wasting your time doesn’t mean you should stop using social media altogether.

Quite the opposite. In this e-book, I will guide you through answering some basic questions to shape your thinking about your online media strategy. Even if you already have an established website and social media accounts, going through this process will help you improve your online presence, and understand how online media integrates into your work and your organisational programme strategies.

You just need a plan!

In the course of my online media consulting work, I’m frequently met with blank looks when I ask about how their website and social media fits into their communications strategy. Would you consider embarking on a new project for your organisation without careful thinking, planning and budgeting, assessing the skills and time needed to manage the project, and monitoring and evaluating your progress on the project? Think of your website and social media as a long-term projects, and apply the same rules and priorities as you would apply to any other project.

At it’s heart, your online media or e-communications strategy is a simple document outlining what you’re trying to communicate, who you’re trying to communicate with, and what you would like people to do with the communication. It does not need to be a lengthy document, taking months to produce, which will sit at the bottom of a filing cabinet. It needs to be a focused, simple, **working document** that brings everyone involved in communications on the same page.

Before we delve into questions about strategy, I will profile some of the more popular social networks. It is useful to keep these in mind as you develop your online media strategy so that you understand the opportunities and challenges of each different platform. There are hundreds of social networks available, with new ones being created every day. Make sure you do some research before launching into a new space.

4. overview of some popular social networks

“LinkedIn is for the people you know. Facebook is for the people you used to know. Twitter is for people you want to know.”

Source unknown

In this section we will take a brief look at some of the more popular social networks, and the kinds of content and time required to engage in these platforms.

f facebook

“At Facebook, we build tools to help people connect with the people they want and share what they want, and by doing this we are extending people’s capacity to build and maintain relationships.” Mark Zuckerberg



An example of a Facebook newsfeed, with updates from nonprofits we have 'liked'.

If you're going to use social media, you can't ignore the biggest social network in the world. Much like an organisation is expected to have a website, it is now expected that organisations have a Facebook page as well.

What is it?

Facebook is an online social network service which provides its members with a simple and inexpensive way to share news, ideas and issues related to your work, and interact with your supporters.

Launched in 2004, Facebook was originally created to help university students get to know each other. It is now the biggest social network in the world. Perhaps because of the proliferation of pictures of pets and kids, many people don't take it seriously. But don't ignore it's potential as a medium for professional communication. It's no longer a *nice to have*, it's a *taken for granted*.

How does it work?

Facebook allows you to “friend” people by searching for them by name or email address. You can also search for people by networks like universities, schools or workplaces. If a person accepts your friend request, you will be able to see their status updates (i.e. what they post on Facebook) and profile pages. As an organisation, you can ‘like’ other pages and follow their updates

in your newsfeed. You can also post updates on pages you 'like', allowing you to reach out beyond your own homepage. Facebook advertising allows you to reach new audiences through targeted ads to other Facebook users.

Who uses it?

As of June 2013, Facebook had 1.15 billion monthly active users. Fifty-seven percent of the users are female. The average age of a Facebook user is 37. More than 100 million users log on to Facebook at least once each day. Users spend more than 4 billion minutes on Facebook daily.⁵

In South Africa:

- Facebook has overtaken Mxit to be the biggest social network in South Africa, with 9.4 million active users.⁶
- 87% of Facebook users are accessing it via their mobile phone.
- Facebook continues to grow at a rate of around 100 000 new users a month.
- The fastest growing age group among Facebook users in South Africa is the over-60s, showing a 44% increase over one year.
- The proportion of urban adults using Facebook is a little less than double rural users - but rural users are now at the level where urban users were 18 months ago.⁷

It should be obvious by now that you can't simply assume that your constituents are not accessing Facebook. Even if they are not on it today, they will be tomorrow.

What content is needed?

Facebook lets you share text, links, images and videos. This can be either original material, or items you've sourced from other Facebook pages or websites. Visual updates (images and videos) tend to get the most attention, particularly in fast paced social media circles. Sharing only your own content can tire audiences, and you will likely see little engagement with your page. Instead, share a variety of content related to your cause – think of yourself

as a content curator, bringing together thought-provoking content for your audience, and not simply promoting your own work.

What are the benefits for your nonprofit?

Facebook offers a simple and inexpensive way to share news, ideas and issues related to your work, and to interact with your supporters.

- **Actively push your message:** When you update your website, you have to wait for people to visit your website and seek out the information. With Facebook, once people 'like' your page, your updates are automatically sent to some of their newsfeeds.
- **Promote your brand:** Use the logo of your organisation as your Facebook Page profile image as it develops recognition of your logo, associating it with the work that you do, thereby building your brand. You can also use your cover image on Facebook (the larger image on the top of your timeline) to reinforce your brand.
- **Gain a public showcase:** A Facebook Page allows you to showcase what you are doing in your organisation. Using photographs to illustrate your work attracts twice as much attention as text. You can also showcase your work using video, which is 12 times more likely to be shared with others than photographs and text combined.

Take a look at the *Kliptown Youth Program*, an afterschool tutoring and personal development program for the disadvantaged children of Kliptown. Their Facebook page effectively uses images that engage and inspire their audiences. The beautiful pictures alone tell their story, and grab attention in your newsfeed.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Kliptown-Youth-Program-KYP/229979263688935>

- **Talk to the world:** Engage in conversations with people outside of your normal sphere of operation and build relationships with other organisations and individuals. Use Facebook to educate the public about news, legislation or discussions

around your area of work. While it can be difficult to make your message concise enough to be read on Facebook, you can provide a short summary or sound bite and provide a link to your website or blog with more information. You can also reach a new audience through targeted Facebook ads.

The *SA National Council for the Blind* has an interesting Facebook page. They use a casual style, not simply posting about issues related to the blind, but commenting on popular culture and events in the news. In between, we learn about important issues (“Did you know blind kids can’t get reading and learning materials because of strict IP laws in the publishing industry which don’t allow for braille/easy accessibility to convert into more accessible formats?”) and read inspiring stories. By making their page entertaining and focusing on more than just their core issues, they build a bigger audience and ultimately garner wider support for their cause.

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthAfricanNationalCouncilForTheBlind>

- **Grow traffic to your website and blog:** Use your Facebook page to alert people whenever you update your website or blog, highlighting new information and growing your web traffic.

Marketing is no longer about the things that you make, but about the stories you tell. SETH GODIN

- **Tell stories:** Facebook gives you the ability to tell a story through your timeline. You can post events in the history of your cause (a march, a change in legislation, and important milestones in the development of your organisation).

Amnesty International's page documents milestones in their history since 1962 – a very effective use of the timeline feature. To view their timeline, scroll down and click on any of the dates on the right of the page.

<https://www.facebook.com/amnestyglobal>

- **Show a human face:** Use your Facebook Page to inform the public about those who work in your organisation and those who are helped by the organisation (though make sure you have permission from your beneficiaries before sharing their stories or images). Provide a human face rather than simply an organisational body.

While it is often argued that it is harder to raise funds if you’re not helping children or animals, there is still a lot we can learn from pages like the *Children’s Hospital Trust*. Instead of depressing stories about sick children, they post positive messages like “Today sees the 2 year anniversary of the opening of the newly refurbished Burns ward at the Hospital. Because of your help to upgrade these facilities, so many more little burns patients’ lives have been saved”. Coupled with a beautiful image of a child, these messages connect donors closely with the organisation and encourage more people to get involved, even without a direct appeal. They post child safety messages, updates about events in the hospital, but mainly positive, heartwarming stories about children, making the page compelling and engaging.

<https://www.facebook.com/childrenshospitaltrust>

- **Foster discussions:** It is notoriously difficult to get people to comment on your Facebook page, but if you post thought-provoking, engaging content, you can foster interesting discussions and debate around your cause.

LeadSA is an example of a very well-managed Facebook page. With over 55 000 supporters and a focus on encouraging South Africans to build a better country, their Facebook page is filled with positive stories, images and inspirational ideas. Their supporters actively engage with the page and create a supportive community.

<https://www.facebook.com/leadsa>

How do I get started?

- Create a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/create/>).
- Post interesting updates, news about your

organisation, pictures, videos or newspaper articles related to your cause. You want there to be something for people to see when they first visit your page.

- You can spend a little money on Facebook advertising to grow the exposure to your site – but remember that money is less important to growing your page and strengthening engagement than good content, which is regularly updated. Contact your current supporters and staff members and encourage them to ‘like’ and ‘share’ your page with their followers.
- Pay attention to your page insights and what content your audience responds to, and use this to shape your strategy.

The second book in this ebook series will look more closely at practical help in creating and using a Facebook page.

How much time is required?

You will require five to 10 hours per week for curating content, posting updates and responding

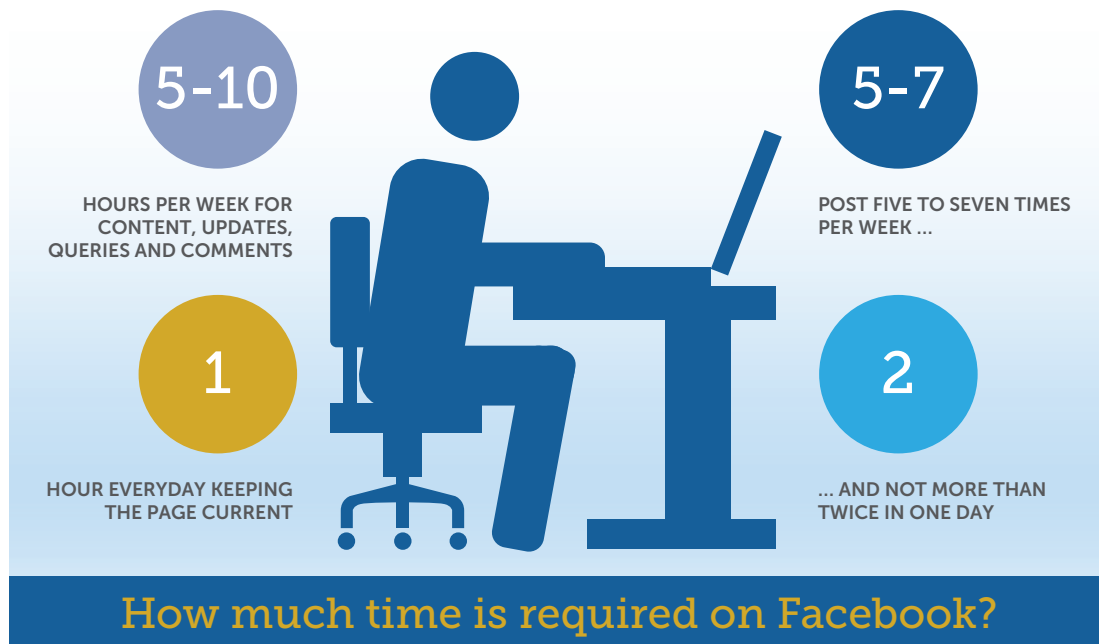
to queries and comments. Five hours spent on a “catch-up day” is far less productive than an hour or so everyday keeping the page current.

