Social Media and The Third Sector
An introduction to best practice by Ed Gould

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Introduction

Everyone’s banging on about it. Your children, the papers, your colleagues, your friends and now your boss is on your back to do something about it. It’s likely the only reason you’re reading this is because you’ve been asked to “Do Social Media” for your organisation.

This guide aims to help you begin to understand ways to harness this rapidly developing tool, give you an overview of the bigger websites and inspire you to create our first ‘engagement strategy’.

The subject is broad and we can only introduce you to the ideas of best practice, which is why we have added some further reading and tips on staying up-to-date at the end.

The principles outlined in this guide can be applied by all types of organisations from Local Authority to small charities. The key is find your audience and build meaningful relationships with them using social media.

So what’s the big deal?

Social media is now bigger than anything else online. More and more people are using social media day-to-day to share ideas, catch up with friends, upload their CVs, share photos, reunite with old flames, find new things to do and recommend places to go, ad infinitum.

Practically speaking you can use social media websites to get your name out into the world and help build yourself a positive online reputation. Through a combination of video, pictures, blogs and comments you can enthuse and enable your specific audience to interact and build a relationship with your organisation.

Do it right and you can create highly-valuable, long-lasting relationships with the public, stakeholders, volunteers and funders. You can build trust, understanding and support for your organisation or campaign, improving your chances of success.

Social media can be accessed at any time of day, at any place across the world which eases communication and increases efficiency.

Don’t just think about promotion - consider using social media for logistics, internal communications, training and HR. It’s a versatile platform that gets you closer to more people. The more you use it the more opportunity will reveal itself.
Expanding your world and your contacts

Use social media websites to find people you are interested in and that share your values, interests and ideas. Talk to them and connect to expand your world beyond your natural environment.

Alongside connecting with your customers, funders and targets, you can use social media to target and build relationships with other professionals in your field. They could be around the corner or the other side of the world. These relationships however, pay dividends and let you develop your knowledge, share information, contacts and develop a network of like-minded individuals that can help you reach your business objectives.

No longer do you have to feel like it’s just you against the world. Use social media to grow your connections and your capacity.

**Measure the success keep an eye out for failures.**

You can use social media channels to profile your targets and understand what they’re interested in. By monitoring conversations online you can quickly understand what people are saying about your organisation.

By setting up simple tools like ‘Google Alerts’ or ‘Technorati’ you can listen to what your customers are saying and track what links they click on. You can even keep an eye on the competition and other organisations.

People love to share their thoughts honestly on social networking sites and their opinions are highly valuable for all kinds of reasons. No more so than you being able to act proactively on negative comments. Using alerts you can see the comment, get in touch, patch up the relationship and turn a negative into a massive positive.
Key channels to consider

There are thousands of social media websites - essentially anything that has a high level of user activity and sharing may be defined as a social site. This document focuses on the big boys of the social media world, but please do check out the other channels which are available and use what fits best to your organisation and target market.
Facebook

Facebook is the biggest social channel in the world, therefore it would be a consideration for numbers alone. The site’s main goal is to allow users to connect and interact with one another and this can consequently be on either a personal or business level.

It provides strong social tools such as sharing photographs, videos, blogs etc, which are instruments that your organisation should be using to get your information out there.

You can also accurately measure statistics through “likes”, messaging and clicks which let you know what your customers are interested in.

Facebook stats:
- More than 600 million active users
- 50% of active users log on to Facebook in any given day
- An average user has 130 friends
- People spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook
Facebook - How you can use it?

With millions of people using Facebook globally, this allows the third sector to get hold of more like-minded people who are interested in the organisation and individuals who want to start to converse.

As the largest social networking site Facebook is a great place to start targeting the 73% of British adults that volunteer in England at least once a year. Themes of action and involvement are popular whether it be a ‘click to support’ proposition or a call for volunteers.

