

YouTube and Beyond: Using the Social Web to Transform the Future

Doug Schmidt
Act Team Coordinator
The Fifth Freedom Network
227 E. Washington Blvd, STE 304
Fort Wayne, IN 46802
act@fifthfreedom.org
www.fifthfreedom.org

Goals:

The goals of this workshop are to teach attendees how to use the Social Web to promote a cause, advertise an event, or draw attention to a Web site or blog. These methods will allow any nonprofit group or private individual to promote anything, even without an advertising budget.

[Slide 1]

I. Introduction: the Social Web

- a. Opening remarks: Internet Communication, The Great Equalizer

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome. My name is Doug Schmidt, and this is “YouTube and Beyond: Using the Social Web to Transform the Future.”

That wasn’t the original title. When I first started writing this presentation, I called it “A great excuse to use the Internet at work.” Next year, I’m writing a workshop about how to take naps.

[Slide 2]

In 1836, the inventor Samuel Colt patented his eponymous revolver. The gun was nicknamed “The Great Equalizer” because it no longer mattered who was bigger or stronger or faster. In a fight, having a Colt made you anyone’s equal.

[Slide 3]

In 2008, the Internet is the new Equalizer. Anyone with an Internet connection can promote a message like a corporate giant, without a giant advertising budget!

Using the Internet to promote a cause is cheap, and it is also the best way to reach a younger audience. Statistics show that most people with Internet access spend more time online than watching television.

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A study by market research company IDC showed that the average person with Internet access spends 32.7 hours per week online. However, people with Internet access only spend 16.4 hours per week watching TV. Newspapers and magazines only take up 3.9 hours per week. The difference is probably due in part to the fact that you can get television shows, news, and magazine content online. It's also probably due in part to Internet usage at work.

The study also shows that people use the media they grew up with. The younger someone is, the more likely they are to use the Internet instead of older media forms.

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The PEW Research Center has found the same thing: the younger someone is, the more likely they are to be online. A 2006 study found that 56 percent of people in their 60's use the Internet. Sixty-eight percent of people in their 50's are online. Seventy-five percent of people in their 40's are online. However, 83 percent of people 18-29 use the Internet, and 87 percent of people 12-17 use the Internet.

Of course, there are always exceptions that prove the rule. My grandfather is 84 and he loves surfing the Web. I have a friend in his 20's who doesn't understand the Internet at all. The other day, he asked me why I had a keyboard plugged in to my microwave.

[Slide 6]

Using the Internet to promote a cause allows you to reach a younger audience with little or no financial investment. Most often, your principal investment will be time. Using the techniques I am about to teach you today, I doubled the number of visitors to Fifth Freedom's Web site working just a few hours each week for three months. If I can do that working by myself, imagine what the people in your organization can do working together.

b. Definitions

I'll be using some unfamiliar terminology today, so we have provided a handout with definitions.

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What is the Social Web? To understand that, we first have to understand what the *Internet* is.

The word "Internet" is a portmanteau, two words mashed together to create a new word. The *Internet* is a collection of *interconnected networks* of computers. While most people think of it as a relatively new technology, the Internet is actually almost forty years old.

How was the Internet invented? No, Al Gore was not involved.

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In 1958, the Department of Defense created the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA), which would be responsible for creating new technology for military use. In 1969, ARPA created a computer network called ARPANET, which was basically the Internet in its fetus phase. The idea behind ARPANET was to decentralize information storage, insuring that valuable military and scientific data would still be here if the Russians decided to launch a nuclear attack.

When ARPANET began, it consisted of four connected computers: one at UCLA, one at the Stanford Research Institute, one at UC Santa Barbara, and one at the University of Utah.

When Samuel Morse developed his telegraph in 1844, the first message he sent was "What hath God wrought?" When ARPANET was completed in 1969, the first message sent was this:

[Slide 9 – The first message sent was "Lo".]

A student at UCLA was attempting to send the word "login," but the system crashed.

This was a message sent to another computer, not another user. That wouldn't happen for another two years, when ARPANET would get email.

[Slide 10]

As strange as it may sound, email was actually invented before the Internet. It was invented even a few years before ARPANET. What was email like when it started? Imagine if the Post Office could only deliver your letters to people who lived in the same house as you. When email began, it was rather like that.

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In 1965, you could only leave someone an electronic message if you were sharing the same computer. Essentially, there was one large computer called a “mainframe” that stored all the information, and dozens of users would connect to it from what’s called a “dumb terminal.” The terminals were called “dumb” because they were essentially empty. They had just enough equipment to connect to the mainframe. When you sent someone a mainframe email, all you were doing was saving a message to their directory. They would be notified of the message the next time they used the mainframe. It was electronic mail, but the message didn’t actually go anywhere.