Post five to seven times per week, and not more than twice in one day. It’s not Twitter: posting more than that clogs the timeline and can annoy your followers. Allow time to analyse your page insights to see what works and what doesn’t, and adjust your posting strategy accordingly.

If you are unfamiliar with Facebook, allow eight to 16 hours to learn the platform, research how nonprofits use Facebook, and develop a strategy and content calendar for your page.

What budget is required?

Facebook advertising is cheap, effective, and easy to use. You can promote your posts for as little as R50, to potentially reach 10 times your current audience. Suggested budget: R500 per month, but your page would benefit from even R100 a month.





“Twitter is not a technology. It’s a conversation. And it’s happening with or without you.” @charleneli



An example of a newsfeed from the US Embassy South Africa.

Twitter gives you the power to have conversations in real-time about the issues that matter to you. You can directly communicate with several Members of Parliament, influential journalists and reach activists all over the world.

What is it?

Twitter is an online social networking and “micro-blogging” service that enables users to send and read text messages limited to 140 characters. These messages are called “tweets”. Once registered, you can read and post messages, but if you are not registered or logged in, you can still read tweets. Twitter works well on mobile phones.

How does it work?

If people “follow” you on Twitter, your tweets appear on their Twitter newsfeed or homepage. People can reply to your tweet or retweet your message (i.e. forward the message to their followers). Retweeting makes Twitter a very powerful tool, as your message has the potential to rapidly reach a large number of people. Hashtags (#) indicate subjects or messages that give some context, for example:

@nponetwork This ebook provides useful info about Twitter! *#nonprofit #socialmedia.*

Twitter is a lot like a personalised radio station you create around your interests. Make sure you’re following interesting people so that your newsfeed will not be filled with pictures of what people have eaten for lunch (unless that really interests you!).

Who uses it?

- Twitter had 500 million registered users in 2012, with 200 million regular users who posted 340 million tweets per day.
- Forty per cent of users worldwide simply use

Twitter as a “curated news feed of updates that reflect their passions” and don’t tweet.⁸

- The service also handled 1.6 billion search queries per day. Twitter is now one of the ten most visited websites, and has been described as “the SMS of the Internet.”⁹

In South Africa:

- **In the past 12 months, Twitter has grown 129% from 2.4 million users to 5.5 million users**¹⁰
- An average of 3,4 million messages are tweeted per month in South Africa.
- South Africans generate average of 80 tweets per minute.
- Users are increasing at rate of 100 000 people per month.

The continued rise in popularity of Twitter in South Africa makes it a platform you can’t afford to ignore.

What content is needed?

Twitter feeds need timely text updates. You can also tweet links to websites, images and videos. You need to learn to be concise to convey your message in the 140 character limit, without sacrificing spelling and grammar!

“Windows have bars, bridges have guardrails, but the misjudged tweet is a steep and easy drop.” Teju Cole@tejucole

What are the benefits for your nonprofit?

Engaging on Twitter provides your nonprofit with lots of benefits.

- **Amplify your cause through your tweets:** Your Twitter followers are people who will potentially engage, respond or retweet your work, immediately exposing your cause to a wider audience with minimal cost and effort.

GreaterGoodSA (@GreaterGoodSA), an organisation which connects givers with good causes, follows and retweets calls from NGOs for assistance, providing a much wider reach for their requests. *NGO Pulse (@Sangonet)* is a news and information service in support of civil society and the NGO sector in South Africa. *The Nonprofit Network (@nponetwork)* provides advice and support for nonprofits using social media. Connect with organisations like these to help amplify your message.

- **Share your message:** With a Twitter account you can share your cause, your mission, your stories, your enthusiasm and passion with others, both those to whom you direct your words, but also to anyone else who may be interested in your work. The ability to connect and respond to people makes it possible to build communities around your cause.

PASSOP (@PASSOP), an NGO dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented communities in South Africa, has an engaging newsfeed where they share useful information and resources for refugees, as well as answer questions from people needing assistance. Reading the interactions on the page helps people better understand the plight of refugees.

- **Listen to tweets:** A really useful feature is the ability to hear what others are saying and gauge public perception about your issues. You can follow related organisations, and also search for keywords and hashtags related to your work. Listening will also enable you to determine areas of interest to your constituents. Even if you are not comfortable sending out tweets, Twitter is an exceptionally useful tool as a listening device.

The *US Embassy to South Africa (@USEmbassySA)* provides a useful and informative feed which keeps people abreast of news from all over Africa. Remember that broadcast-only feeds also have value. See *@CapeTownTrains* for example.

- **Build relationships:** Twitter allows you to build relationships with like-minded people, by spending time reading and responding to people who tweet about the issues you care about. You can also learn from, and connect with, other nonprofits working in similar fields around the world.

Follow *Sangonet's* list of NGOs on Twitter to connect with other NGOs in South Africa:

<https://twitter.com/SANGONeT/lists/sango>

- **Increase traffic on your website:** Many nonprofits struggle with the idea of condensing what they're trying to say into 140 characters or less. Twitter may be too concise for in-depth discussions, but you can add links to your website and blogs which will allow people to read and learn more about the issue you are discussing. You don't have to say everything in a tweet. You just need to say enough to draw people into your website or blog to get the full picture.
- **Recruit staff:** Use Twitter to ensure your search for interns, volunteers or staff has a wider reach – and if they find you on twitter they are probably following your work and interested in the field.
- **Get real-time updates:** One of the most essential uses for Twitter is for real-time updates of crises and events all over the world. Share live-tweets of your workshops, talks, marches or other events that would be useful for the public to gain some insight. Similarly, follow real-time updates of events to follow the experiences yourself.

We've already mentioned the impact of tweeting during the Arab Spring and the terrorist attacks at the Westgate Mall in Kenya. But even outside of crises, real-time updates can be useful and interesting.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper live-tweeted a typical day in his schedule and invited Canadians to follow along: <http://storify.com/ctvnews/pm-stephen-harper-chronicles-his-day-on-twitter>

An IT Consultant in northern Pakistan inadvertently live-tweeted the raid on Osama Bin Laden's compound:

<http://tweetlibrary.com/damon/osamaraidlivetweets>

Lawyers for Human Rights (@LHR_SA) and the South African Litigation Centre (*@Follow_SALC*) often live-tweet important court cases. Are there events that your organisation could live-tweet?

How do I get started?

- Set up a Twitter account: (<https://twitter.com/signup>). Use your organisational logo and complete your profile.
- It is always useful to post a few tweets so that when people first look at your page they have something to see.
- Search for people and organisations you know, and then spread your search to find those who tweet about the areas you are interested in. It is usually expected that you follow back people who follow you, but you are generally advised to take a look at their profiles and decide if their tweets are relevant to you before you follow back.
- Use hashtags to connect with other people in your area of work, and respond and retweet messages you find interesting or relevant.

The second book in this ebook series offers practical help in creating and using a Twitter profile.

How much time is required?

Allow 10 to 15 hours per week for Twitter. You cannot tweet once a day and ignore Twitter for the rest of the day – it is an ongoing conversation. Make sure you dip into Twitter at different times of the day to engage with people who respond to you, and respond to others. Experiment with sending tweets at different times of the day to gauge when your audience is more likely to respond. Use tools like BufferApp, TweetDeck or Hootsuite to schedule your tweets and help manage your time on Twitter.

in LinkedIn

“LinkedIn is no longer just a place to post your resume and look for a job. It’s become a vital business tool for professionals and companies. In many ways, starting your non-profit’s company page on LinkedIn legitimizes your charity with professionals and corporations.” J. Kevin Wolfe

LinkedIn gives your nonprofit the ability to create a professional presence and participate in one of the most important professional networking spaces in the world.



What is it?

LinkedIn is a social networking website for professional people. With a focus on skills and business connections, it is mainly used for professional networking and building business relationships. LinkedIn is available in 19 languages.

Who uses it?

As of June 2013, LinkedIn reports that it has acquired more than 225 million users in more than 200 countries.¹¹

In South Africa:

- South African users of LinkedIn increased from 0,6 million in 2010 to over two million in 2013.¹²
- The largest group of users are aged between 25 and 34 years.
- Approximately 70,000 members are in the government sector.
- 35% of graduates use LinkedIn as a primary source for their job search.
- It is the 8th most popular website in SA, and the 3rd most popular social networking site (behind Facebook and YouTube).

Given the high representation of people in the government sector on LinkedIn, there is clearly the space and benefit for nonprofits to follow suit.

How does it work?

LinkedIn is a professional space, and therefore does not have the games, spam and frivolous updates more common with other social networks. Thankfully, this means you can navigate LinkedIn without being inundated with *Candy Crush* requests! Your newsfeed displays content from people you are connected to and groups you have joined. You can post status updates and join discussion groups with other professionals.

What type of content is needed?

Your followers on LinkedIn are not necessarily the same as your followers on other social networks, so you can start by posting the same or similar

content that you post on Facebook and Twitter, but remember that the content should be tailored for a more professional audience. Posting links to your blog and articles of interest are popular on LinkedIn.

What are the benefits for your nonprofit?

- **Visibility:** LinkedIn allows nonprofits to create a free company page that can build visibility for your brand, promote your cause, showcase job opportunities, and share news and updates about your nonprofit and your work.

