



CENTRE OF
EXCELLENCE FOR
PUBLIC SECTOR
MARKETING

LOW COST PROMOTIONAL TACTICS FOR SOCIAL MARKETING PROGRAMS

Prepared by:
Jim Mintz
Managing Partner
Centre of Excellence for Public Sector Marketing

INTRODUCTION

There is a misconception in the social marketing world that you need a lot of money to develop a comprehensive social marketing program. There are two reasons for this misconception. First, organizations particularly governments, believe they have to spend a significant amount of money on paid media (advertising) to run a successful social marketing campaign. Second, those organizations that don't have a lot of money feel if they don't have significant funds it is hopeless to become engaged in social marketing and tend to run ineffective "public education" initiatives which tend to focus on awareness but not much else. Certainly not behaviour change!

The Centre of Excellence for Public Sector Marketing proposes four (4) social marketing tactics which are low cost but can have significant impact on changing attitudes and behaviours. The following four strategic tactics will involve a time commitment to develop but will produce long term effective results. Low cost marketing ideas are only limited by your imagination. Start brain storming creative ways using these four promotional tactics to launch your social marketing campaign.

The 4 low cost social marketing tactics are:

- Strategic alliances and partnerships
- Face to face marketing
- Pro active public relations
- Web and digital /social media marketing

STRATEGIC ALLAINCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

When developing your tactical plans it is a good idea to consider how you can expand the reach of your messages through strategic alliances and partnerships. You may wish to identify specific organizations or simply the types of organizations with whom you will develop alliances.

Partnerships between governments, nonprofits and private sector organizations for the purpose of delivering information to citizens are becoming increasingly popular in Canada and around the world. Strategic alliances are gaining recognition by all sectors whether they are public, private or nonprofit as a legitimate and effective way of reaching and influencing individuals.

Clearly, partnerships need to be considered as an integral tool for delivering cost effective messages to the audiences that are identified for a social marketing program. It is strongly believed that both the tangible (e.g. communications and distribution networks) and intangible (e.g. credibility, associative) value of partnerships could be substantial and these partnerships should be leveraged to deliver targeted, positive and sustained messages to your audiences.

An expanded communications network composed of private sector, government, NGOs, interest groups, coalitions, professional associations, academia and opinion leaders will improve credibility tremendously, over a single-source marketing campaign. They will also help effectively saturate the media while spreading the cost across all sectors.

Strategic Alliances require common and compatible objectives and they should be used to assist an organization do something it cannot do on its own. Strategic alliances can be risky and developing them can be time consuming so only enter into a strategic alliance when the benefit to your organization is clear.

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The primary value of working with these partners towards an integrated approach is that they have the ability to move beyond a public education role to one where they can offer viable solutions at the appropriate time that moves the target audiences closer to action.

In addition, while your organization may be a trusted source of information, the target audience may likely respond more positively to information and endorsements from credible third parties as a means of providing balance to your initiative. This is particularly important for those who may be generally more skeptical of, and less responsive to messages from your organization. (Example: youth may be skeptical from messages that emanate from a government organization)

The following are some of the benefits of using strategic alliances and partnerships:

- Financial: Co-investment to leverage or expand the resources available to achieve goals. When collaborating organizations contribute skills, time, money and other in-kind resources to initiatives, the overall impact of the campaign may be greater than if you were working alone.
- Credibility and enhanced influence - Partnering with organizations that are viewed positively by the target audience can improve the effectiveness and impact of messages.
- Strengthened relationships with, and support from businesses, non profits, media and other government organizations.
- Access to new networks and distribution channels which can expand the reach and impact of an initiative and reach the target market on their own terms.
- Access to new sources of information and expertise.

TYPES OF STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Strategic Alliances can take on many roles and formats, depending on the objective of the campaign. The following are examples of types of strategic alliances that may be used in a campaign.