By sharing your media such as photos, videos and URL links, you can express your messages creatively in any way that suits the audience you are aiming at. You can also measure what your target audience likes on your Facebook page by using the ‘insights’ feature on your page. By doing this, you will be able to pick up what your audience are interested in and cater you content and messaging to suit, ultimately increasing your chances of success.

Considerations

If you want to run a promotion or competition you need someone like Carswell Gould or another developer to create a third party application. You can not run it straight off your page (www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=114670568584818&topic=109)

You need to consider permission of using of content and be aware Facebook owns anything you add to it. Facebook is all about the interaction. If you simply create a page for your organisation and then not interact you won’t benefit. You can link Facebook to your other social accounts and use it as a second hub. Make sure you have two admins minimum.

Example of a Facebook page
http://www.facebook.com/HelpforHeroesChallenges

Further reading on how to set up a Facebook page
http://mashable.com/2011/05/22/how-to-facebook-page/
Twitter

Twitter is a strong network that millions of people, organisations, and businesses use to discover and share new information and track users.

Twitter users subscribe to your messages, or tweets, by following your account. These messages will feed into their accounts which will give you the chance to connect with your audience anytime you wish. Any retweets or click ons will also be registered to allow you to follow up what your audience is interested in. This social networking site is designed for quick, efficient and short messaging of up to 140 characters.

**Twitter stats**

- 460,000 new sign-ups daily
- 155,000,000 tweets per day
- 200,000,000+ registered users

**How can you use it?**

Twitter can help you share information about your organisation. It’s a quick, easy and personal way of instantly improving your relationship with your community.

You can also track your own followers to discover what they are doing and what they’re interested in. This is handy, as by viewing their interests you can think of ideas relating to their insights to attract other like-minded individuals to your site and organisation.

Their tweets will also automatically come onto your business’ home page, with the latest at the top, so you’re constantly being updated. You will also be able to measure what your audience likes by analysing retweets and click-ons. So consequently, Twitter is a useful tool for attracting your audience and understanding their wants and needs.
Twitter Considerations

Twitter is a strong network that millions of people, organisations, and businesses use to discover and share new information and track users.

Twitter is great and simple to use - 140 characters and you’re away.

It has great targeting tools and you can add various online measurement tools like tweet stats. We use Hootsuite, Tweetdeck and Timely to add a greater layer of functionality and increase efficiency. We also run a small amount of automated messages to maintain the company’s core messaging and positioning.

However, too much auto messaging and you will lose your followers’ interest. It is, after all, about building real relationships.

Example of a twitter page:
www.twitter.com/#!/dothegreenthing
www.twitter.com/carswellgould

Further Reading - How to set up a Twitter page
YouTube is a video-sharing website where users can upload, share and view any video they wish to watch. Firstly you need to make your own account and then you simply upload the videos you want to share with the world.

It accommodates lots of space for in-depth video clips, in which you need to educate your potential customers or volunteers. There is a comment bar underneath so you can listen to what your target audience will be saying and you can measure the amount of views to see what’s popular within your market.

Clicking on a YouTube username will show you the user’s profile where personal information will be shared.

Your audience can also contact you through the YouTube’s messaging system, which can be found in a link above their channel information box if they are interested.

**YouTube statistics**

- More than 13 million hours of video were uploaded during 2010 and 35 hours of video are uploaded every minute.
- The equivalent of 150,000+ full-length movies each week
- More video is uploaded to YouTube in 60 days than the 3 major US networks created in 60 years
- 70% of YouTube traffic comes from outside the US
- YouTube is localised in 25 countries across 43 languages
- YouTube’s demographic is broad: 18-54 years old
- YouTube reached over 700 billion playbacks in 2010
YouTube
How can you use it?

YouTube can help the third sector organisations to share videos all over the world. Video is a great way to demonstrate what you do as an organisation, instead of just demonstrating it through text.

Your viewers can also comment on your video underneath so you can see what they’re saying and take on board their feedback, a great way to benefit your organisation for the future. Through measuring the amount of views you can see what’s popular and by doing this you can improve your videos to attract more third sector interested viewers.