SHAWCO, a student-run NPO based at the University of Cape Town, does a great job of keeping their LinkedIn page interesting, and using the page to share news about the organisation and advertise vacancies.

<http://www.linkedin.com/company/shawco>

- **Display your expertise:** LinkedIn provides an environment where you and your nonprofit can establish yourselves as experts within your field. Start or participate in LinkedIn groups, post presentations and promote workshops.
- **Stay informed:** LinkedIn groups allow you to stay abreast of the latest information on the nonprofit sector in an effective and well-organised manner. Join appropriate groups to gain insight and information from nonprofit workers in your field.
- **Weave a web of connections:** Connections can be made with businesses, other nonprofits, and even donors within your industry. You are able to search for individuals associated with particular nonprofits, foundations, or businesses. You can then determine whether anyone can make introductions on your behalf (i.e. if you have a mutual contact), and simply click the “Get introduced through a connection” option on their profile page.
- **Vacancies:** Cast a wider net in your recruitment efforts by publicising job postings and volunteer opportunities at your nonprofit.

The Allan Gray Orbis Foundation, which seeks to nurture and develop an entrepreneurial mindset, uses their page primarily to advertise vacancies, fellowship and

scholarship opportunities. They also provide updates about the organisation and stories from their previous scholars, making the page lively and engaging.

www.linkedin.com/company/allan-gray-orbis-foundation

- **Link up your supporters:** Provide an easily accessible platform to connect with your staff, supporters and partners, and enable volunteers and would-be volunteers to network more easily with each other.
- **Find experts that can help solve problems:** You can research experts in a field and approach them for advice. Networking communities such as these tend to be supportive and helpful.
- **Raise your profile in search engines:** Your profile, customised with your name (e.g. www.linkedin.com/in/yourname) has a vastly improved chance of being found in search engines because LinkedIn has such a high profile on search engines. This usually means an appearance in the much-valued first page of search results.

How do I get started?

- To create your organisational page, go to LinkedIn’s Company Pages and add a company. You will need to have an email address with the domain of your company.
- Complete your profile with as much information as you can.
- Make sure all your staff follow your organisation. This not only shows a connection with your team, but also makes it easy for people to find you and your staff.
- Use the recommend button to encourage people to interact with your company page and recommend your organisation.

The second book in this ebook series will look more closely at practical help in creating and using a LinkedIn page.

How much time is required?

LinkedIn for your nonprofit does not have to be as demanding as other social networks and you can manage your page in five to 10 hours per week.



“Humans are incredibly visual and powerful, moving images help us find meaning... [and] video helps capture and contextualize the world around us.” Dan Patterson

YouTube is the second most popular search engine on the web, giving you the potential to be discovered by a wider audience. Can your nonprofit benefit from having its own television channel? Absolutely! What medium is more powerful in connecting with your audience?

What is it?

YouTube is a video-sharing website on which users can upload, share, and view videos. Videos can also be embedded in other sources such as blogs and websites. In 2008, YouTube won a Peabody Award and was cited for being “a ‘Speakers Corner’ that both embodies and promotes democracy”.¹³

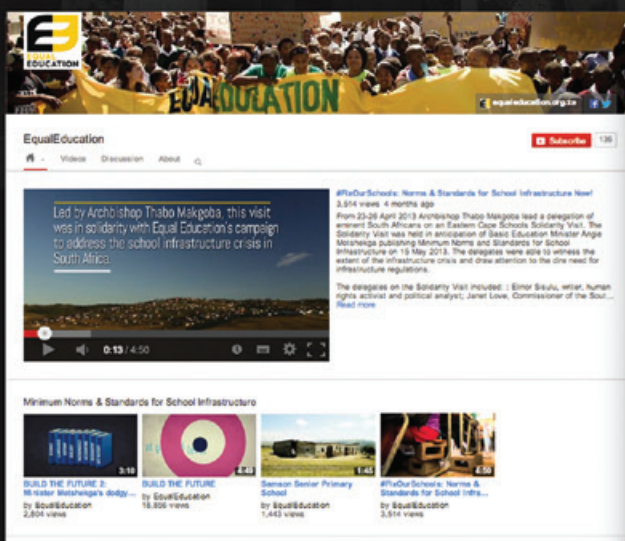
How does it work?

On YouTube, you can watch, rate and comment on existing videos, or respond to ratings and feedback on your videos. While you don’t need your own account to watch videos on YouTube, you do need an account to create your own channel and upload your own videos. YouTube allows you to subscribe to channels (videos uploaded by a specific user or organisation). You can also join groups where people upload and discuss videos around a particular theme.

Who is the audience?

YouTube has a vast, worldwide audience.

- More than one billion unique users visit YouTube each month.¹⁴
- Over six billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube—that’s almost an hour for every person on Earth, and 50% more than last year.
- 100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute.
- YouTube is localised in 56 countries and across 61 languages.
- 70% of YouTube traffic comes from outside the US.



An example of a YouTube channel: Equal Education South Africa.

In South Africa

- There are approximately six million YouTube users.¹⁵
- YouTube grew by over one million users in the past 6 months.
- Most users are in the 18 to 24 year and the 25 to 34 year age groups.
- 49% of users are male and 51% female.
- YouTube is the 4th most popular website and the 2nd most popular social network (after Facebook).

Clearly, YouTube is an international phenomenon with good penetration in South Africa and growing rapidly. It is worth taking the time to consider how its immense popularity can benefit your nonprofit.

What type of content is needed?

To state the obvious, you need videos! However, you do not need to spend a lot of money on purchasing video cameras or editing software to make your own videos. You can easily find software for making simple videos on your computer or mobile phone. Your nonprofit can make a video using pictures, symbols or illustrations – you are not limited to filming with a video recorder.

Room to Read, a nonprofit which works in education in Asia and Africa, produced a simple one minute video using just photographs and narration. It effectively tells the story of how their work extends beyond the boundaries of the school yard.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=DSJ7pN4EIJg#t=24

Remember that it's not about high production values and big budgets – it's about an effective message.

What are the benefits for your nonprofit?

- **Utilise the power of visual presentation:** YouTube provides a medium for you to tell your story visually, a powerful way to engage your audience.

The Children's Hospital Trust makes very effective use of videos in their campaigns. In one campaign, they posted child safety messages in short, 30 second video clips, using children to tell stories like: "I hope my Superman cape came with a warranty because it didn't help one bit when I tried to fly!". They show some statistics about injuries caused by falls ("Almost 35 000 children visit the Trauma Ward every year due to falls"); and use clips of children making appeals to share the video, follow them on Facebook and Twitter and visit their website. Using children to tell the stories makes it compelling and memorable viewing. The short length of the clips makes them more likely to be watched and shared, and they are a great example of simply-made but very effective videos.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CHTrust1>

- **Add captions:** YouTube does not yet have auto captioning abilities but it is synchronised with CaptionTube that allows you to create subtitles for your video. Viewers can add captions or translations of the video. Of course, you could simply add your own captions or translations. This is very helpful when you hope to address people in different languages.
- **Tell the full story:** The spoken word, in conjunction with the visual presentation, is very powerful. Voices, and even background noises, stand out from the "noise" of pages of information on the internet.

Inyathelo, an organisation aiming to promote philanthropy in South Africa, uses videos to present ordinary people and their inspiring stories of becoming philanthropists. The videos transport us into their world, and allow us to hear their stories and the passion for what they do in their own voices and words.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/inyathelo/videos>

RLabs offers community development services using mobile phones for counseling. In their YouTube video, they use interviews with staff to tell a powerful story about how they use social media to save lives. Founded on the Cape Flats, *RLabs* uses Mxit as a platform for free counselling services on areas from drug addiction to stress, family and relationship issues.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gmp5OQZOLYk>

- **Go viral:** Going viral simply means your message spreads widely and quickly, without your intervention. In the case of YouTube, a video goes viral when it is quickly shared and watched by thousands or even millions of people, who continue to share and talk about the video, which continues to increase its popularity. It is rare and difficult to achieve virality with your video, but when it does, it can be very powerful.

A registration campaign by *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University* created a viral video sensation. They worked with a marketing company, Boomtown, to organise a flash mob at a local shopping mall on a busy Saturday morning, featuring the NMMU choir singing a selection of songs featuring the word “you”. The edited video was released on YouTube and Facebook with the final campaign message: “U can stand out from the crowd. For a better U, apply now.” It elicited an overwhelmingly positive response with over 150 000 view on YouTube to date, and generated over R700 000 worth of exposure online and in the media.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ilFqHMOE1g>

- **Create a traffic jam:** A key purpose of any nonprofit having a web presence is to create awareness of the nonprofit organisation and its causes. YouTube has become a top destination for searches and can be used as a good strategy to gain search engine optimisation (i.e. to put you on the first page of Google searches in your field), thereby improving awareness of your cause and driving traffic to your website.

How do I get started?

Realistically, YouTube can be inaccessible to many South African nonprofits, who cite cost and technological limitations as the main barriers. However, video does not need to have high production values to be effective.

Take a look at the *Santa’s Shoebox* project, which collects Christmas gifts for children in need. They posted a 30 second clip, filmed on a cellphone camera, of some

of their beneficiaries (a classroom of adorable three and four year olds), singing a thank you song to their donors. Short, simple, and very powerful!

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10153230230600526&set=vb.112712045415079&type=2&theater>

Equal Education had a production company produce a very effective video for their *Schools Infrastructure* campaign. The video was widely shared and currently has over 18 000 views. It helped garner much support for their cause, and ultimately successful campaign.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/EqualEducation>

As you can see from the examples above, watching a short video clip gets a lot more attention than reading long reports and statistics. If you simply do not have the time or inclination to make a video, approach a local university, technikon, advertising school, or media studies department. They may be interested in helping your organisation make a video. Lecturers are often looking for meaningful work assignments for their students, and students can be enthusiastic and creative so the collaboration could be mutually beneficial. Advertising agencies are also sometimes interested in doing pro-bono work. You can also build up your channel using relevant videos already on YouTube.

How much time is required?