- **Advocacy** – Influencing companies, industries and other levels of government to change products or policies to facilitate social change
- **Consultative or Advisory** – provide advice and input on policies, strategies, program design and implementation
- **Contributory** – provide financial support (mostly government... if you have a funding program you may want to use it to leverage support for your social marketing campaign.)
- **Operational** – work to deliver information and services and build capacity
- **Collaborative** – share authority, resources, costs and benefits
- **Catalyst/Broker** – initiate new relationships by bringing together key stakeholders.

Example

Provincial transportation ministry who is promoting purchase of fuel efficient motor vehicles may engage in the following strategies

- *Government Ministries and Agencies (e.g. Environment) communicating complementary messages to a similar target audience. In addition include other levels of government (e.g. municipalities, federal departments such as Natural Resources Canada, Environment Canada).*
- *Non profits and associations focused on environmental issues and communicating with members of the vehicle fuel efficiency target audience.*
- *Private and public organizations that are communicating with motorists on a regular basis (e.g. CAA, Driver Training companies and organizations etc.).*
- *Industry stakeholders that can influence purchasing decisions by the products and services they sell (e.g. Auto Manufacturers, Auto Dealerships, Service Centres); also retailers who sell auto parts and do repairs (e.g. Canadian Tire).*
- *Industry suppliers that benefit from a cleaner environment (e.g. Insurance companies).*

• *Media organizations and publications/websites that are dedicated to the environment and/or have access to the target audience (e.g. Canadian Home and Garden).*

FACE TO FACE MARKETING

There is a myth that face to face marketing is retiring and we are moving on to bigger and better things. Face to face marketing includes everything from live events, seminars, workshops, outdoor events, trade shows, and conferences. The younger group, known as generation Y, or those born between the 80's and early 90's, highly depend on technology for not only work but personal relationships as well. The rise in people's need for technology to function has led others to believe that meeting with clients for face to face marketing is not necessary anymore and has become a "fossilized tactic". So what is the point in wasting money to meet with people face to face if it is an outdated tactic?

The point is that meeting face to face is absolutely effective and vital to building strong relationships with clients, or anyone for that matter. People who are wrapped up in the virtual world still have a strong desire for personal relationships, which is what they try to falsely attain through technology. All relationships are the same, whether it be a work related relationship or a personal relationship, they all need to make that face to face connection. By using technology you may lose that relationship. People have bought into this myth that face to face interaction is no longer important and have begun adapting to technological alternatives. But, face to face marketing has and always will be effective; it is a strategy that best fits an organization who is working with a limited budget that need to influence key stakeholders and opinion makers. .

While most people think of public relations as media relations, there are times when either you can't reach your audience through print, broadcast or the Internet, or you need to supplement your media program. That's when you need to think about face-to-face marketing—placing clients directly in front of targeted audiences through informational events structured around their interests.

SOURCE <http://ezinearticles.com/?Social-Media-Vs-Face-to-Face-Marketing---The-Death-of-Real-World-Networking?&id=3772456>

Whatever the rationale behind a face-to-face marketing effort, one of the underlying benefits is that the event itself is as much a part of the message as the content. There are times when technology just doesn't do the job and face to face marketing is required.

What can face to face marketing offer a social marketer?

- It provides you the opportunity to meet with key stakeholders or very targeted populations

- It is most appropriate when some form of personal intervention or interaction is required to deliver detailed information, address barriers and concerns, build trust and gain commitment.
- Excellent way to compile data and build a database
- Provides fast and flexible solutions in a changing environment

Face to face marketing can begin a lasting relationship between the target audience(s)/key stakeholders and an organization using the simplest and oldest method of communication - one person speaking to another. Events and exhibits and educational tactics like workshops, seminars, should be considered as part of the face to face strategy.

It can take place in a very wide range of locations:

- airports
- railway/ bus/subway stations
- ferry ports
- supermarkets
- special national and local events
- shopping malls and community centres
- trade shows
- conferences (government , private sector and non profit)

It is essential that staff involved must have been well trained in approaching stakeholders or specific target audiences e.g youth, seniors, women, aboriginal groups, new Canadians etc. They must also be able to offer a fast but clear summary (problem, solution) of why they are making the approach, from an excellent knowledge of the program, issue, product or service and also be absolutely clear about what is expected of them in terms of delivering your social marketing message. Personality, politeness, body language, negotiating skills, objection handling and administrative competency are just some of the skills that are required by a successful face to face marketer.

