Social Media

Social media allows people to create and share information, and make connections. It is a powerful publishing and communications tool that has changed how people discover, read, and share content.

People increasingly rely on social media for up-to-date political news and information. It can also spread political information quickly, whether it is true or not.

Social media sites encourage political involvement by uniting like-minded people, reminding users to vote in elections, and generating conversations that help people identify cultural similarities and differences.

Social media activity can help taint a political figure's reputation with information that may or may not be true. Before a politician can confirm, deny, or explain, the public may have already formed an opinion based on that information. When done well, the spread of information on social media for political means can help campaigns immensely.

Campaigning online can be difficult, especially for campaigns with limited resources. Focusing your efforts and cultivating followers on specific platforms can pay off come Election Day. A strong social media presence is vital to any campaign.

The Benefits of Social Media

Reach: Anyone, anywhere has access if they have an Internet connection.

Accessibility: Unlike traditional media, social media is available to anyone for little or no cost, and does not requires training to use.

Flexibility: Compared to traditional media, social media allows the user to easily modify content to better engage with their audience.

Interaction: Provides direct feedback and immediate results that traditional media does not, and allows for collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and information.

Managing your media campaign and social media presence

A strong media campaign that reflects your objectives as well as your image is vital to success, especially when engaged in party politics. Maximize your reach by including both traditional and digital media in your plan, and be open to making adjustments to your image or "brand".

Expand Your Reach

While it is important to post regularly on social media, Facebook advertising can help you reach target audiences strategically. Promoting your page or posts based on specific demographic criteria such as location, age, or interests will help expand your reach.

Use Images

Using images will help grab your audience's attention. Adding a picture to posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter will help to tell your story, and capture the attention of viewers. Instagram is a great platform for connecting with a younger demographic.

Videos

Online videos are a great way to convey a message and to share and promote information. Videos don't have to be fancy; they can be made with a smartphone or computer camera for quick sharing on social media. Videos also help to generate greater reach and engagement on social media. Also consider Facebook Live and video stories on Facebook and Instagram.

Add Your Social Media Profiles to Your Email Signature and All Campaign Materials

Every personal and campaign email you or your campaign staff send is an opportunity to mention your social media profiles. Add the information into your email signature, and you are all set.

Post Updates from the Right Account

This is a big one. Make sure you and your campaign staff keep personal and campaign social media posts separate. Personal posts sent through official campaign accounts have caused embarrassment for many campaigns.

One way to keep everything separated is to use a separate browser for just campaign posts. Using one browser for your personal social media accounts and another for your political campaign accounts will make it easier to keep your activities separate while letting you stay logged in.

Another option is to use social planning and scheduling tools like Hootsuite or Tweet Deck to help separate personal and professional accounts. These tools also allow you to easily create multiple posts across platforms and plan larger social campaigns.

Ask Your Fans and Followers for Help

The more fans and followers you have, the more avenues you have for increasing your social media following and engagement.

On Facebook, ask for comments, likes, and shares; on Twitter, ask your followers for retweets.

It's important to have someone closely monitoring comments and replies. Negative and/or offensive comments/replies on any social media platform should be dealt with in a timely manner.

Make the right call to action: if your post is about raising money, ask specifically for a donation. If you are looking for volunteers, ask your followers to go to the signup form and register. Be specific. Never assume that someone will just know what to do.