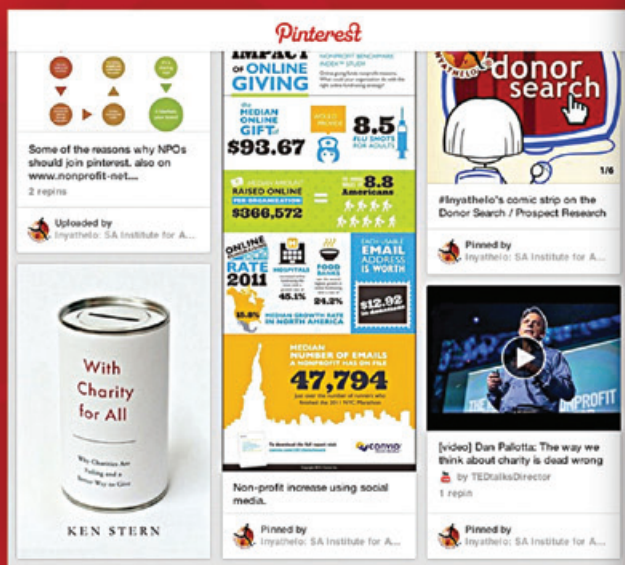
This depends on whether you create the videos yourself or outsource this task. If you’re outsourcing your video development, you still need to spend two to five hours per week posting and sharing videos.

“We’re still in the process of picking ourselves up off the floor after witnessing firsthand the fact that a 16-year-old YouTuber can deliver us 3 times the traffic in a couple of days than some excellent traditional media coverage has over 5 months.”

Michael Fox, founder of Shoes of Prey



“Content curation is not only about collecting beautiful, funny, interesting images. It is about collecting information for future use, reference, enjoyment, etc. Pinterest has put a pretty face onto a very important concept.” Jennifer Osbon



An example of a Pinterest board: Inyathelo's board of Fundraising and Advancement Resources. Each 'pin' is a link to an article, image, or video.

Pinterest is a fun and valuable network, which gives your nonprofit the power to be a content curator, establishing yourself as an expert in an area simply by gathering useful resources on your virtual pinboards. It's not just for recipes anymore!

What is it?

Pinterest is a social networking site that focuses on visual imagery, using virtual pinboards.

How does it work?

You can 'pin' images and videos (or articles which contain images or videos) onto a virtual board. In this way, the site allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections of events, interests, and hobbies – similar to the pages you bookmark in your web browser, except these are organised on boards with images as links.

Who uses it?

Pinterest began in 2010, and their subscriber base continues to grow exponentially.

- Pinterest had 70 million users by August 2013.¹⁶
- Eighty percent of their users are women.

In South Africa:

- 1.6% of South Africa's internet users use Pinterest.¹⁷
- Pinterest is the 19th most popular site in South Africa.
- South Africa has the 12th most Pinterest users globally.

Although the main demographic of Pinterest users has been women between the ages of 25 and 44, there is an increasing number of visitors across all demographics. Current users in South Africa are still early adopters but Pinterest has shown rapid growth once a small core group begin to use the site.

What type of content is needed?

The nature of Pinterest is that you curate or collect content according to a themed board that you create. You can "pin" content from your own

website or any other website, or “repin” content from other Pinterest boards. The content you pin must have images – it is not possible to pin anything that doesn’t have an image on it. You can also pin video clips to boards.

What are the benefits for your nonprofit?

Pinterest can be slightly easier to use than other social media networks because your organisation does not have to create original content all the time; it can just aggregate content that already exists on the web and on Pinterest.

- **Curate boards about your cause:** If your cause is an animal shelter, your boards could be simple, for example showing images of animals that need to be adopted; but they could also be more complex, bringing together information about care and grooming of a pet, recipes for pet treats, tips on training your pet. These kinds of boards will draw in animal lovers, who will then be more receptive to your cause.

Inyathelo works to assist nonprofits with grantseeking, and curates Pinterest boards with fundraising and advancement resources and useful books for nonprofits (including their own publications). They also work to encourage philanthropy in South Africa and curate boards of inspiring South African philanthropists.

<http://www.pinterest.com/inyathelo/>

- **Establish your organisation as thought leaders:** You inevitably do a lot of research in your area of work. Collect your research resources (e.g. websites, reports, books, articles) onto relevant boards.

The *Ending Hunger* project has boards with information on how to end hunger, books on hunger and poverty, things that people are doing to end hunger, ideas from around the world etc. Be creative around the resources you collect, and think about what is useful for your audience.

<http://www.pinterest.com/endinghunger/>

- **Market your brand:** Use Pinterest to market the work you do to interested people, possible volunteers, possible donors and the general public. Storytelling through pictures is key to communicating your mission. Nonprofits market themselves through educational and emotive appeals. Pinterest is an ideal platform when it comes to such appeals.

Send it South is a company offering IT business solutions to nonprofits. They curate a board of useful resources for nonprofits, which helps reinforce their brand as a company that helps nonprofits.

<http://www.pinterest.com/senditsouth/send-it-south-nonprofit-know-how/>

- **Organise your information:** The boards are useful not only for people following you, but also for yourself. For example, you can gather all the resources you need to put a campaign together, pin all the media articles that cover that campaign, and any images or stories about the campaign outcome. Since multiple people can pin to the same board, it can be a central space for staff to gather information.
- **A picture is worth a thousand words:** Pin images that promote your nonprofit and capture the essence of your organisation visually. Eye-catching images quickly get people’s attention. People react more deeply to visual representations than to words.

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) advocates for children’s rights around the world. Their Pinterest boards include powerful images, posters, articles, infographics and videos of UNICEF’s work and campaigns around the world. For example, the *UNICEF Television* board collects insightful videos and highlights children’s rights campaigns all over the world.

<http://www.pinterest.com/unicef/>

- **Images depict the situation:** Images and videos of the context in which your organisation is working can be pinned onto your board. Written descriptions below each pin should reflect how

your pins relate to your mission and your work. Photographs and videos of the work done by your organisation provide irrefutable evidence to interested parties, donors and fellow nonprofits. Share images from events or activities. “Before” and “after” boards work well to promote the work done. Invite volunteers and others in your nonprofit to post photos of resources needed, progress on activities, and achievements.

charity: water is a nonprofit that brings clean and safe drinking water to people in developing nations. Their Pinterest boards collect images from their field trips, merchandising, videos and images of people who have benefitted from their work.

<http://www.pinterest.com/charitywater/>

- **Pictures personalise your organisation’s message:**

Pin photographs and videos of the beneficiaries of your work (with their permission), showing the human side of your work. Ideas and images that are inspirational are soon re-pinned. Embed inspirational quotes onto your images.

Amnesty International USA has a collection of boards about fair trade items, inspiring quotes, suggested readings, infographics on human rights and a host of useful, share-able content.

<http://www.pinterest.com/amnestyusa/>

- **Increase web traffic:** If you pin articles from your website, people clicking the image or pin will be directed to your website to read the full story. Pinterest is a great way to direct traffic to your

site. Use keywords in pins and boards to enhance search-engine optimisation.

- **Inform through infographics:** You can place interesting and informative facts about your nonprofit and the work that you have done, or still need to do, in a creative graphic style which will both attract interest and inform people about your nonprofit. Really interesting infographics help to involve and interest the public in specific projects.

Take a look at this collection of nonprofit images and infographics:

<http://www.pinterest.com/nonprofitorgs/nonprofit-ads-posters-infographics/>

How do I get started?

- Create an account with Pinterest, and create a few boards.
- You can install a ‘bookmarklet’ to your browser toolbar, which allows you to pin any webpage (with an image on it) or videos to the boards you create.
- You can follow people who pin items that are of interest to your cause, and repin their pins to your boards.

How much time is required?

Pinterest, like Twitter, can easily take up most of your time, but if you are disciplined about your time you can manage Pinterest in three to 10 hours per week. Be warned: Pinterest is one of the more addictive social networks!

“ A new guide to visual storytelling practices reveals that when information is presented orally, people tested 72 hours later remember only about 10%. That jumps to 65% when pictures are added! Pinterest is a dream come true for nonprofits wanting to engage constituents with their mission.” Claire Axelrad

e blogging

“Blogging is to writing what extreme sports are to athletics: more free-form, more accident-prone, less formal, more alive. It is, in many ways, writing out loud.” Andrew Sullivan



An example of a Blog template

Your blog is your organisational voice. If advocacy is part of your organisation’s mission, you are missing a key opportunity if you don’t have a blog. Think of it as your personal publishing house for your op-eds.

What is it?

A blog is a website where you post your own frequent updates told from a personal perspective. Articles, called “blog posts”, are often short (although they don’t have to be), and the structure and tone of a blog post is less formal than a traditional website. Posts are arranged by date, with the newest post appearing first. Blogs usually include a comments facility where the audience can leave comments, questions or information for you and other readers. Although blogging requires a sustained effort, it pays off in many positive ways.

Who uses it?

In a nonprofit environment, a blog’s audience comprises people who are interested in your organisation’s work. Blogs tend to have more visitors than websites because of their frequent updates and ability to be more timely and casual than websites. As a result, blogs are more appealing to the audience and provide more easily accessible information.

What type of content is needed?

Posts are generally text-based but should include images and/or videos.

What are the benefits for your nonprofit?

- **Generate content:** Your blog posts give you the opportunity to produce original content for your nonprofit. This content can be repackaged for your social media platforms, your annual report, or form the basis of an opinion piece in a newspaper.

I think it is .. tiresome and useless to argue about whether blogs are journalism, for journalism is not limited by the tool or medium or person used in the act. Unknown

- **Timely responses:** They allow you to react quickly to issues, new research and events. This provides a major advantage over other forms of traditional media, and you are able to respond in greater depth than other forms of social media.
- **Two-way communication:** A blog shouldn't only be a one-way communication process but rather a conversation between you and your audience: you communicate with your readers and the readers in turn respond to you via a comments box. This is a great opportunity for your organisation to learn what your followers want. Feedback helps you realise what your strong points are and what you are doing correctly, but also where they are gaps in your blog. This can also give you guidance about what may interest your audience in other areas of your work.
- **To be the expert:** Blogs are useful to show your organisational expertise in your area. Think of them as opinion pieces that you publish yourself. You can use these to promote your cause, and if they are well-written and popular, you can generate interest in having your pieces published in the mainstream media.