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An engineer working on ARPANET named Ray Tomlinson added email to ARPANET in 1971. This allowed people to send messages to someone at another computer, one that they didn’t share. Ray Tomlinson sent the first modern email in 1971. It was a simple test of the system, probably something like “QWERTY”. His first *real* email was simply instructions on how to use the system, including how to use the “@” symbol.

As the technology advanced, public networks similar to ARPANET were developed. In 1973, the networks were connected, and the Internet was born.

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Most people use the terms “Internet” and “World Wide Web” interchangeably, but they actually refer to two different things. The Internet is a physical network of computers. The World Wide Web is an immense collection of interlinked documents usually referred to as “Web sites” or “Web pages.” The World Wide Web is data carried by the Internet. If the Internet is a library, the World Wide Web is the books.

The Internet carries other data that is not the Web. The Internet also carries Instant Messaging, email, voice over Internet protocol (Internet “telephone calls”), bit torrent, and many other types of data.

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The Internet has always been about sharing and building connections. First, the goal was simply to allow computers to share text files with each other. Then, the text files were annotated and linked together.

This system of links, called hypertext, was added to the Internet by a computer scientist named Tim Berners-Lee. Thus, in 1991, the World Wide Web was added to the Internet.

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Hyperlinks connected one document with another. Like a spider's web, the documents built a mass of connections. A text file about the Civil War linked to one about Abraham Lincoln that linked to one about Ford's Theater that linked to one about the play *Our American Cousin* that linked to one about the playwright Tom Taylor.

This mass of linked documents became the World Wide Web. The Web was soon filled with more than just text. The Web soon got images and sound and software and, eventually, video. After a few years, there were trillions of files on the Internet.

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The computers were connected. The files were connected. But what about people?

That's where the Social Web comes in. The Social Web is anything online that connects people with similar interests, and that helps those people share content. That content can be personal information, links to Web pages, text, photos, video, or anything else on the net.

If you learn how to use the Social Web, you can make sure that the content that is being shared is *your* content, *your* message. You can collect donations, build relationships with people, and recruit them for your cause. Best of all, you can do all of this for practically nothing. In most cases, your main investment will be time.

I'll be discussing the three main types of Social Web site today: social networking, social linking, and social media.

II. Social Networking: [Facebook](#)

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You might have heard the phrase “six degrees of separation.” This is the idea that anyone on earth is six social connections away from anyone else. You might not know someone personally, but you might have a friend who has a friend who has a friend who has a friend who has a friend who does.

Communication is becoming easier and easier, and it’s possible to be friends with someone on the other side of the planet. The world is shrinking and social connections are increasing. If you try hard enough, you can connect everyone. Social networking sites can help.

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This idea is the basis of the game “Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon.” Supposedly, you can connect any actor in Hollywood to the actor Kevin Bacon. For example, let’s start with Charlie Chaplin. Charlie Chaplin was in Picture People #3: Hobbies of the Stars with John Beal. John Beal was in The Firm with Margo Martindale. Margo Martindale was in Rails and Ties with Kevin Bacon.

You can also connect Kevin Bacon with Saddam Hussein. Yes, Saddam has been in several movies. He mostly plays a maniacal dictator. Typecasting, I know. Saddam was in a French movie called “Les, Dix” with Nelson Mandela. Nelson Mandela was in Malcolm X with Gareth Williams. Gareth Williams was in Digging to China with Kevin Bacon.

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These types of relationships form your social network. Social networking the verb is making connections with people and using those connections to your advantage. How do we do that? One way is through the Social Web.

A social networking Web site allows you to get a visual picture of who your friends are, who your friends’ friends are, and who your friends’ friends’ friends are. You can use these sites to expand your social circle, meet new people, form new friendships and business connections, and increase your presence in your community.

There are hundreds of social networking sites, but we are limited in time so we will focus on the most popular: [Facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

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Facebook is not just one of the most popular social networking sites; it is also one of the most popular Web sites in the world. Facebook was founded in 2004 by a Harvard student named Mark Zuckerberg. Zuckerberg dropped out of Harvard to work on the Web site full-time. Today, he is twenty-four years old and has an estimated net worth of \$1.5 billion. That's "billion", with a b. Who else feels like a failure? I'm almost thirty and I'm only worth about half that.

First, the site was limited to Harvard students, then Ivy League students, then college students in general. Now, it is open to anyone over the age of 13.

