Online Communications
Building Online Advocates

These training materials have been prepared by Aspiration.
Who is Aspiration?

- Aspiration helps nonprofits and foundations use software tools more effectively and sustainably.
- We serve as ally, coach, strategist, mentor and facilitator to those trying to make more impactful use of information technology in their social change efforts.
- www.aspirationtech.org/services
First Things

- This webinar is envisioned as a dialog
  - We want your input as much as possible

- Please ask questions early and often
  - Especially if and when we use technical jargon, terminology and concepts you don't know

- It will only be as valuable for you as you make it!
Goals

- Review the limitations and caveats of online organizing
- Discuss tangible ways to engage and sustain online advocates
- Share engagement asks and tactics
- Most importantly, answer your questions
Limitations of Online Organizing

- Never forget who is left out by online strategies
- Trust relationships are best built in person
  - Online organizing is most effective when it leverages established social networks and communities
- Each community and campaign is different
  - Your mileage will vary
Caveats of Online Tools

- Can take a lot of time
  - Time = Money
- Big corporations want your data
  - You are the product
- There are billion of tools
  - Which ones do we need?
- Tools change EVERY. SINGLE. DAY.
  - How can we keep up?
Develop Campaign Goals

- Influence Decision Makers
- Mobilize for an Event
- Educate
- Raise Funds
- Increase Volunteers
What are your goals?

- Measurable
- What does success look like?
- Tool-Agnostic
  - Make sure your communications plan stays in tact when the tool you are using fails you
Tool Agnostic?

Goal → Tool → Goal

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Identify Your Audience

- Who supports your cause?
- Who chooses to respond to your requests?
- Who views you as a trusted source?
- Who shares things you care about online?
Develop Tactics for Your Goals

- A tactic is a plan, procedure, or move you can take to help achieve your goal.
- Your tactics depend on who you are trying to reach and what you are trying to do.
- Let's take a look at some online "moves"...
Online Tactics

- Meet people where they are at
- Create appropriate messages for different platforms
Online Tactics

▶ Mobilize established networks
Online Tactics

Get Creative

We need your help! For each person that clicks through, National Bank will donate $4 to Pathways to Education. This week's answer is 241! Link: https://www.facebook.com/nationalbanknetworks/app_125124097644937

We've been seeing a lot of late night Facebook updates and Tweets from students about midterm season! This one's for you. Hang in there! You can do it!

"The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don't tell you what to see" - Alexandra K. Trenfor
Bottom Line

- Online tools aren't a magic bullet
- You need:
  - An measurable goal
  - A compelling message
  - Effective tactics to realize your goal
  - A plan for engaging supporters and well-defined ways for them to plug in
Online Organizing is an Ongoing Conversation

- 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 Engagement Asks

➡️ Encourage Action

➡️ Make it the “easy choice” to get involved

➡️ Reduce barriers for participation
  • Decrease the # of clicks to action
  • Give fame for getting involved
  • Remove login or memberships
  • Use accessible language
  • Create clearly defined asks
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” when you plan your messaging.
Online Engagement Asks

- Pledge Support
  - (Petitions, Endorsements)
- Donate Money
- Contribute to an Art project
- Join an Online Contest
- Volunteer
Online Engagement Asks

- Influence Campaign Decisions
  - (Polls, Voting, Discussion Forum, Letters to the Editor)

- Recruit Others
  - Social Networks
  - Shout Outs
  - Guest Blogs
Offline Engagement Asks

- Gather Info or Research
- Host or Attend Events
  - Day of Action
  - Movie Screenings
  - House Gatherings
- Start local groups/chapters
  - Volunteer Management
Organizing Youth Online

**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?

**Partners:** http://www.canfit.org; http://www.rysecenter.org;
Organizing Youth Online

“"I can talk about my community work online and not just my personal life.” “in my voice, in my story without the usual filters.”

- youth participant
Learnings: Organizing Youth Online

- Maintain principles of youth development
- Move away from assumptions about youth and social networks, and create a strategy with goals and tactics
- Organizing people takes time, online and offline
Learnings:
Youth eAdvocacy Video
Thank You!

▶ Questions?

▶ Comments?
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