Custom Contested, focusing on laws and policies affecting custom, "tradition" and citizenship rights, is a blog by the Centre for Law and Society at UCT. With insightful and well-written articles in their area of work, it establishes CLS as experts in their field.

<http://www.customcontested.co.za/>

- **Creating a sense of trust:** When your blog posts touch on topics that are helpful and useful to your

audience, a sense of trust is created. Readers automatically tend to trust a source as soon as their needs are met and questions answered. Maintaining a blog helps you foster a positive relationship that can have many advantages for both the reader and yourself.

The DG Murray Trust blog provides interesting and useful resources for nonprofits. In so doing, they create an audience of nonprofits who regularly read their posts, even if they are not directly funded by the Trust.

<http://www.dgmt.co.za/category/what-weve-learned/dg-murray-trust-blog/>

- **Social shares:** Do you have your Facebook, Twitter and Google Plus accounts set up yet? Your blog posts are original content that make an excellent source for social sharing material. Once you have a strong followership, sharing blog posts that provide value to readers is a fantastic way to extend your reach and grow your audience.
- **Search Engine Optimisation (SEO):** SEO refers to optimising your page to feature higher up in search engine rankings. Think about it – when you Google something, how often do you look at results beyond the first page? Keywords play an instrumental role in allowing your site to be found more easily through search engines. Producing keyword-rich blog posts are a great way to get your website recognised. There are many useful online keyword tools that will give you a sense of which keywords are better to use in your blog post.
- **Show a human face:** Your blog can give your audience an understanding of how you work behind-the-scenes, some of the challenges and successes you face, and how your beneficiaries are impacted by your work.

“Don't focus on having a great blog. Focus on producing a blog that's great for your readers.” Brian Clark

Getting started

- You can use any of the free blogging platforms to get started. Wordpress, TypePad, Blogger, Tumblr etc. are all free and easy to set up (but get in some professional help if you'd like your design customised).
- Write and publish a few posts, and then promote your blog using your social media channels and link to it from your website.
- Look for and read other blogs, comment on their posts, and encourage them to read and comment on your blog.

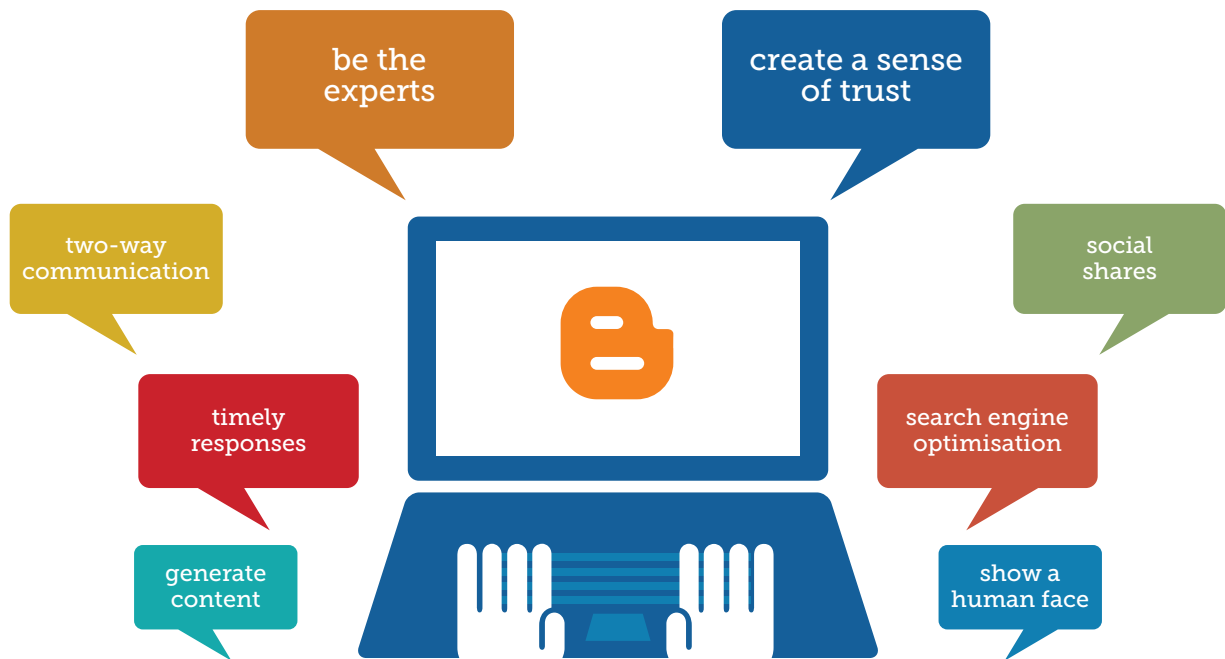
Time Required

How often you should blog depends on the nature of the work you do and the topics you address. Some bloggers may feel that blogging once a week

is an ideal way to keep abreast and meet readers' expectations, while others may find that just a single blog post a month does the trick. You may need to spend time moderating comments if your blog generates enough traffic. If you are not receiving comments, encourage staff to debate issues on the blog as well. Allow time to market your blog post on social media. You can also invite other people to contribute to your blog. Allow at least four – six hours per week to maintain your blog.

Budget

Although blogging software is free, you will need to invest staff time to keep the blog active and updated. You will need staff members who are good writers and committed to writing and advocating for your cause on your blog. If your organisation doesn't meet these criteria, it is best not to start a blog.

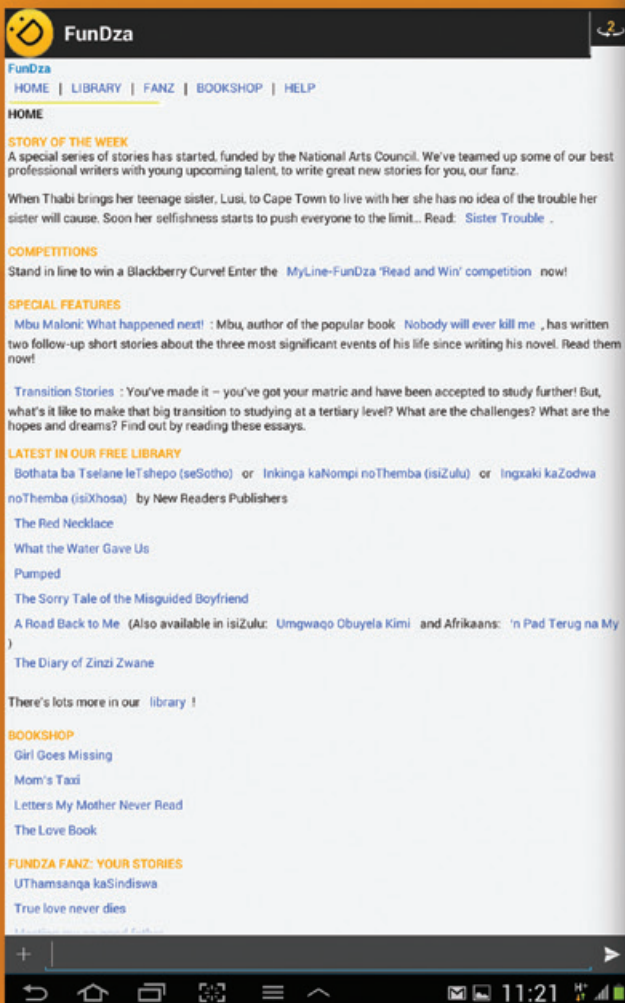


What are the benefits for your nonprofit?



“It doesn’t matter whether you’ve got a dumb phone, a feature phone, a Blackberry, an iPhone, Android or Windows phone, [Mxit] works on everything. It’s a truly democratic social network.”

Alan Knott Craig, former Mxit CEO



An example of FunDza’s Mxit page

It is impossible to talk about social networks in South Africa without addressing Mxit – our biggest home-grown social network.

What is it?

Launched in 2005, Mxit has long been one of the most popular social networks in South Africa. It is a free instant messaging application developed for cellphones. It’s particular appeal lies in the fact that it is not limited to more expensive smartphones, and therefore is accessible to a much larger, and lower income demographic.

How does it work?

Users install a Mxit app on their phones and register for the service. You can exchange text and multimedia messages directly with other users or participate in discussions in chat rooms. You can also buy games or services within the app.

Who uses it?

By January 2012, 50 million people had registered for the service internationally.

In South Africa

- There are currently 7.4 million users in South Africa
- 54% of users are aged 18 to 25 years
- 25% of users are under 18 years
- 49% of users are based in Gauteng

This year, for the first time, Facebook surpassed Mxit as the largest social network in South Africa. However, South Africans still spend more time on Mxit than any other social network.¹⁸

How have nonprofits used the service?

Mxit is vastly popular amongst the young and economically disadvantaged, not only in South Africa, but throughout the continent. Some South African nonprofits have been very creative in

leveraging this success, and in so doing have added value to Mxit subscribers and substantially broadened their reach. While it might not be for everyone, if these demographics are important to your organisation, Mxit might be the ideal place to meet your followers where they are.

The greatest value in Mxit is the ability to develop your own community within the platform. Several South African nonprofits have cleverly built their own Mxit communities using chat rooms or by developing their own apps.

Dr Maths is a service where trained tutors are online after school hours to assist learners with their maths and science problems. Students simply look for one of the tutors to come online and text them questions.

The *FunDza Literacy Trust* empowers young South Africans by encouraging reading and boosting their levels of literacy. By making use of the Mxit portal, FunDza has been able to deliver relevant and engaging content to young people in innovative ways. Every week a new story is uploaded to their mobi-network and Mxit. These stories are serialised over the course of the week, making it easier to read on a mobile phone and encourages reading on a daily basis. The stories are engaging, address relevant issues positively, use accessible language, and are set in local townships.