So what does it take to make face-to-face marketing work?

1. The Plan—have a well-defined plan of what you want to do, what you want target audiences to get from their experience, and how you will deliver. A good plan underpins everything.

2. Pick the right opportunities—the right show or event will make all the difference. Start by asking your current stakeholders, what shows or events they go to and why?

3. Have a great presence—the right exhibit booth and graphics help prospects understand who you are, what you do and why they should care. A great presence also includes having the right people work the event.

4. Follow up and evaluate—manage and measure your results. A good Client Relationship Management (CRM) system is essential. A plan for fast follow-up on inquiries is vital.

5. Have a good partner—a good plan poorly executed is no plan at all. Find a good partner that can help with all the thousand little details that face to face marketing presents.

Source: <http://www.ipmarketingadvisor.com/content/2010/03/02/face-to-face-marketing-matters-more-than-ever/>

PROACTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS

A proactive public relations (PR) approach to marketing communications is a key tactic for social marketing. It is not that thing that you should be doing but never quite get around too. You need to be proactive. PR is a vital marketing communications tactic that can help you get significant communications weight for social marketing campaign without spending significant funds.

Proactive PR provides free visibility for your social marketing campaign. Successful PR activities generate positive mentions of your programs and activities in the media and it is very cheap to implement. You can set up a blog and twitter account for free and it costs you virtually nothing to send a press release (try a social media press release <http://smr.newswire.ca/en>). It is impossible to get free advertising. Advertising via traditional mediums can be quite expensive but proactive PR is very low cost and effective. Countless studies have shown that the results of a PR campaign are considered much more trustworthy than ads. Most PR strategies are designed to be easily tracked and measured. If you put an ad in a newspaper you may find it hard to work out whether it has been successful. It may be hard to measure your success. However, if you use PR you should be able to easily work out whether your strategies have been successful.

Public Relations are vital to the success of a public sector or not-for-profit organization social marketing campaign. No matter how important your cause is, you should not expect that everybody will know about it or even about your organization. Proactive PR is essential to success. From building awareness and credibility to supporting your campaign, a well-executed, proactive PR program can make the difference in achieving your social marketing objectives.

The following tips and tactics will illustrate how easy it is to launch your public relations—no matter how large or small your organization.

Tips and Tactics to Get Started

The ultimate goal of most proactive public relations programs is to generate positive media coverage in the media, including on-line media that are read, listened to or viewed by your target audiences. Whether the media coverage you seek marks the beginning of a campaign to influence the public on a

particular issue, or is simply the basis for increasing awareness of your organization, there's a good deal of advance preparation that needs to take place before you start.

There are five important tactics that your organization can use to generate the desired media coverage, whether you have a dedicated PR person or not:

- * Framing the story and writing a news release
- * Targeting and connecting with the appropriate media
- * Distributing your news
- * Developing experts and promoting them as a reliable source
- * Monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of your efforts

Framing Your Story and Writing Your News Release

News releases especially social media releases (<http://smr.newswire.ca/en>) are a great way for organizations to build awareness about a cause or issue. A news release should be written in a journalistic, rather than marketing, style. It should be objectively written as though a reporter were writing the story for you. Most important, your release needs to "inform" people, NOT just "sell" them something. It should include a headline that grabs the reader's attention and speaks directly to the "news"; a lead paragraph that contains the information most relevant to your message, such as the five W's (who, what, when, where, why) and a short boiler plate description of your organization and or program. The release should always list a contact that can be reached at any time in case a reporter has follow up questions.