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Facebook is a tool to help people connect with each other, both online and in the physical world. When you sign up for Facebook, first you create a profile. The profile contains personal information, such as your name, where you went to school, your hobbies, your favorite music, anything you like. The most important piece of information is your name. This allows people to find you on the site.

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Anyone can search for your name and ask you to join their list of contacts. Facebook calls your list of contacts your "friends." Once you join the site, people will ask to be your friend by sending you a "friend request." You'll get friend requests from all sorts of people: people from your church, your coworkers, people you went to high school with and haven't spoken to in twenty years... Thanks to Facebook, your friends will stay in your life forever, no matter how annoying they are.

You might get friend requests from people you don't actually know. Why would a stranger want to be your friend? If you met me on the street and I wanted to talk, you might decide you're too busy or just not interested. We're strangers; why should you bother? But if I say "I know your friend Steve", your reaction might be "Any friend of Steve's is a friend of mine! Let's talk!" Social networking sites work the same way. If you get a message from a stranger, you can instantly see how you are connected.

Because you can list your interests on the site, someone might want to "friend" you just because you both like the Beatles and they want to talk about The White Album with you.

In college, I wrote for the school paper, and I got lots of friend requests from people who didn't know me but just liked my writing. Or they hated my writing and wanted to argue with me on the Internet.

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After you create a profile, you join a network. You should join at least one, but you can join as many as you want. Networks are people from the same region, students or alumni of the same college or high school, or people who work for the same company. For example, I'm in the Fort Wayne network and the IPFW network. Joining a network helps people find you on the site, and keep in touch with you.

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Facebook has a lot of features, some useful, some not. Your Facebook friends list makes it easy to stay in touch with people, and to share information, photos, music, and life events. It is also a valuable resource. If you are looking for a job, you can message everyone in your network and let them know. One of your friends probably knows someone who knows someone who knows someone who can help you.

One nice feature is your Facebook status. This sends a one-sentence message to all your friends. It allows you to tell people what you are doing that day, how you are spending the weekend, or just tell a joke.

Facebook also allows you to poke your friends. "Poking" sends them a message that says "you have been poked." Why would you want to do that? I have no idea.

Facebook also gives you the ability to post photos online and share them with your friends. If you are at a party or company event and take photos, you can "tag" the photos with the names of the people in them. The day after the party, you can look at the photos and say, "Who was that guy with the lampshade on his head? Oh, that was John Smith!"

Everything your friends do on the site is displayed in a "news feed", which makes it easy to keep tabs on what they're up to. If they go to a party, you'll see the photos. If they update their blog, you'll see the latest post. And if they end a relationship, you'll see their broken heart.

You can also talk to your friends through chat, instant message, or wall posts.

There are a variety of ways nonprofits can use Facebook.

a. Create a cause on Facebook

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You could create a “Cause” page and invite your friends to join. Your group can collect donations through this page, organize events, spread news, and more.

Back in May, Causes issued a report on its first year of operation. Causes raised \$2.5 million in support of almost 20,000 nonprofits. The O Campaign for Cancer Prevention has raised over \$75,000. The nonprofit Love Without Boundaries raised \$94,000 in its first two months of using Causes. These aren’t typical examples. They’re like that guy Jared in the Subway commercials. He lost 200 pounds eating fast food, but you probably won’t. Still, the possibility is there. If they can do it, maybe you can, too.

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More important than the fundraising, however, is the marketing. When Facebook users add your cause to their profile, all of their friends can see it. Knowing that their friends support a cause encourages Facebook users to want to learn about it and support it themselves. Even if you don’t get big fundraising bucks, you can still recruit people. Facebook causes are a fundraising opportunity and a free marketing opportunity combined. And there’s more.

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In September of 2007, a group of monks in Burma led a series of nonviolent, antigovernment protests. The government responded, resulting in the deaths of many monks, journalists, and civilians.

Alex Bookbinder, a Canadian college student, created a Facebook cause page called “Support the Monks Protest in Burma.” The group was created on September 19. By September 29, it had over 140,000 members. A short while later, it had half a million.

The group organized political protests in a hundred cities across the globe. These protests were attended by thousands of people.

Moderators from the group went on to create BGAN, the Burma Global Action Network, a nonprofit group dedicated to raising awareness of political issues in Burma.

And that’s just one example of the good you can do through Facebook.

b. Why your nonprofit needs a Facebook page

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When businesses, bands, and public figures create pages, they have “fans” instead of “friends.” You can use updates to keep your group’s “fans” informed about news and upcoming events.