Considerations

The cost of producing the videos.

It’s GREAT for SEO (Search Engine optimisation) and you can stream and share the videos you upload onto your website or even your Facebook group.

One trick is to set up your own channel add your videos and then supplement your channel with other people’s/organisations’ videos that your audience will like. Activity like this pleases your audience, the person who made that video as they get greater profile views and yourself, as it gives you relevant content.

Make sure that all the information is bang on and that everything you add is properly tagged and labelled. The more information you add the more benefit you will get.

Example of a you tube channel

www.youtube.com/user/VolunteeringEngland

Ho to set up you own channel

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kORJgR6jp9c,
LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the world’s largest business network. It allows you to connect to other individuals and groups related to your industry and interests so you can share your knowledge, ideas and opportunities to gain a broader network of professionals.

This can result in connecting you with jobs, new leads and ideal business partners which could benefit your organisation. It also lets you to control your own online identity, which allows you to control the first impression people get when looking you up online.

LinkedIn statistics

- They add a new member every second
- 101 millions members worldwide
- Over 52% of LinkedIn members are located outside the US

How can you use it?

It can help connect your third sector organisation to other individuals and groups from around the world. You can see what they are doing to promote themselves, and you can take this on board and make yourself look better. You can also find people with the same interests as the third sector and see what they’re doing and then get into contact with them. By sharing your knowledge, ideas and opportunities on LinkedIn, people will become interested in you and ultimately give you a larger network of professionals, where you can gain ideal business partners to work with. We suggest focusing on the groups - set up your own and join others.
LinkedIn Considerations

Make sure your profile and messaging is correct for you and your organisation.

Realise this channel is PEER TO PEER so you need a face and name to represent the organisation.

The company profile page is worth doing but it’s really about the individual. This has a legacy for the individual so it’s in their interest to work on their profile. LinkedIn is like your online C.V. Use the recommendations.

Example of linked in account:
http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=27379629

How to set up a LinkedIn account video link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzhPzoQ08jo
Flickr

Flickr is an image and video hosting website which you can use to share for pleasure and/or business. There are a great number of bloggers that host the images they embed in their blogs and social media.

The flexible privacy control that makes sharing your images and videos secure can organise and display your photos in the way you want to. Flickr members can also form up groups where like-minded people can post photos related to the group’s theme. By getting your organisation connected to the right group you can gain a lot of attention.

**Flickr Statistics**

Holds over five billion of the world’s photos
Over 10 million active groups taking part in the conversation
Learn from over 60 million photographers
How can you use it?
Flickr has become a helpful tool to display high quality images and videos of your organisation and its activity. It’s one of the best platforms to share visually to your audience and it’s a great way of showing them what you have been doing.

If you consider incorporating blogging into your social media strategy, you can send a direct link from your blog for your audience to view your images on Flickr. By using your web address as your Flickr name this name will come up with every photo you upload or message you post in a group discussion.

*Example of Flickr page:*
www.flickr.com/groups/leagueagainstcruelsportsimages/

*How to set up a Flickr account video link:*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyXmR2PA6cM
Google alerts

These are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic. Set up alerts for your organisation’s key words to keep up-to-date with what’s being said online.

E.g. If you run a charity that recycles computers in London to raise money for the homeless you would set your alerts to look for websites talking about technology, computers, London, homelessness etc.

Once you’ve identified your key influencers online, your organisation can then target them. Connect with the aim of them potentially helping you spread your message to their own following.

How to use Google Alerts:
www.google.com/support/alerts/bin/static.py?hl=en&page=guide.cs&guide=28413&rd=1
Blogging

A blog is an online journal which is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption. They are designed to get your name out there and represent the personality of the author.

They are also a useful method to share your organisation’s expertise and connect with your potential customers.

Many blogs syndicate their content to subscribers using RSS, a popular content distribution tool, to keep them regularly updated. Updating a weblog is also quicker and cheaper than getting hold of a web designer to do web coding, changes and updating yourself.

