

Online Advocacy

Building Online Advocates

Sustaining Passionate Online Supporters



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Agenda Overview

- ▶ We'll cover some BIG picture perspectives today and go over two specific experiences relating to:
 - ▶ Caveats for Organizing Online
 - ▶ Defining Online Activists
 - ▶ Engaging and Sustaining an Online Activist

Caveats of Online Organizing

- ▶ Never forget who's left out by “e” strategies
- ▶ Trust relationships are best built in person
 - ▶ Online organizing is most effective when it leverages established social networks and communities.
- ▶ Each community, campaign, and cause is different
- ▶ Respect for local wisdom, culture, & customs needs to remain intact in online engagement

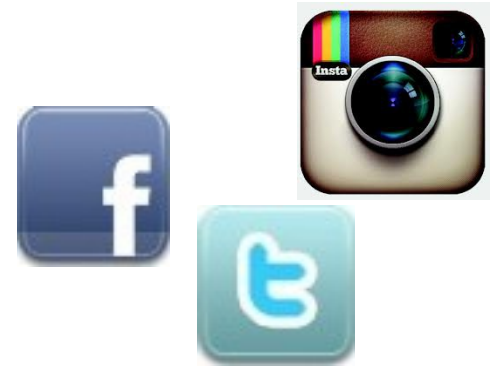
What is an Online Activist?

- ▶ A supporter of your cause
- ▶ Responds to your requests
- ▶ Views you as a trusted source on an issue
- ▶ Promotes your issue/cause using online tools



What do Online Activists do?

- ▶ Read Emails
- ▶ Take Online Actions
- ▶ Tell People About You
- ▶ Attend Events
- ▶ Create Content about you or your Issue Area
- ▶ Organize Local Events or Meetings
- ▶ Influence and motivate others



Register

DONATE

Activist Engagement Cycle

- ▶ Collect Contact Info
- ▶ Alert to Actions & Progress
- ▶ Deepen Engagement
- ▶ Maintain Care and Feeding
- ▶ Track Activity
- ▶ Rinse and Repeat



Frames of Engagement

- ▶ Encourage Online Activity
 - ▶ Make it the “easy choice” to get involved
 - ▶ Reduce barriers on your end (less clicks, small asks, fame for getting involved, remove login, language)
- ▶ Provide clearly defined asks
 - ▶ Users should take action to effect change or offline work through online tools and activities that you provide

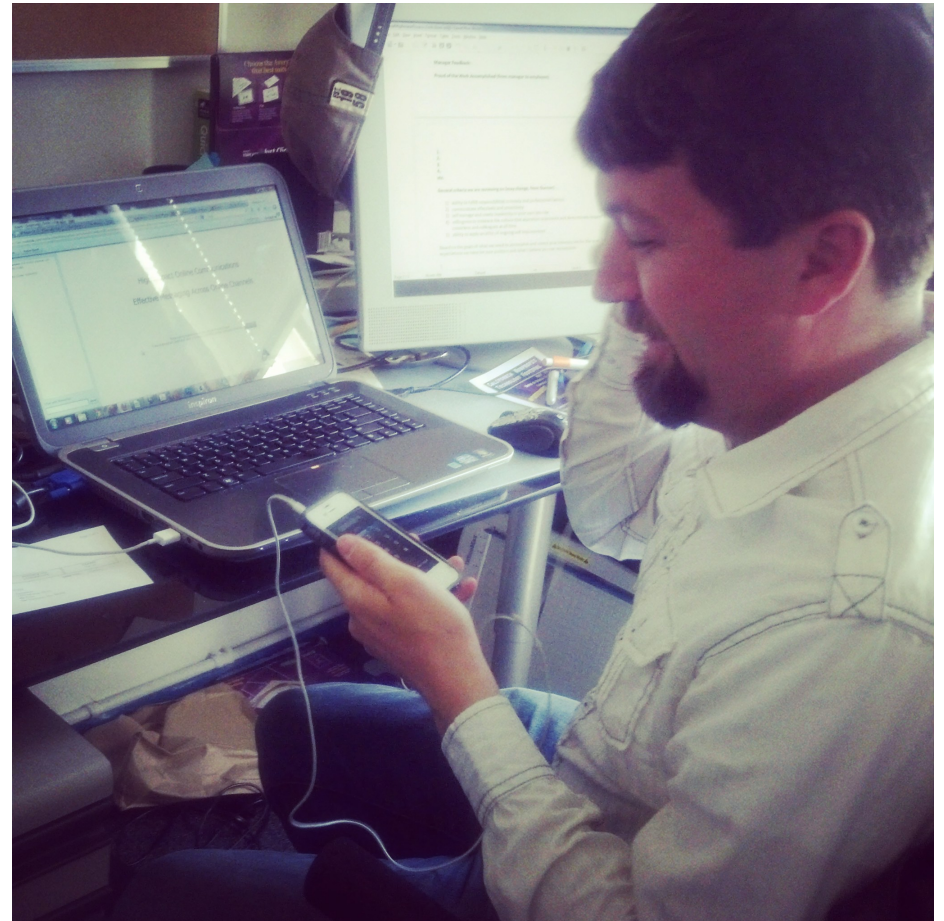
Online Engagement Asks

- ▶ Your role is to define ways for your different audiences to plug in
- ▶ How are you engaging strangers? fans? funders?
- ▶ Prep work is key.
- ▶ Define your lists of
- ▶ “Asks” or ways to engage ahead of time.