Facebook pages are an easy way to keep your group updated on news, upcoming meetings, and more. They allow users to post discussion messages. When a Facebook user becomes a “fan” of your cause, all of their friends see. This helps in promotions.

I know what you’re thinking. “We already have a Web site!” But your Web site doesn’t attract one percent of the traffic Facebook does. Many people in your target audience are already using Facebook. Don’t expect them to come to you. You’ll be much more successful if you go to them.

Your page is indexed by Google, Yahoo, and other search engines, so people searching for your organization can find it.

When you add new content to the page, your fans see it as an “update” on their profile.

Facebook is about personal relationships and friendship, so everything done on the site should have a personal touch. If anything you do sounds corporate, detached or phony, Facebook users will see through it immediately. When you write on Facebook, identify the person who wrote it, with a name and a picture. The author should be listed as “John Smith,” not “The Acme Corporation.” If users can’t put a face to a message, they won’t buy it.

c. Create Facebook events and invite people to attend.

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You can create and send events from your group’s Facebook page or from a personal profile. Sending out Facebook event invitations is a quick and free way to reach a nearly unlimited number of people. Also, you probably think nobody RSVPs anymore. On Facebook, they do.

d. Use the Facebook marketplace to list services and products.

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You do not have to sell anything actually related to your cause. Buying a new computer for your office? Sell the old one. When people see your listing,

they won't just see "Computer for Sale." They will see "Acme Corporation has a computer for sale. For more information, contact the Acme Corporation at AcmeCorporation.com."

It's free advertising for your organization, but it's not just a free ad – it's an ad that makes you money!

e. Caution!

[Slide 32]

Facebook profiles are public by default. If you decide to create a personal profile on Facebook, you may wish to change your privacy settings so that only your friends can see it.

Otherwise, your employer, a family member, or a member of the media may decide to search for you and find out something you don't want them to know. There have been a number of stories in the media about people losing their jobs because their Facebook profile was open. Some people call in sick to work but, the next day, they post photos of the party they went to or the ball game they saw, and their boss finds out.

Also, if you are looking for a new job or might be looking in the future, it is an absolute necessity to make your profile private. Human resources departments are increasingly likely to search Facebook for the names of job applicants. Anything embarrassing or controversial could cost you a job. If you decide to keep your profile open to the public, then treat it like a second resume. Nothing goes in the profile unless it's proofread, professional, and inoffensive.

III. Social Linking

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The Social Web also acts as a collaborative filter. Why do we need a filter? As author Theodore Sturgeon once said, "Ninety percent of anything is crap." This is very true. Most television, literature, film and art is not worth your time. The Internet is the same. There is a lot of content online, and most of it is not very good.

Many Social Web sites allow users to rate what they are seeing. Before you watch a video, read an article or visit a Web page, you can see what other people thought of it. "Oh, fifty out of sixty-five people enjoyed this video. I guess it's worth my time. But I'm definitely not going to watch *that* one. Three thousand people said it was terrible."

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This collaborative filter also helps weed out “spam.” A spam message is unwanted advertising. Everyone with an email account has gotten spam, but spam also appears in the Social Web.

You don’t have to be selling something to have your message marked as spam. If you try to promote a personal Web site or blog in the wrong way, you can get your message deleted or even get your account banned.

Imagine that you’re riding the bus, and the stranger in the seat next to you suddenly grabs your shoulder and says, “Hey, buddy, guess what! I wrote a book, and you need to read it! Go down to the library right now and check it out!” Are you going to read his book, or are you going to move as far away as you can? Even though he wasn’t trying to sell anything, the message was delivered in a bad way, so it gets ignored.

In order to get noticed – and not ignored – on a social linking site, you first have to learn about the site, and get a feel for the local culture.

a. [Delicious.com](http://delicious.com)

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Imagine that you are surfing the Web at work, and you come across an article you would like to read later. You bookmark the site. Later, at home, you think “Oh, I have time to read that article now. But where was it?” The bookmark is saved on the computer at work, not your laptop at home. What to do? If only there was a way to save your bookmarks on the Internet, instead of a computer!

Enter [Delicious.com](http://delicious.com).

[Slide 36]

Delicious.com allows users to save their bookmarks to the Web site, rather than locally on a computer. Instead of being tied to a single browser, you can log in to your account from anywhere with Web access and get your bookmarks.

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When you post a bookmark on the site, you can also “tag” it. In the Social Web, tagging refers to marking a piece of content with a relevant, descriptive word. AAPD.com has been bookmarked and tagged with “disabilities,” “voting,” “politics,” and more. That way, anyone who comes across a link to

AAPD.com can tell at a glance what the site is about. If a link just says “AAPD,” the tags will let you know if it’s the American Association of People with Disabilities or the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Also, tagging a link means that anyone searching for those terms on Delicious will get AAPD.com as a result.