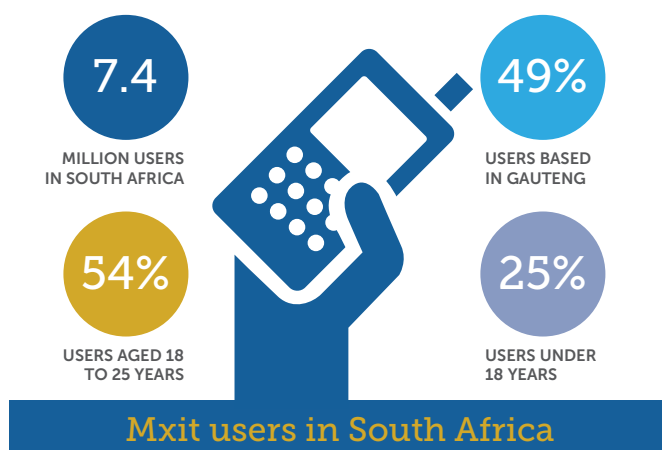
Cell Life is a Cape Town-based nonprofit which has made counselling services and vital health information accessible to South African youth infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Through the “Mxit cares” platform, an instant messaging service, Cell Life’s trained counsellors are able to engage in confidential chats with youth in need. The Red Chat zone is a live mobile counselling initiative which has provided assistance to more than 21 000 young people to date. Cell-Life Red is a very useful information portal which provides updated HIV information for the benefit of young people.

RLabs is a nonprofit which provides live counselling services via Mxit. Founded on the Cape Flats, *RLabs* offers community development services using mobile phones for counselling, equipping community organisations with skills to enhance their service to the community. *R Labs* has assisted more than 120 000 Mxit users on various issues including drug addiction, stress, family and relationship issues.

A *Rape Crisis* app enables rape survivors to access information such as how to report a rape and what to expect from a forensic examination.

Political parties are using Mxit to target the youth vote. *Agang* allows people to register as members of the party using their app, and earn airtime by signing up others. The *ANC* released a Mxit app which, with a targeted advertising campaign, generated 438 683 subscriptions or 80% of its social media following.

LifeLine Johannesburg uses Mxit to facilitate communication with young people through the *Girls and Boys on the Move* project, which teaches young people to make wise decisions about their sexuality, HIV and learning.



5. summary of time for social media

PLATFORM	NUMBER OF UPDATES PER WEEK	TIME PER WEEK
	5-7	5 – 10 hours
	35 – 50	10 – 15 hours
	1	2 – 5 hours
	3 – 5	5 – 10 hours
	5 – 10 pins	3 – 10 hours
	1	4 - 6 hours
	Many	Depends on the nature of the content

Do you still think you don't need a social media manager?

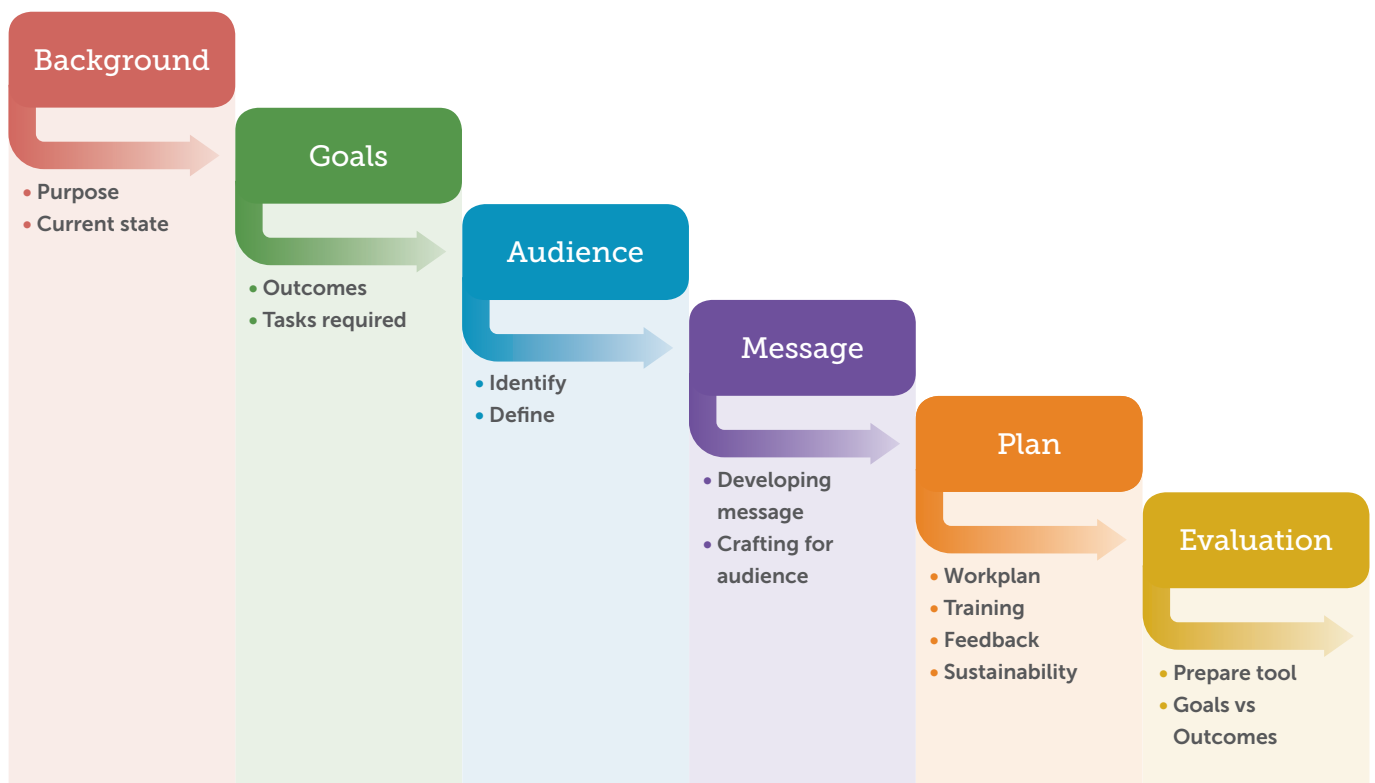
Use the time estimates to determine how many social networks your organisation can effectively manage. It is better to use one platform well, than to have several poorly-managed or neglected platforms!

6. crafting an online media strategy

“Social media is just a buzzword until you come up with a plan.” Unknown

Now that we have looked at a few popular social networks and their potential benefits for your non-profit, we will take a look at how to craft an online media strategy. You will need to work through the development of an online media strategy rather than just think through it.

The following sections provide you with questions and exercises to work through, whether you work alone or with colleagues. Once you have answered these questions, you can begin to nail down the details from which your organisation’s online media strategy will emerge.



Basic steps in crafting an online media strategy

“You can’t buy attention anymore. Having a huge budget doesn’t mean anything in social media... The old paradigm was pay to play. Now you get back what you authentically put in. You’ve got to be willing to play to play.”

Alex Bogusky, co-chairman CP&B

Let's walk through the exercise using an example of the "fictional" organisation called *The Nonprofit Network*. This organisation consists of a small but nimble group of individuals dedicated to helping Southern African nonprofits craft their

online media message. Their principle challenges are a small staff, limited budget, and a clientele that, while receptive to the message, is not always committed to turning the advice into action.

Background > Goals > Audience > Message > Plan > Evaluation

Contextualising your online media strategy

What is the purpose of this e-communication strategy?

The intended outcome of your strategy can only be conceived in the context of the aims and objectives of your non-profit.

This exercise should give you clarity about why you need an online media strategy.

FOCUS QUESTIONS	SAMPLE ANSWERS
What is the core business of your non-profit?	<i>Developing free resources for nonprofits in using online media</i>
What are your mission and aims?	<i>To educate nonprofits about the value of online media in their work, and in so doing, develop a stronger and more professional social media presence for South African nonprofits</i>
Why do you need a communications strategy?	<i>We are a small, unknown start up organisation with no existing media footprint</i>
What is the intended outcome of your e-communications strategy, i.e. what would you like to achieve for your organisation?	<i>We would like to develop the Nonprofit Network as a brand. We would like more nonprofits to learn about the existence of the organisation and use our resources</i>

What is the state of our current e-communications?

As far as possible, base your assessment on data and research about your e-communications to date. You can do this by conducting a survey, and using interviews and focus groups to assess your e-communications. If this feels overwhelming, consider bringing in a communications

consultant to help you with this assessment. This could also be a great project for an intern who is studying communications.

The following questions should guide your thinking when reviewing the material and messages your organisation has used to date.

FOCUS QUESTIONS	SAMPLE ANSWERS
What e-communication channels do you currently use?	<i>We use a website, Facebook, Twitter and Google+</i>
What information do people seek from your website and social media and do they find it?	<i>They seek help in using social media for their organisation. Our website is optimised to make this information easy to find</i>
What successes have you had in e-communication in the past? We are great at....	<i>We are great at sharing our resources on Twitter and it generates great feedback and interaction. We are great at marketing our events using our newsletters, social media and website</i>
What are the main weaknesses of your current approach to communication? We could do a lot better at....	<i>Our reach is still small and we could do a lot better at growing our online media footprint and increasing our website traffic</i>
What opportunities have you noted for further or better communication?	<i>We need to use more offline methods of communicating with nonprofits, and alerting them to our online presence</i>
What do you see as the biggest challenges to your desire to communicate?	<i>The NPOs who need our help the most are not using social media. We want to keep people informed, but we don't want to overwhelm them with too many messages</i>
What are the (latest) communication tools that you do not use or have not used effectively or extensively?	<i>Instagram</i>

Identifying your organisation's objectives

What do you want to achieve from your online communications?

Identifying your goals is essential to making your online communications effective.

FOCUS QUESTION	SAMPLE ANSWERS
What are your goals?	<p><i>We want to educate nonprofits on how to use online media to further their cause, raise funds, and increase their voice and visibility</i></p> <p><i>We want to raise our organisational profile and develop our brand</i></p> <p><i>We want to build our email list</i></p>

Now define your organisation's goals more clearly. Remember that your goals must be **SMART**: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound.