Targeting, Influencing, and Reaching Appropriate Media

Knowing where members of your target audience get their information that drives their decisions is one of the most important aspects of a PR program. Once you have this information, determine which reporters cover news related to your organization or causes. There are many ways to do this, some more time and cost-effective than others. They include:

- Subscribing to the publications and internet sites read by your target audience
- Utilizing search engines to find on-line editions
- Following media-focused newsletters or publications to keep abreast of changes at outlets
- Using a media database that provides:
 - On-line access from anywhere
 - Geographic, subject, beat, title, pitching tips, search capabilities
 - Distribution and delivery mechanisms

Whatever method you choose, familiarize yourself with the print, broadcast or online media to learn what each reporter covers and what interests him or her and his/her audience.

If you've used a media database to create your media contact list, you should consider distributing your news release directly to this list. In addition, consider using a newswire service, one of the most cost-effective ways of directly reaching the media—as well as potential donors or sponsors. E.g Canada Newswire www.newswire.ca/en/

Distributing Your News

Newswire services provide a huge benefit to public sector and nonprofit organizations that are trying to establish themselves, increase awareness of their causes, raise money, or solicit sponsorship funds. A commercial newswire can distribute your news release electronically to thousands of major and secondary daily newspapers, weeklies, relevant trade journals, broadcast outlets, and wire services.

The benefit of using a newswire doesn't stop there. Ever wonder how all those news releases get posted on Google? Through a commercial newswire service, (<http://www.newswire.ca/en/>) the only way to get visibility in such portals as Google, MSN, Yahoo!, AOL, and Excite. Newswires let you reach hundreds of thousands of individuals, decision makers, and other influential people through the Internet.

Some services even offer search engine optimization tools, which make news releases more likely to show up higher in search results on leading search engines and keep them on these search engines for up to six months. This is an extremely effective way of reaching stakeholders directly with your news when they are searching for information on particular subjects. Include a URL that links to a opportunity to get involved with your program or cause make your news release an even more effective tool. Plus, the keyword reporting features provided with these optimization services can help you tailor future messaging and gain a better understanding of how your audience seeks information on your organization.

A Social Media Release is an add-on to your traditional news release-it provides the online audience with a place to go for multimedia content and conversation about your message. It distributes to RSS feeds and portfolio e-mail services, reach news consumers on the go (i.e. Blackberry and Windows Mobile Devices). You can upload your video content to Youtube which allows it to be easily viewed, shared and embedded. You can also provide greater options to viewers and journalists by adding both web-friendly, smaller images and print ready high resolution images. Including links and important documents and files gives audiences more background about your release. Opt-in comments enable your audience to have a conversation on your release; giving you a chance to be part of the community. (<http://smr.newswire.ca/en/>).

Developing Experts and Promoting Them to the Media

Developing experts within an organization and creating platforms from which they can provide their opinions is vital to securing lasting media coverage. An organization should always have a few experts on hand to discuss their objectives, explain the cause/issue or point of view on a particular subject in detail, and provide support to sponsors.

Profiling key spokespeople on the organization's Web site or in widely available expert databases gives reporters easy accessibility to these experts. If your expert can respond to something that is currently in the news, consider sending out a media advisory alerting reporters to the availability of the spokesperson and his/her position on the topic.

Monitoring and Measuring the Effectiveness of Your Program

You should always know what articles or postings have been written about your organization or what news of interest to your nonprofit has been published on the Internet and in print. There are tens of thousands of Web sites and other on-line information sources that could potentially post something of interest or importance to you, and there are several methods you can use to find this information.

The most basic approach to "monitoring" is manually searching the Internet by inputting keywords into search engines, which can be time consuming and redundant. A more sophisticated approach is signing up for RSS feeds or subscribing to a service that monitors news sources and provides reports that link to articles based on specific keywords. These services allow you to stay on top of what's being said about your organization and about entities with differing viewpoints, enabling you to make more informed decisions, tweak messaging, and get an overall gauge of the organization.