Also notice that the site has been tagged with “disabilities” and “disability.” You never can tell what terms someone will search for, so you should use both.

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Every time someone posts a link to a Web site, article, photo, or any other piece of content, it acts as a “vote” on Delicious. The content with the most votes gets listed as “popular.” Any popular content is sure to be seen by thousands of users.

As a result, Delicious and other social bookmarking sites represent a huge opportunity for free advertising for your organization. Just a few bookmarks on Delicious could bring you thousands of visitors. More visits to your Web site means more donations, more recruits, and more support for your cause.

b. [Reddit](#)

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While many people use Delicious just as a bookmark storage bin, everything posted to [Reddit.com](#) is intended to be shared. Posts to Reditt are voted up or down by other users. Users can view the most popular posts or the newest, or they can sort by topic.

The most popular posts are related to political news, technology, computers and Internet, and funny videos and pictures.

c. [Digg](#)

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[Digg.com](#) is similar to Reddit. Users submit content to be shared, and users can vote up a story, called “Digging” it, or vote it down, called “burying” it. Popular stories are on the front page, and unpopular stories are “buried” a few pages in, kind of like the less important news items are “buried” in the back pages of a newspaper.

Digg is one of the most popular social linking sites on the net. It has so many users that, when sites becomes popular on Digg, they often crash, becoming temporarily unavailable.

Like Reddit, the most popular posts are related to political news, technology, computers and Internet, and funny videos and pictures.

d. [StumbleUpon](#)

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[StumbleUpon.com](#) is actually a piece of software *and* a Web site. If you visit StumbleUpon.com, you can download a special toolbar for your Web browser that allows you to “channel surf” the Internet. The controls are simple: stumble, thumbs up, thumbs down.

Unlike other social linking sites, just one or two votes can generate thousands of hits (page views). Even though the site promotes itself as a means of “channel surfing” the Net, StumbleUpon also has a lower “bounce rate” than users of other sites. StumbleUpon users stay on a site longer than Digg users. This means they will read more of your content.

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One way to use StumbleUpon is by giving the “thumbs up” to any Web site that links to yours. For example, pretend that you’re trying to promote Example.com. Go to Google and search for “Example.com.” Not “<http://www.example.com>” or “<http://example.com>” or “ww.example.com”. Just the domain and the extension. Visit all the sites that link to you, and give them the thumbs up. This will drive extra traffic to those sites. When those sites get visitors, they will see your link and many of them will click. You gain traffic by helping other people. And isn’t helping people what we all like to do?

You can get more visitors from StumbleUpon through their ad program, which costs just \$0.05 per impression. This means that, for \$5.00, 100 people will see your ad. For \$50, 1000 people will see your ad. However, this does not mean that you will only get the visitors you pay for! If you create strong content – content that is interesting, informative, entertaining, controversial – then a few of your paid visitors will “thumbs up” your site, and you will start getting free traffic.

e. Others

Other social linking sites include Metafilter.com, Fark.com, Linkfilter.net, Furl.net, and others. Each site has its own culture and its own standards for what is “spam.”

IV. Social Media: Use [YouTube](#) like your own TV station

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a. The Possibilities

On [YouTube.com](#), simple, homemade videos have attracted millions of viewers. Today, over 30 million people visit YouTube each day, and watch over 100 million videos. Just imagine how much good could be done with a YouTube video! Imagine reaching 10, 20, 30 million people with your group’s message!

If your group applies to be a part of YouTube’s nonprofit program, you will have the option of adding a “Donate” button next to your videos, which will allow you to collect donations through Google’s online payment system, Google Checkout. So, YouTube is a marketing opportunity and a fundraising opportunity combined.

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b. What makes a video go viral?

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If you want your videos to be watched at all, they should be under five minutes long. Most people don’t want to watch Braveheart on a tiny screen. Your video should also have good tags. Just like posts to social linking sites, videos are tagged. If you pick good tags, more people will find your video through searches. Finally, your videos should have enticing titles and thumbnails. Once people find your video in a search, it’s the title and thumbnail that will convince them to watch.

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Finally, if you want to be really popular, you have to be especially appealing to the YouTube audience. The most popular videos include at least one of five things: humor, cuteness, music and dance, pop culture references, and sex appeal.

1. Humor

If you spend a little time writing, you can develop a funny concept that still gets across your message. Fortunately, you don't have to be that funny to be popular on YouTube.