	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
	<i>We would like more people to use our online resources</i>		
Specific – clearly define how you will know if you have succeeded	<i>Increase visibility of our website but increasing traffic by 20%</i>		
Measurable – how will you measure your success?	<i>Use Google Analytics to measure website traffic</i>		
Achievable – can you realistically achieve your goal?	<i>Our website traffic has improved in the past through marketing, and a 20% increase is realistic</i>		

	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
Time-bound – how long will it take to achieve this goal?	<i>We will run this marketing campaign for 6 months.</i>		
Relevant – how does this goal impact your organisation?	<i>Increasing visibility of our website will increase visibility of our cause, educating more people about our mission.</i>		

What are the specific tasks needed to achieve each goal?

Outline the steps required to achieve each goal.

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
<i>Increasing website traffic</i>		
<i>We must generate new and useful resources for the website every week</i>		
<i>Website analytics must be used to help determine which areas of the site need further development (i.e. which are the most and least popular sections?)</i>		
<i>Twitter: Send 5 tweets a day using tips from the website, with links back to the website</i>		
<i>Facebook: Post one new resource a day with a creative picture illustrating the resource</i>		

Identifying who you are targeting

Who are your audiences?

Think about who your audiences are, and how the content of your messages will vary depending on your intended targets. You will communicate differently to board members, potential donors, clients and the general public as they will be seeking different information from you.

Who are you trying to communicate with?
Who are the individuals in each sector of your audience?

Tip

Have you considered running an audience survey to find out what media your constituents use? For example, use a free service like Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>), to set up questions like:

- Do you use our website?
- Do you use social networks?
- If yes,
 - Which social networks do you use?
 - Do you follow us on Twitter?
- Do you subscribe to our e-newsletter? etc.

The following table is a good way of clarifying who your audiences are and how they differ:

AUDIENCE SECTOR	PARTICULAR INTEREST/ INVOLVEMENT IN THE SECTOR	DESIRED ACTION FROM THE SECTOR	SPECIFIC MESSAGING REQUIREMENTS	SUITABLE MESSAGING TOOLS
Volunteers	<i>Sympathetic to your cause</i>	<i>Actively assist at given times</i>	<i>Information about when and where to assist</i>	<i>Twitter Email Website SMS</i>
Board members	<i>Monitoring your work</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Quick assessment of the status of projects</i>	<i>Email Website</i>
Potential donors	<i>Seeking information about your cause</i>	<i>Contribute funds</i>	<i>Case studies of successful projects</i>	<i>Website Facebook Twitter</i>

“If you do not have great content it does not matter at all how you deliver it.” @unmarketing

Message

Nike corporate slogan



“While an occasional disinclination to exercise is exhibited by all age cohorts, the likelihood of positive health outcomes makes even mildly strenuous physical activity all the more imperative.”

Nike slogan, if written by a nonprofit executive.

SOURCE: ANDY GOODMAN, FREE-RANGE THINKING, NOVEMBER 2003

Nonprofits have a habit of using incomprehensible jargon and acronyms, making their messages inaccessible to people outside their organisation. While the academic prose may be appropriate for grant proposals or a report to funders, in other

contexts it comes off as self important or even worse, boring. Remember that with social media, you must grab attention and define your message quickly and concisely. Can you do this without jargon, in terms anyone can understand?

Crafting your key messages

FOCUS QUESTIONS	SAMPLE ANSWERS
What is your core message? Our organisation is the only to	<i>Our organisation is the only source of free online media resources for South African nonprofits</i>
What is the purpose of the messages you want to send and receive?	<i>We want to send messages to educate people about our cause We want to receive messages indicating if the resources are clear enough, or if people need more assistance</i>
How will you communicate these messages? Do you need to use images, video, audio messages?	<i>We will communicate using our website, Facebook, Twitter and Google+. We will use images, video and audio podcasts to make the messages more accessible</i>
How will you know if these messages are effective? Is a click of the ‘like’ button enough or do you need to hear a response from your audiences?	<i>We will know if the messages are effective if we see more clicks through to our website, ‘likes’ and ‘shares’ of Facebook; ‘favourites’ and ‘retweets’ on Twitter</i>

The two words ‘information’ and ‘communication’ are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.

Sydney J. Harris

How will you craft your message for specific channels? Create a table including all the social networks you use as well as your website and e-newsletters. Now brainstorm

how each channel can be used to deliver which of your core message(s) and help you achieve your goals. For example:

GOAL: TO HAVE MORE PEOPLE USE OUR WEBSITE RESOURCES			
FACEBOOK	TWITTER	BLOG	NEWSLETTER
<i>Post articles from our website with links back to the site, highlighting a featured topic each week.</i>	<i>Tweet tips for nonprofits.</i>	<i>Write blog post about how social media has been successfully used for advocacy.</i>	<i>Share the latest resources from our website.</i>
<i>Post articles, videos and podcasts about the importance of online media for nonprofits, sourced from around the web.</i>	<i>Tweet articles from the website.</i>	<i>Write blog post about how to develop content for your online media.</i>	<i>Share recommended readings about online media for nonprofits, including books and reports.</i>
<i>Post articles about and from nonprofits in South Africa, highlighting the work of other organisations.</i>	<i>Tweet links to videos and podcasts about online media for nonprofits.</i>	<i>Write blog post about when social media spreads inaccurate messages.</i>	<i>Highlight relevant talks and debates about online media for nonprofits.</i>
	<i>Connect with other organisations working in online media communications; learn from and share their resources.</i>		<i>Encourage people to connect with our social networks.</i>

Developing your plan of action

Develop a work plan

Now that you have now decided which of your clearly defined goals will be best served by which media, you can begin the most important aspect of your e-communication strategy—the development of a plan for implementation. This level of follow through is vital. Without a specific

plan of action, your e-communication strategy is just another document in your filing cabinet.

Ask yourself what it will take to make your strategy work, who will do what, when, and how, and then write it up.

FOCUS QUESTIONS	SAMPLE ANSWERS
What is the role and responsibility of every member of staff in the communication strategy?	<i>JFS will develop content for the blog. RG will manage the website.</i>
Is there a need for outside help to implement the strategy?	<i>We will ask CJ to monitor the implementation of the plan.</i>
How will everyone be trained to fulfil his or her roles and responsibilities?	<i>Training needs will be assessed and workshops will be set up for those who need assistance.</i>
Who will oversee and monitor e-communications?	<i>MGS, as Communications Manager, will monitor and oversee all e-communications.</i>
Who approves the messages sent out using online media? Remember that you cannot authorise every tweet or post, so think carefully about how authorisation will occur. A good social media policy can help in this regard.	<i>MGS will approve an overall strategy, and RG will send out messages on Facebook and Twitter. No other staff are permitted to use the organisation's social networks.</i>
What is the role of the board members, etc.?	<i>Board members will be required to contribute one blog post per year. They will be asked to promote our website and social networks to their contacts.</i>

Use this information to develop a plan of action. There may be several levels of involvement for each activity/message. Use a calendar to plot activities and deadlines, making it clear who is responsible for each

activity. For each month, summarise what you hope to achieve, and list specific tasks that need to be carried out. At the end of each month, assess what has been achieved.

SAMPLE WORKPLAN

We have a detailed plan of action which will be overseen by the director. Staff will keep a record of their activities enacted according to the plan. Discussion on the implementation of the plan will be a standing item on the monthly staff meeting.

Our goal: To have more people use our website resources

January:

- 3 blog posts to be written related to online media for nonprofits, with links back to our site (JFS)
- 3 tweets a day must be resources from our website – in addition to usual tweets (RG)
- 3 Facebook posts a week must be resources from our website – in addition to usual Facebook posts (RG)
- Start planning development of a video clip illustrating how to use Facebook (RG)

Outcome: We want to see an improvement in website traffic, and establish what percentage of website traffic is derived from social media. This will help determine how much we can expect our website traffic to grow with an improved social media presence.

Devise a relevant training schedule

Do not make any assumptions about the capabilities of staff regarding the use of electronic and social media. Once the e-communication strategy has helped

determine which media tools will be used, provide an opportunity for everyone to receive training.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

Who needs to be trained?

SAMPLE ANSWERS

MGS has limited social media skills, and needs training in Twitter and LinkedIn.

FOCUS QUESTIONS	SAMPLE ANSWERS
Why does training have to take place – is it operational or supervisory?	<i>MGS will supervise social media and will not use it directly, but still needs the skills to be able to monitor the organisation’s account</i>
Who will provide training?	<i>Will contract the ABC Training Centre.</i>
When will training take place?	<i>January and February</i>
How will you deal with obstacles to success, such as reluctance to use new media, technophobia, lack of time?	<i>We will allocate a percentage of JFS and RG work time towards social media. Not all staff need to know all social media. If staff are not comfortable on a platform we will provide training but they will not be compelled to use it.</i>

Create mechanisms for feedback

Feedback provides an organisation with the opportunity to make data-based decisions about its public message and the efficacy of that message. Feedback is therefore required at two levels:

1. recipients of messages must have an opportunity to provide feedback and to receive a response;
2. the organisation needs feedback on the efficacy of these messages in order to access the successes or failures of its strategy.

To this end, someone needs to be in charge of tracking your strategy through appropriate monitoring systems, and to propose adjustments when necessary.

FOCUS QUESTIONS	SAMPLE ANSWERS
How will your audience be given the opportunity to give feedback?	<i>Comments on blog post, responses to tweets and Facebook posts.</i>
How will you respond to feedback?	<i>Respond on the medium in which the comments originate.</i>
Who will respond to feedback, and when?	<i>RG will respond to all feedback in consultation with MGS. Responses should be within 3 working hours.</i>

Calculate resources required for sustainability

Do you have the resources you need to get your voice out there? Online media strategies often fail because the strategy was more ambitious than resources would

allow. It is better to have a lean but effective e-communication strategy rather than an elaborate plan that is unsustainable. **What do you need and what will it cost?**

SUGGESTED BUDGET ITEMS	SUGGESTED BUDGET (TIME AND MONEY)
Developing materials for website	1 hour per day to write new content
Updating website	30 minutes per day to upload content @ R150 per hour
Facebook advertising budget	R500 per month
Time for updating Facebook	1 hour per day
Time for updating Twitter	2 hours per day
Training	5 hours per month
Material development	10 hours per month
Graphic design	R1000 per month

Preparing an evaluation tool

Prepare an evaluation tool before you implement your strategy so that everyone knows what is expected from the strategy and how the strategy is to be evaluated. This doesn't have to anything more complicated than a series of questions around the goals you set.