By blogging, you can get your organisation’s name onto the internet and show its caring personality. By blogging frequently, you can increase numbers of people who understand your organisation and back you.

You can also share your organisation’s expertise, so that anyone who is interested in joining can learn more about you.

How to start a blog:
http://www.wikihow.com/Start-a-Blog
Social bookmarking is a method to organise, store, manage and search for resources online. Descriptions may be added to these bookmarks in the form of metadata, so users may understand the content of the resource without first needing to download it for themselves. Such descriptions may be free text comments, votes in favour of or against its quality, or tags.

By tagging a website it saves it online rather than saving it to your web browser. This makes it easier to share pages with friends or other like-minded people. This is great for visibility and SEO (Search Engine Optimisation).

Most bookmarking sites let you browse on ‘recently added’ and ‘most popular’ through a voting system so you can easily discover a page which is more current and beneficial for others’ and your interest. The aim is to get your content referenced as many times as possible.

Popular bookmarking websites include Digg, Delicious, Technorati and StumbleUpon.

How to use a social bookmarking site:
It’s just like real life!

Real life relationships start with an interaction. We introduce ourselves, converse, listen, respond and enjoy each other’s discussion in the process.

1. What type or organisation are you? What’s your ethos/goals? Your hopes and dreams? Take it one step further...What is your business plan and marketing plan?

2. What are your aims for the strategy? E.G. I want my organisation to have greater awareness amongst its audience / I want to find volunteers / I want to increase donations / I want to position our organisation as a thought leader etc.

3. How do those aims relate to your audience and what actions do you need to take? Think about how you can make these people interested in your objectives and how you can make it into a two-way relationship and not just you asking for help.

4. TARGET MARKET - You may have existing profiles for your TM that you can revisit. You must understand that to make it work well on social media channels there is a greater emphasis on you and your organisation to make the content relevant to your targets. Unlike a press release or an advert you’re looking to have real conversations with your audience.

5. Where do your target groups hang out in their biggest numbers? This will take a lot of research, but it is worthwhile. It’s likely they’ll be on the big sites mentioned previously, but it may vary e.g. if you are a visual organisation Flickr may be better than Twitter.

6. Be sure to understand how these sites work - get involved in your group’s communities, use their websites and build a picture of site’s etiquette or tricks e.g. Twitter’s #ff = Follow Friday.

7. Next plan your conversations: What do you think you want to talk about? What are you willing to share ? What do you hope to achieve through these actions? Your organisation’s key information and messaging should be reflected across all your channels.

8. Draw a plan of how the websites you choose to use will link together. At Carswell Gould we have a monthly meeting to agree topical content ideas for the team to then use to keep our channels fresh.

9. Agree a plan of who will undertake the work and allocate weekly time budgets for the work to be done.

10. Social media IS time consuming but often cheap to start. Organisations often set up then fail to follow through, which is why you will need to allocate time upfront for this plan to work.

11. Carswell Gould’s social team spends about 30 minutes a day on our own social media sites.

12. Set up your channels carefully. You can do this yourself or ask an agency. There are a lot of variations of how you can set them up.

13. On many sites you can brand them with your logos. See Carswell Gould’s Twitter ID for an example @ carswellgould.

14. When you set up your channels make the user a global/shared email address and password so if that employee leaves your business there are no issues with logins. Also make sure two people are admins on all accounts for the same reason. At Carswell Gould we often find clients have multiple accounts set up which we then have to spend time undoing and correcting. Avoid this
Carswell Gould (CG) was chosen by Hampshire County Council (HCC) to deliver an integrated communications campaign that would reinvent and strengthen the position of Hampshire libraries. Working to a tight budget meant county-wide advertising and awareness activity was delivered via a strategy that dovetailed into the council’s own communications activity and Discovery Centre Programme. Exciting, creative and targeted messaging encouraged people to challenge their perception of what and who libraries are for. The year of successful activity culminated in the launch of the new Basingstoke Discovery Centre (BDC).