[Slide 52 - "Muffins" = over 8 million views. Watch the video on YouTube by clicking here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tcR19y7GPM>]

You don't actually have to write anything to be funny in a YouTube video. A young man named Brandon Hardesty made three videos of himself making funny faces. In total, this series has received over 7 million views. That's about how many people watch Oprah every day.

[Slide 53 - "Strange Faces and Noises I Can Make.]

How long do you think he spent writing that? Even though all he was doing was making funny faces, this video got him an appearance in a national television commercial.

2. Cuteness (animals and babies)

Someone at your organization is certain to have a cute baby or animal - or baby animal - you can film. If you don't have access to puppies or kittens, you might be able to pay a visit to a local animal shelter and film a few. Even if cute animals and kids have nothing to do with the topic of your video, just adding them in will increase your views.

[Slide 54 - "Charlie bit my finger" = over 65 million views. Watch the video on YouTube by clicking here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OBlgSz8sSM]

[Slide 55 - "Hahaha" (laughing baby) = over 68 million views.

Watch the video on YouTube by clicking here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5P6UU6m3cqk>]

3. Music/Dance

If you are a musician or know someone who is, an impressive display of musical skill is guaranteed to get views. You might see someone playing an instrumental song and run some text about your organization along the bottom. If you can't play an instrument or

sing, try anyway. Your attempt might be funny enough to get people to watch.

[Slide 56 - “Guitar” (Canon) = over 50 million views. Watch the video on YouTube by clicking here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjA5faZF1A8>]

[Slide 57 - “Evolution of dance” = over 106 million views. Watch the video on YouTube by clicking here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMH0bHeiRNg>]

4. Pop culture references

Work in a few pop culture references, and anyone who enjoys that topic is sure to share it with likeminded friends.

Your pop culture references should be current and inoffensive, but not obscure. Keep things current. Much of YouTube’s audience consists of younger people. If you make references to Pat Boone, they probably won’t get the joke. People are also more likely to search for things that are currently in the news, in theaters, or on the calendar. Keep things inoffensive. Some viewers would enjoy a video filled with bad language and violence, but if you want your video to be enjoyed by as many people as possible, you should keep it family-friendly. If you’re writing a TV parody, The Simpsons would be a better choice than The Sopranos. Finally, the point of pop culture references is that they’re popular. The more popular your target, the more it will be enjoyed and shared. If you’re writing a movie parody, Indiana Jones is a better choice than The Brain that Wouldn’t Die.

Finally, the right pop culture references mean that your video will get more traffic from people watching “related videos” on YouTube. Imagine that you have to promote a fundraiser, so you decide to make a YouTube video. In your video, an actor pretending to be Donald Trump talks about how important it is to give to charity. This means that other videos about Donald Trump will show your video in the list of “related videos.” People watching Donald Trump videos will also watch your video and learn about your fundraiser.

[Slide 58 - “Star Wars according to a three-year-old” = over 9 million views. Watch the video on YouTube by clicking here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBM854BTGL0>]

5. Sex appeal

First, the bad news: YouTube works just like the movies and TV. If the star of your video is young, attractive, and female, you will get a lot of views. Now, the good news: “Sex appeal” doesn’t have to involve anything R-rated. In fact, your video can even be rated G. Don’t believe me? Watch this.

[Slide 59 – Magibon= over 4 million views. Watch the video on YouTube by clicking here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kib05Ip6GSo>]

Over 4 million people watched that video, and she didn’t even do anything!

c. The Bottom Line

[Slide 60]

The bottom line with a promotional video or any other piece of marketing is this: advertising is content, content is advertising.

You could be selling the cure for cancer, but if your ad is boring, people will still turn it off.

Unfortunately, most people don’t care about your message, your organization, or you. Why would they watch your video? Why would they go to your Web site? Is it useful? Is it entertaining? If not, how can you rewrite it or redesign it so it is?

Once you have something useful and entertaining, you have to promote it.

d. Promotions

A little extra work can dramatically increase your viewers.

[Slide 61] [Slide 62]

Last summer, the AAPD posted two virtually identical videos promoting the Ohio Presidential Forum in Columbus. I helped to promote one, but not the other. In just two weeks, the video I helped promote had over ten times the views. If I can do that working just a few minutes a day for two weeks, imagine what your organization can do working for a few months on a bigger project.

You can promote YouTube videos internally, working on YouTube.com, and you can promote them externally, on the rest of the Internet.

e. Internal Promotions

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First, get your channel page ready. Each YouTube member has a “channel”, a page of information about them. This page is visible to search engines, so anyone searching Google for your organization’s name will find your YouTube page as well.