"Measuring" the effectiveness of a proactive PR program is a major challenge for all organizations, whether they are not-for-profits, government agencies, or associations. Measurement, however, is key to analyzing the impact of certain messages, changing messaging mid-program, and assessing the quality of coverage. For many organizations, monitoring and measuring might appear to be luxuries you can't afford; there are, however, cost-effective services that can go a long way toward helping you understand how your audience may be viewing your information.

With a program or campaign that includes all of these fundamental elements—news releases, targeting and distributing to appropriate media, developing experts, and monitoring and measurement—you have a full-circle approach to your public relations efforts*

*<http://www2.guidestar.org/rxa/news/articles/2005/promoting-your-not-for-profit-through-public-relations.aspx?articleId=785>

9 Simple Steps for Proactive Public Relations

By [Hamish Jones](#)

Select your target audience- No matter what your organization is, you are not going to be able to sell to everybody. Yes, it would be nice to be able to reach everyone but it's not just going to happen. Tailor your messages to the right target audience.

· **Survey them to check their current knowledge levels-** You may not have to survey them directly but the internet search engines help you to gauge your target audience's beliefs. A quick Google search and checking forums related to your organization should enable you to understand their current levels of knowledge.

· **Look at how they are reacting with their current knowledge-** Your target audience doesn't just know something; they formulate opinions based around this 'knowledge.' What does your target public think about the situation?

· **Set your goals for the campaign-**If you are going to do proactive public relations, you need to plan your campaign. This involves setting goals of what you'd like to achieve- increased web activity etc.

· **Select your public relations strategy-** Once you have set your goals, your strategy is your overall plan to reach your goals. This is what you need to achieve to reach your goals.

· **Decide on what your persuasive message will be-** Once you have developed your goals and strategies, you need to work out what you need to tell those people you are targeting. What will you tell them to reach your goals?

· **Decide on what tactics and tools you could use-** What will you do to fulfill your strategy. Will you write press releases? Will you write a blog? Will you be twittering? What about participating in forums or will you combine many of these tactics?

· **Monitor for changes in knowledge and beliefs-** Public relations goals and messages can generally be defined as either reputation building or belief changing. You need to monitor what is being said to see or people are being swayed to change their beliefs.

· **Monitor for behavior change-** It's not good enough to have changed someone's beliefs; you want to see a change in behavior that mean acting like you want them to.

<http://ezinearticles.com/?9-Simple-Steps-for-Proactive-Public-Relations&id=893783>

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS AND TACTICS

The following section has been adapted from the Centre for Public Sector Marketing Social Media Marketing Workbook prepared by Mike Kujawski

“Should I be on Facebook? Should I start a blog? Should I buy an island in Second Life? Should I be Podcasting! Tell me what to do!” These are the kind of questions that social media consultants get asked the most. The answer is simple: There is no “universal” answer. Every organization’s situation is unique and there is no magic application. Everything is dependent on your objectives and who your target audience is. This is why you need to pay careful attention to the traditional strategic elements of marketing, (objectives, segmentation, targeting and positioning) before deciding on specific social media tactics. Basic marketing elements are as important as ever. They are often ignored and not applied as many people are anxious to get to the visible “tactics” without a “strategy” in place. The 4P’s of Social Marketing (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion) still apply as well; however with social media, your target audience can collaborate, participate and share with you in their development, hence the constant referral to “2-way” engagement.