Online Engagement Asks

- ▶ Contact Decision Makers/ Influencers
 - ▶ (Letters to Congress)
- ▶ Pledge Support
 - ▶ (Petitions, Endorsements)
- ▶ Donate Money
- ▶ Contribute to an Art project
- ▶ Join an Online Contest
- ▶ Volunteer



Online Engagement Asks

- ▶ Shape Campaign Decisions
 - ▶ (Poll, Voting, Discussion Forum, Letters to the Editor)
- ▶ Recruit Others
 - ▶ Social Networks
 - ▶ Site Badges
 - ▶ Shout Outs
 - ▶ Blog



Frames of Engagement

- ▶ **Offline Activist:** An on-the-ground supporter who you can count on to organize/attend local in-person events and meetings and to be leaders
- ▶ **Engaging Offline Activists “Online”**
 - ▶ Provide opportunities to attend or organize real world action using online tools you provide
 - ▶ Coordinate organizing or research tasks in a decentralized manner through online tools

Offline Engagement Asks

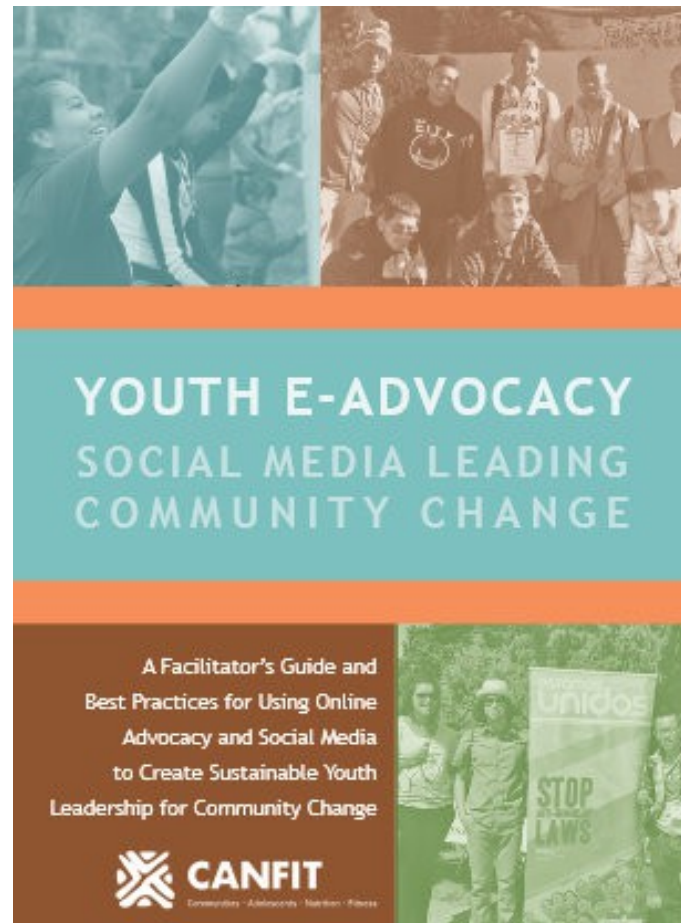
- ▶ Gather Info or Research
- ▶ Events
 - ▶ Day of Action
 - ▶ Movie Screenings
 - ▶ House Parties
 - ▶ Flyer Days
- ▶ Phone Banking
- ▶ Local groups/chapters
 - ▶ Start/Find, Volunteer Management, Updates



Project: Building Youth Online Activists

- ▶ Who: Organized group of young people in Richmond, CA
- ▶ What: How can activated young people use online advocacy to support their on-the-ground community efforts?
- ▶ Partnerships: Richmond Youth Organizing Team; <http://www.canfit.org>;
<http://www.rysecenter.org>;

Organizing Youth Online



Learnings:

Youth Online Activists

- ▶ Core principles of youth development **MUST** be a part of any campaign, online or offline
- ▶ Ah-ha moment: “I can talk about my community work online and not just my personal life.” “in my voice, in my story without the usual filters.”
- ▶ It still takes a lot of work to recruit people, regardless of the platform
- ▶ Move away from assumptions about youth and social networks, and still create a plan

Learnings: Youth eAdvocacy Video



Online Organizing is an Ongoing Conversation

- ▶ Primary Goal: Establish Trust with your audiences.
 - ▶ Trust empowers mobilization.
- ▶ Too many orgs use online to BLAST their audiences "THE SKY IS FALLING TODAY"
- ▶ Review the narrative over time, not just the "Asks"

Online Organizing is an Ongoing Conversation

- ▶ Arguably the most important part of online outreach is managing responses
 - ▶ Reply to Replies
- ▶ Pick up a phone every once in awhile
- ▶ Consider where your online supporters are moving in their technology choices (Cell Phones, Social Platforms)

Care and Feeding of your Online Activists

- ▶ Keep the Momentum
- ▶ Shine a Light
 - ▶ Two P's and Two F's
- ▶ Consistent story rather than just asks
 - ▶ Target ACTIVE people with more asks
 - ▶ Target ACTIVE people with offline engagements



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Summary

- ▶ Definitions of Online Activism vary
- ▶ Online activists can mirror and bolster your offline engagement
- ▶ Engaging online activists is a continuous cycle, rather than a streamline or blast
- ▶ Conversations and storytelling are critical parts of your online activist strategy

Thank You!

▶ Questions?

▶ Comments?

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