You want to customize this page, add information about your organization, a link to your homepage, and anything else you can add to create a good impression. If you have a Facebook page or a collection of links on Delicious, you can add links to them here, as well.

When you finally post your first video, you should add a link to your Web site in the video’s description. That way, you can promote both your site and the video at the same time.

[Slide 64]

On YouTube, there are five basic ways to draw more attention to a video:

1. The number of views
2. The number of external sites linking to the video
3. The number of comments
4. The number of five-star ratings
5. The number of users who have added the video to their favorites

Visitors do not have to have an account at YouTube for their visit to the video page to be added to the view count, and of course anyone can link to the page. For everything else, visitors have to register for a free account.

[Slide 65]

YouTube awards “honors” to each video - the most views, comments, and so on for each day - and the winners get more attention on the site. To get the most attention for a video, it would probably be helpful to pick a day for everyone in your group to act in a coordinated fashion. Two hundred comments in a single day would get the video noticed more than twenty comments each day for a week. If the video gets enough attention, it might get featured on the front page, which means tens of thousands of people will see it.

Another way to get attention for your video is to be involved with the YouTube community. Look for other viewers posting content similar to yours, and comment on their videos. If you have the time, you can even post

video responses to other people's videos. If your comments and video responses are entertaining, informative, or useful, people will probably look at your other videos, including the one you're trying to promote.

f. External Promotions

1. Where to post your video

[Slide 66]

Social bookmarking sites, which we just learned about, are a great place to post your video and get more attention. Just be sure to use the right tags and ask your friends, family, and coworkers to also post the link.

Once you post a video, select "share video" to share it on Facebook, Delicious, and other Social Web sites. This will get you even more attention.

Also, if your organization has its own Web site, be sure to embed your video there on your front page. This will make certain that your Web site's visitors are also added to your view count on YouTube.

2. Where to embed your video

[Slide 67]

If your organization has a Web site, embed the video there first. Next, send an email to anyone you know who has a blog or Web site on a similar topic and ask them to embed the video as well. I would also recommend adding a message like "please embed this video at your site or blog" to the video's description text.

g. A word of warning

[Slide 68, 69, 70]

Finally, I have a word of warning about YouTube. Like many Social Web sites, YouTube allows people to write comments on whatever is posted. YouTube is famous for having some of the worst comments on the entire Internet. Some people post spam, racist messages, homophobic messages, and other offensive things.

YouTube has such a reputation for horrible comments that it recently added a new feature: audio preview. Imagine that you're watching a video clip on

YouTube, and it makes you angry. You decide to write a nasty comment. Before you post the comment, you select “Audio Preview.” You hear an electronic voice read it back to you. Hopefully, hearing your comment read aloud will make you reconsider.

Still, there are a lot of nasty comments on the site. If you are going to use YouTube, check on your videos once a week and delete anything offensive.

You can disable comments on your videos, but this makes it harder to draw attention to them on the site. You also can’t get comments in support of your organization, answer viewers’ questions about your cause, or have any real connection with visitors. So, even though it makes things easier for you, I strongly recommend against it. Just assign someone on your organization to police your videos for nasty comments.

V. Social Web do’s and don’ts

[Slide 71]

Here are some do’s and don’ts to keep in mind as you work on the Social Web:

a. DO make all your Social Web content accessible

Of course, we want people with disabilities to be able to experience everything we create online. YouTube makes it very easy to add captioning to videos.

Whenever you post an image online, add <alt> text describing the image for people using screen readers.

b. DO create content about the Social Web

The Social Web is madly in love with itself. Some of the most popular content on the Social Web is content ABOUT the Social Web. YouTube users love videos about YouTube, and so on. Other topics that always do well are Google, Firefox, Apple/Mac, the iPod and the iPhone.

For our purposes, a YouTube video titled “How to use YouTube to help people with disabilities” would probably be well-received.

c. DO make a call to action

Never just promote your organization’s Web site. Tell people what you want them to do. Tell them to visit your site, leave a comment, send you an email, and buy your t-shirt, whatever. If you want help promoting your cause, ask

for it! Ask people to friend you on Facebook, Digg your site, and rate your video.

d. DO give people an incentive to help you

Tell them that promoting your video on YouTube will help spread your message, which will help people with disabilities live better lives. When you ask someone to vote on a video, say something like “Tell people how important disability issues are by giving the video five stars.”

e. DO reply to comments

If people leave comments on your Web site or video, reply to them. If you say “Good Morning” to a coworker every day, but she never says “Good Morning” back, how long are you going to keep talking to her?