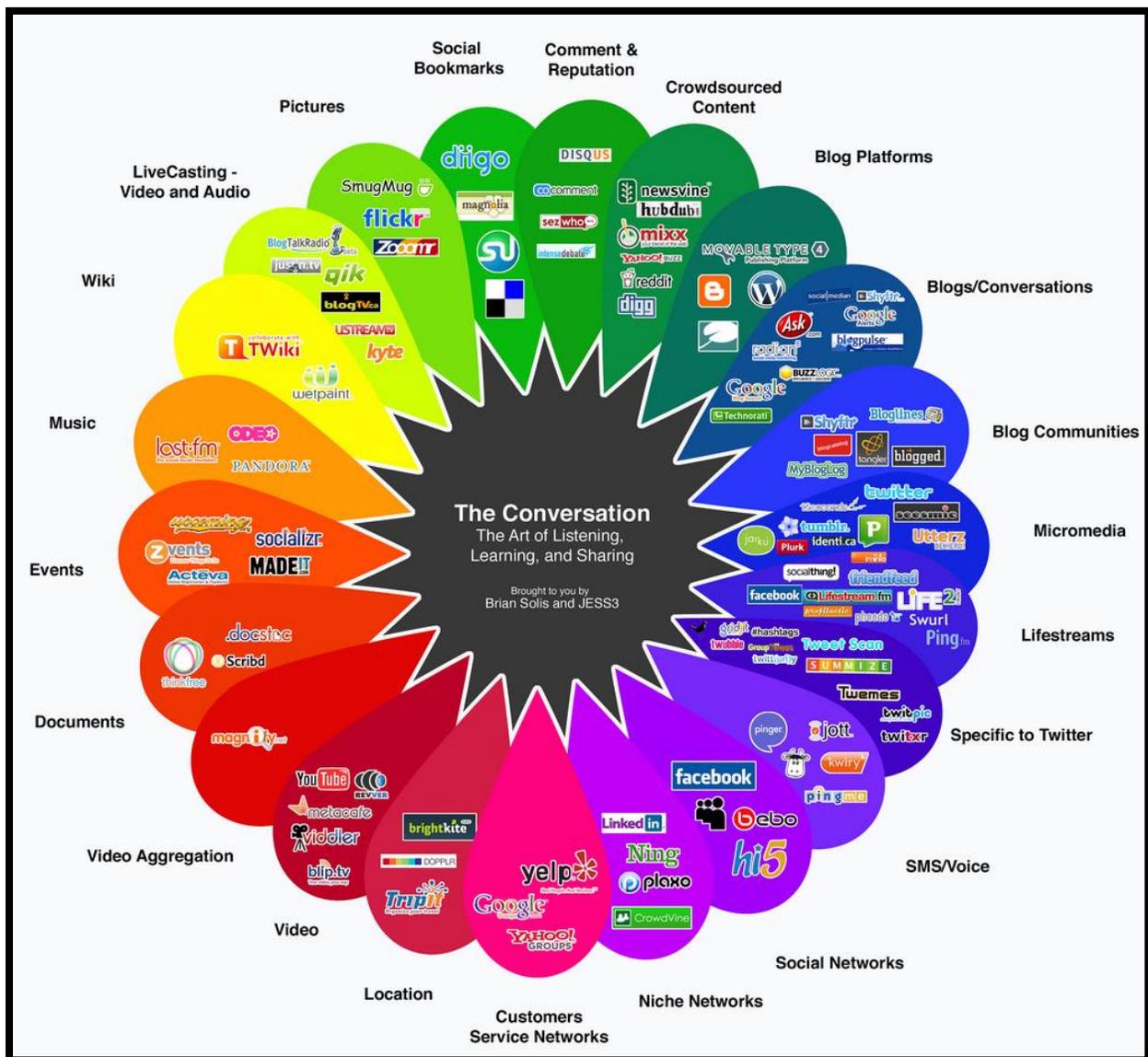
Potential social media tools include:

- RSS News Feed Development
- Blogger Relations Campaign
- Social Media Press Release Development
- Social Network Community Development
- Podcast Series Creation
- Blog Development
- Wiki Development
- Micro blogging Participation
- Mash-Up Tool Development
- Mobile Web Widget Development
- Virtual World Presence

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS & APPLICATIONS

The amount and quality of tools and applications is growing at an incredible pace. This leads to many skeptics not wanting to invest time in any particular tool in case it’s obsolete by next year. However, if this is your thinking then you’re missing the point. By engaging in social media, you’re not investing in the tool, you’re investing in the people behind that tool (i.e. building genuine relationships). People are real and they are here to stay, no matter which platform they’re using down the road.