**Aim:**

We wanted to awaken people to the fact that libraries are changing. No longer are they boring, stuffy, dusty places where you’re told to be quiet. Changes have and continue to take place to create a modern and resource-rich experience. HCC libraries and discovery centres offer a huge range, from books to free internet and from computer games to e-reader downloads. Our work had to challenge people’s own perceptions, in order to get them to try their local libraries again and see for themselves what a valuable resource they are. Key performance indicators of our work would increase visitor numbers, issues and joiners, plus a change in perception.

**Method:**

We conceived and developed creative and key messaging to form the backbone of the year’s activity. The creative proposition was used consistently to increase recall and understanding and to offer best value to the client. Additional messaging and content was developed to inform people throughout the county what facilities are available in libraries. Once we had agreed the creative strategy a programme of activity was developed that included:

Media planning and negotiation that spread the budget for best value, covering key locations associated with or close to Hampshire libraries. Outdoor awareness - billboards, phone boxes, train stations, adshells, banners on concourses, four sheets and buses. Internal awareness - lit shopping centre six sheets, banners and branding content shown on big screens, information screen content, lift doors and pull up banners in locations like museums and cinemas. Targeting of newspapers, magazines and local newsletters for adverts and editorial content. Facebook and online advertising plus serving of content to multiple websites and ePR. Social media to open up the reach and develop relationships with new audiences. Email marketing template development and creation serving content to e-newsletters. Event organisation and experiential marketing opportunities, competition developments and the creation of the ‘Discovery Treasure Trail”. Leaflets, posters, flyers, shelf wobblers and other forms of collateral. Negotiation and development of relationships with key groups and organisations; with the results of free supply of multiple acts and performers, products and vouchers for prize fund, like-for-like promotions and catering and exhibition content.

The key activity CG undertook for HCC was the creation, organisation and delivery of the launch of Basingstoke Discovery Centre launch. We began by running teaser campaigns to intrigue our target audience about what was to going to be happening. We then developed an integrated communications plan for the launch, culminating in an official opening ceremony with a week-long opening event, top and tailed with two days of exciting events, competitions and activities including: Pre-event publicity tied in with Oktoberfest, an annual family-focused event within Basingstoke. Advertising in and around Festival Place shopping centre, including billboards, banners, large posters, countdowns, shelf wobblers in stores and adverts in the lifts. Communication via Festival Place email and web channels, branding on multiple promotional...
Case studies

Basingstoke Discovery Centre - Repositioning Libraries for the Future
www.carswellgould.co.uk/our-work/1187/2011/01/13/repositioning-libraries-for-the-future
Full case study, image and videos at the above address.

Ladies Choir - performed on the BBC’s Last Choir Standing, The Author - Richard Reece, a hip hop artist from Basingstoke Funky Element - Marcus, a rap artist.

The Results:

In a tough year for libraries nationwide and set against severe cuts, our work helped Hampshire libraries develop and increase its value to the local community. Basingstoke Discovery Centre launch took place over one of the snowiest weeks in UK history, with many people staying indoors. With these considerations in mind, the performance of the campaign excellence and the returns and legacy made our work great value.

Statistics:

- In the first week of opening 13,428 people visited Basingstoke Discovery Centre.
- There was a 46% increase in issues of books and other content to users.
- There was a 500% increase in people signing up for a library cards.
- The Facebook page received 2,156 page views, 153 likes, 69 interactions with users and on one day, 3,183 page impressions (Nov 1 - Dec 8)