Also, replying to comments and answering questions builds your image as an expert. People will learn that, if they want to know something, they should go to the person who knows: you.

f. DON'T always use the same password

If you really make a big effort to use the Social Web, you might end up with accounts on Facebook, Delicious, Reddit, Digg, YouTube, and dozens of other sites. That's a lot of passwords to remember, but DON'T use the same password on all your accounts.

The more times you use a password, the more likely it is that a hacker could guess it. Hackers try to get account passwords, even when there is no possibility of financial gain. The site Neopets.com is a games site for children, everything is free, but they have a tremendous problem with scammers trying to get passwords. Use original passwords for all your accounts, and never use the same password as your email account or Web site!

g. DON'T “Spam”

How many of you read every word of your junk email? If **you** don't read it, you shouldn't expect **other** people to, either. Spamming may attract some Web traffic, but it will also annoy people and make your organization look unprofessional and even dishonest.

Out here in the real world, we have various unwritten rules that are called “social norms.” For example, when you get aboard an elevator, there is no list of rules telling you how to behave.

However, if you get aboard an elevator and hop on one foot and wave your arms, everyone is going to think you're a little odd. If you try to talk to the other people on the elevator, they're not going to listen, no matter how good your message is! The Social Web works much the same way.

Each site that makes up part of the Social Web has its own culture and social norms. If your message does not fit in with the expectations of that culture, it might not be viewed as spam, but it will be rejected.

This can be a difficult rule to follow. Web sites have different cultures, and these cultures produce different standards for what constitutes "spam." Some sites only reject commercial messages, blatant attempts to sell a product. Some consider even promoting a personal blog to be spam.

For example, the social linking site Linkfilter.net allows you to post a link to your own Web site, but only once. Post any more than one link, the other users get mad and your content gets deleted. That rule isn't written anywhere on the site. I only learned it after spending several weeks using the site and talking to other users. It can take some time to get to know a site's rules but, if you want your message and your organization to be well-received, it's absolutely necessary.

Web forums are rather complicated. The rules about spam can change depending upon which section of the site you're using.

Web forums are usually divided by topics and levels. A book discussion site may have general "fiction" and "nonfiction" forums and a "subforum" for each genre of literature. The nonfiction forum may have subforums for biographies, military history and philosophy. The fiction forum may have subforums for science fiction, mystery and romance.

Imagine that someone in your group writes a biography of Sen. Tom Harkin. Posting a message about the book in the science fiction forum would be viewed as spam, as it is off topic. Posting the same message in the biography forum would probably be ok.

h. DON'T break copyright law

Imagine spending days filming a video to promote an upcoming fundraiser, and then months to promote it, only to be threatened with a lawsuit because you didn't have permission to use the music. Even a thirty-second clip can get you in trouble.

A while back, someone posted a video on YouTube of their toddler playing in the kitchen. The radio was playing in the background. As a result, the video had thirty seconds of a Prince song playing in the background. Prince's

record company found out, they complained to YouTube, and got the video pulled from the site.

Anything you put on the Web should be created by you, in the public domain or used with permission. For more information, see the section in the handout on public domain and Creative Commons resources.

i. DON'T lie – Don't misrepresent your content just to get hits.

Let's pretend that I need to promote a fundraiser for Fifth Freedom. I create a YouTube video asking for donations. The video is on YouTube for a week and nobody watches! Well, it's December, so I know a lot of people are searching for "Christmas" videos. I could just change the title and keywords on my video to make people think it's about Christmas, and I would get a lot more views. However, this would be a bad thing in the long run. People would realize pretty quickly that they had been tricked. Instead of watching the video and donating to Fifth Freedom, they would click on something else. If they even remember what "Fifth Freedom" is, they would think "Oh, right, that's the organization that tricked me. I'm going to avoid them in the future."

j. DON'T use the Social Web without a schedule and to-do list!

You can only do achieve great things with the Social Web if you stay focused. It's easy to get distracted by funny YouTube videos or sending messages to your friends on Facebook. Make a schedule and a to-do list and stick to them. If you don't, you'll end up wasting hours at work and might get in trouble with the boss.

VI. Conclusions

[Slide 72]

Even groups with no budgets can use the Internet to promote a cause. All it takes is a little creativity, a little knowhow, and some time in front of a computer.

It also takes friends. In order to promote something on the Social Web, you need support. You need people to friend you on Facebook, bookmark your site, and watch your YouTube video. But where will you find such people? Just look around you. We have a room filled with people all devoted to the same cause. We can achieve great things online and in the physical world, if we work together.

[Slide 73 - OPEN FOR Q&A]

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