An evaluation tool will be created and used to measure our success in implementing our e-communications strategy. The director will assign one person to monitor the strategy and to evaluate it after 12 months. A data-based report must be presented to the director before the next AGM.

Write down your SMART goal(s) as discussed earlier —

SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

Prepare an evaluation document which asks the relevant questions:

FOCUS QUESTIONS	SAMPLE ANSWERS
Have the goals been attained? If not, why not.	<i>No. While we increased traffic to the website, it has not been a substantial increase.</i>
What is working and what is not?	<i>Social media has helped improve traffic but it is not consistent. We need to reach people not already on social media.</i>
Which audience sectors are most engaged, and why?	<i>Younger nonprofits are more active and engaged on social media as their staff are more receptive to it.</i>
Which audience sectors are not engaged, and why?	<i>Older nonprofits are less interested in engaging in social media as the director and board are technophobic and less interested in new media.</i>
What can we improve in the next phase of this project?	<i>We can try to run more workshops to engage people one-on-one. We can try to gain some coverage in traditional media.</i>

You may find it necessary to make slight adaptations or additions to the tool at the end of the implementation period. It is impossible to predict every eventuality, but you do want to take note of any surprises.

The goal is to attain a usable critique of your strategy. As you continue to work through developing a strategy, you will learn how to set more realistic, attainable goals. Developing your online media

strategy is not a “once-off” process. Your goals and strategies will continue to evolve as your goals and your campaigns change. Your audience will continue to grow, and your understanding of who they are and how best to communicate with them will grow too. You will learn how to more effectively use your communication tools through each campaign, and as you learn what works and what doesn’t, you will develop more efficient and effective strategies.

I’m a great believer that any tool that enhances communication has profound effects in terms of how people can learn from each other, and how they can achieve the kind of freedoms that they’re interested in.

Bill Gates

7. guiding questions for creating social media policies

Creating your organisational social media policy will help your staff understand who is responsible for various area of this work, and help define the appropriate boundaries on your social media channels.

Responsibilities

1. Who is responsible for social media overall?
2. Who can post to which channels?
3. Who helps generate content to post?
4. Who helps ensure consistency between social media channels and your website/s?
5. Which staff member will be responsible for regularly reviewing all social media channels? This should be a programme staff member who is not responsible for posting on any channel.

Content

1. What topics will you cover on each social media channels?
2. What is the tone of your social media channels (professional, light-hearted etc.)?
3. Are there topics that should not be covered?
4. If other NGOs are running campaigns outside of your area of work, should you promote them on your networks?
5. Should you cover current news and events in South Africa, even if it is not specifically related to your work?
6. If posting outside of the specific topics covered by your policy, should social media staff seek approval before posting? If so, who will be responsible for giving approval?

Privacy

1. Can you post information about your clients? If you require permission first, who will seek permission?
2. Can you post photographs of people without their consent (e.g. pictures used to illustrate an issue)?

A note on staff use of social media

In 2013, FHM magazine suspended two of their writers for inappropriate comments posted on their personal Facebook page. Does your organisation have a policy about staff social media use? It is very likely that your staff members are using social media in their personal capacity. When does what an employee says in their own “personal” space cross that line to becoming an organisational concern? What would happen one of your staffers posted something completely contrary to your organisation’s core values? Will you take action or would you stand on principle to protect your staff’s right to free speech? Even if you choose not to create a policy, it is worth having a discussion with staff about this.

8. sample content calendar

A content calendar helps you:

- keep your social media platforms organised
- develop sufficient content timeously to keep each platform active
- determine who is responsible for which areas of work
- maximise the use of each platform
- identify what works and what doesn't

The next page shows a sample content calendar. You can create your own in Excel, use Outlook or Google Calendars, or simply draw up a table on a whiteboard. The key areas to include are:

- Dates
- Platforms
- Keywords
- Goals
- Tasks/ Responsibilities
- Outcomes

A content calendar is a valuable tool in professionalising your social media work. It helps ensure that your social networks and websites are being used effectively to fulfill your communication goals. Remember that this tool is not all-inclusive or cast in stone. It merely provides an overall guide for the core posts each week, and helps manage staff input into online communications.

You still need to follow related organisations to share their posts, read the news and blog posts in your area of work and share relevant information, and respond to requests that arise during the week.



“Beginners at social media don’t have an editorial calendar, and they don’t measure results—they simply post when they have time. You have to keep feeding the beast. Otherwise, it’s worse than doing nothing.”

Beth Kanter, Author of Beth’s Blog: How Nonprofits Can Use Social Media

DATE	WEBSITE	TWITTER	FACEBOOK	BLOG	KEYWORDS	GOAL
------	---------	---------	----------	------	----------	------

01 JUNE						
TASKS	Create page to advertise workshop	Links to the workshop 10 Tips related to workshop content ('for more attend our event!')	Post image related to workshop and links to workshop page	'Why we need to build capacity at our NGOs' (with links to workshop content)	Capacity building nonprofit	Sell tickets to workshop
RESPONSIBILITIES	Write content for pages - JFS Create page wireframe - MGS Brief web developer - RG	Provide content for social media manager - RG	Source images - MGS	JFS to write blog post, RG to edit		RG to monitor all platforms and outcomes
OUTCOMES	Page content not well developed, therefore page is sparse	12 retweets and mentions	2 likes and 3 shares	300 views		2 tickets sold

02 JUNE						
TASKS		More tips related to workshop content Tweet extracts from blog post	Share image + tips related to workshop content Share blog post			
RESPONSIBILITIES						
OUTCOMES						

9. managing your social media staff

Do you micro-manage without realising it? Do you value what your social media staff do? Do you simply leave it to the “expert”? Do you feel uncomfortable managing a “technical” field?

Few NGOs can afford to appoint a full-time staff member to manage their social media. However, you can assign the work of social media manager to a staff member who is well-versed in your programme work and your mission, who has an understanding of social media, and who is trained in communications.



Allow enough time

Make sure that you assign at least 25% of the staff member’s time to manage social media. This will allow them enough time to manage one channel. Do not assign social media to anyone who is not qualified or experienced enough to communicate on behalf of your organisation.



Ensure they have the right skills

The social media staff must be well-versed in the language and tone of social media, and be able to blend this with a professional organisational voice. An intern or staff member who has a personal Twitter or Facebook is not automatically qualified to manage your organisation’s social media. Remember these are critical communications channels that should be managed by communications staff.

Your social media manager should understand the following:

- How to monitor social media for your keywords
- Which social media management



Social media staff management

- tools are best for your needs
- Which analytic tools provide the data you require
- Which social media metrics you should be tracking
- How to target particular audiences on different channels
- How to define a successful tweet or post
- Who your key influencers are

way of understanding social media. Look into workshops, webinars, online courses, or just do your own internet research. At the end of the day these are communication channels, not technical channels. You don't need to be a telecommunications expert to make a phone call; you don't need to be proficient in computer programming to send a tweet.



Stay up to date

Your social media manager should keep abreast of technological developments and have an eye on what trends are emerging. At the same time, don't be tempted to jump into every new network that emerges. Each social network has its own audience, approach and value; make sure that it adds value to your work and that you can sustainably manage it before opening an account.



Plan and evaluate your work

Even if you're not the one doing the tweeting and posting on Facebook, you should be actively involved in deciding what to post and when (*see sample content calendar on page 44*) and tracking statistics and insights to see what works and what doesn't.



Ask for help

Taking social media seriously means acknowledging the expertise required to manage it properly. So don't be afraid to call in an expert to help guide your strategy and evaluate your work. You'll find that you are not the first to have questions. There are consultants who can help – or contact the Nonprofit Network! At the same time, don't let technophobia get in the



Get the basics right

Finally, make sure your website is up-to-date. Developing an effective social media presence and using it to drive traffic to your website is pointless if your website is rarely updated and maintained. Your website should be fully integrated with social media – make it easy for people to “like” or “tweet” your articles, helping to grow their reach. Simple additions like using images in your articles will make it more likely they will be “pinned” on Pinterest.

Communication works for those who work at it.

John Powell

Contact the Nonprofit Network

<http://www.nonprofit-network.org>

<http://www.facebook.com/nponetwork>

<http://www.twitter.com/nponetwork>

<http://www.pinterest.com/nponetwork>

10. conclusion

Start now!

Don't wait until your campaign starts to create your social media accounts. If you start using a brand new Twitter account at a campaign launch, you might as well be placing your tweets in a bottle and tossing them into the sea. You need a good, established following before your campaign begins. It takes time to build up your community and get to know your supporters, and most importantly, turn them into your advocates.

In working through this book, you should have an overview of the more popular social media channels

in South Africa. You have worked through a basic online media strategy. You now understand how to manage your social media staff and develop content calendars. Now it is time to get started.

Plan as much as possible, but remember that using social media is like driving a car. Your real lessons start once you get behind the wheel!

The next books in this series will focus on implementing the strategies you have just learned, and monitoring and evaluating your work.

While [social] networks themselves can't solve the world's problems, they enable human beings to come together effectively, in real time and across the globe. Social networks allow expert organisations like NGOs, non-profits and government programs to harness our enthusiasm.

If we are no longer holding massive war protests and marching naked on Washington it isn't because our social networks are cheapening our efforts. It's because we no longer need to burn our bras to get a point across.

Whether or not humanity is hurtling towards some sort of collective consciousness for creating good is debatable, but if history has taught us anything it's that humans are capable of both miraculous and horrific deeds.

The fact that we now have social media and social networks hasn't changed this, but it has certainly empowered more of the former than the latter.

Courtney Boyd Myers - Has Social Media Reinvented Social Activism?

endnotes

- ¹ From 'The New Wave' Author Indra de Lanerolle, © University of Witwatersrand
<http://www.networksociety.co.za> Retrieved 1 September 2013.
- ² See *Global Voices*, an international community of bloggers who report on blogs and citizen media from around the world. <http://www.globalvoices.org>
- ³ Twitter Revolution: How the Arab Spring was Helped by Social Media
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