So if it is YouTube or Facebook these social media tool examples are mere brainstorming suggestions. There is a wide variety of new cutting-edge social media applications developed daily and most of them can be fully customized (mashed-up) by non-techies thanks to standardized programming languages. You must carefully evaluate the best ones to pursue, paying careful attention to the target audience(s) and objectives that need to be met at the end of the day. The benefits of using social media channels can far outweigh traditional efforts thanks to the viral nature of online communities, especially when they are presented with content that is relevant to them (i.e. your “product” P of the Marketing Mix). Best of all, most social media engagement channels can easily be monitored and measured for performance.



Never do something just because others are doing it. Out of the 55,000 Facebook Groups you can bet that a vast majority of them are abandoned. Don't do YouTube because your colleagues are doing it. Do what is right for you and your target audiences. Out of the thousands of podcasts started each day, many will be cancelled within a few weeks due to lack of subscribers or commitment time. You must choose what is right for you and be sure to do it well.

Pros & Cons of various Social Media (very general)

Type of Social Media Tool	Key "Marketing" Advantages	Key "Marketing" Disadvantages
Social Network Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to act as an online "human voice" by creating a profile of yourself as a representative of organization X • Social Networks have very specific and highly measurable/targetable audience segments¹ • Easy and free to use • Ability to communicate with specific target audiences (your connections) for free anytime. • Mass adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance to any form of "traditional" 1-way promotion (especially banner ads) • Many are "private" and not fully indexed by search engines.
Blog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use and set-up • High search engine visibility • Allows you to have a dynamic website where you can post content without bothering IT • Your audience can subscribe via RSS or email to your blog • 2-way communication channel (ability for comments) • Strong blogger community (double-edged sword if you don't abide by the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative comments • Blog SPAM • Tremendous time commitment

¹ The more people fill out their profiles, the better marketers can target them (in terms of relevancy)

	rules)	
Microblogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent tool for gauging real-time discussion of current events • Ability to filter by hashtags² • Extremely easy to use • 60 second “breaking-news” cycle • Instantaneous response • Plethora of 3rd party applications³ • Ability to filter out irrelevant noise • Ability to follow niche communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still in the “rapid growth” stage compared to other social media. • Learning curve • Time commitment to build a loyal community
Wiki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent collaborative participation tool • Can be used for marketing research • Great way to get your target audience (especially the influencers) to do your work for you voluntarily⁴ • Great for self-organizing meetings and conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept can be hard for some users to get, even when presented in a simple way.
Podcast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great way to keep your audience up-to-date without soliciting their email boxes. • Great way to engage audience during their commute to work or personal time • Great channel for people that love to speak as opposed to write 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For maximum experience, a portable MP3 player is required to really feel the “portability” advantage of podcasting.
Web Widget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable • Cross-platform compatible • Easy to use and understand • Highly customizable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential installation issues if users do not have account admin privileges

² <http://hashtags.org/>

³ <http://search.twitter.com/apps>

⁴ You can save considerable marketing research dollars by engaging the audience in the design of certain aspects of your marketing plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very useful and practical 	
Mash-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully customizable • Mind-boggling possibilities • Allows you to create your own tool/application with a specific purpose based on the collaborative work of the community (i.e. their tagging efforts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Might have a learning curve if complex. Especially since every mash-up is different
Virtual World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to reach early-adopters and influencers • Very unique means of engaging/meeting with your audience in a 3D setting. • Addresses the interaction needs of the “Net Generation”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow and hard to use for mainstream users • Hardware requirements • Community resentment for anything that seems overtly promotional in nature

CONTACT



Jim Mintz

Managing Partner, Centre of Excellence for Public Sector Marketing

2487 Kaladar Avenue, Suite 214, Ottawa, ON, K1V-8B9

T: 613.731.9851 ext.18, F: 613.731.2407

CEPSM Website: www.publicsectormarketing.ca

CEPSM on Twitter: www.twitter.com/cepsm

Subscribe to my blog: www.jimmintz.ca

E-mail: jim.mintz@publicsectormarketing.ca