Launch event activity included:
Locally-sourced food Promotional lookalikes Gaming experience Discovery Treasure Trail Win Christmas competition Musical acts - Fat Boyz - break dance, hip-hop and street dancing group Hoolistics Dancer - Bee Varga, James Mitchell - acoustic guitarist, The Basingstoke Tappers - a tap dance company, Happy Feet Dance School - a dance company specialising in tap, modern jazz, street and hip hop. The Basingstoke Area Youth Choir - aged between 11 and 18, The Basingstoke Academy of Dancing - a dance company that focuses on a variety of dance styles for children and adults. The Basingstoke

channels including Hampshire County Council websites. Adverts placed in local newspapers and Vue magazine. Adverts were created for local radio. A promotional Facebook advert went live, inviting residents living within 25 miles of Basingstoke to come as VIP guests. Throughout the two days, shoppers from Festival Place could get their photos taken with Captain Jack Sparrow and Lara Croft. These were then uploaded onto the Discovery Centre’s Facebook page so people could tag themselves. A record of their contact details was kept for the Discovery Centre’s database.

Music was sourced from a variety of local talent. Street dancers, local choirs, dance troops and an acoustic guitarist all took part. Craft workshops and interactive video games were set up to get children involved in their new library and a treasure hunt was set up so they could explore what had changed in the library. Prizes were awarded. A ‘Win Christmas’ competition was set up and advertised, encouraging existing and new users to borrow a book, after which they were automatically entered into a draw. The prize package was compiled of gifts donated from stores within Festival Place, which included a snowboard, gym membership and an Xbox.
Case studies

Race Online 2012 - Creating A 100% Networked Nation

http://carswellgould.co.uk/our-work/1213/2011/06/14/
race-online-creating-a-100-networked-nation

Full case study, image and videos at the above address.

The Results:

• In just eight weeks CG increased the Twitter followers by 400% (to over 1000 followers), Facebook followers by 500% and boosted its LinkedIn profile and connections.
• Our social media activity accounted for 54% of all referral traffic to the website
• So far over 600 organisations have pledged to support the campaign – including the likes of Google, Microsoft, BBC and Talk Talk.

Race Online 2012 is a national campaign which aims to get the entire UK online by the Olympic year. Currently 10 million people cannot access the benefits of the internet. A fully networked nation could save the UK an estimated £22 billion, as well as delivering huge social benefits.

Aim:

CG was tasked with using social media to inspire UK businesses to support Race Online 2012 encourage 10,000 organisations to make a pledge.

Method:

Everyone at CG believed in the Race Online 2012 mission and we knew that others would too, they just needed to hear about it. CG’s challenge was to target the decision-makers, explain the initiative and get them to sign-up. Working along side Martha Lane Fox (UK Digital Champion) and her team, we developed a social media strategy which targeted business leaders directly, as well as targeting their influencers (opinion leaders, staff, partners, children).

Using the latest social media techniques and digital platforms we created advocates out of passionate internet-users, used crowd-sourcing to generate mass awareness, generated exciting new content and blogs and inspired business leaders to pledge to help get the whole nation online. We managed all of Race Online 2012’s Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn platforms; creating new networks and contacts. We also developed an email marketing programme to keep in touch with advocates and partners, serving them with the latest content, and a special micro-site for employees to get their bosses to sign up – www.tellyourboss.co.uk.

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Some further reading and websites to check out

- All about your industry: http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/
- Tips to increase followers: http://sproutsocial.com/find-new-customers?gclid=CL2k-MOxl6kCFUtC4QodZgKC-sw
- Easy mistakes to avoid: http://socialmediatoday.com/jeffepstein/281435/7-common-mistakes-businesses-make-using-twitter
- Step by step process of how to create a Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/pages/learn.php?campaign_id=155613657785428&placement=phrase&creative=7928804412&keyword=how+to+make+a+facebook
- Video of how to make a Facebook account: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4i-AP6Rz-8E
- How to make a YouTube account: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2N72ACocFg
- Tips on blogging: http://www.bloggingtips.com/
- Top 31 free blogging websites: http://webupon.com/blogging/top-31-free-blogging-websites-the-ultimate-list/
- What to avoid when blogging: http://truemlmgrowth.com/blog/the-top-3-common-blogging-mistakes-to-avoid/
Credits

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