

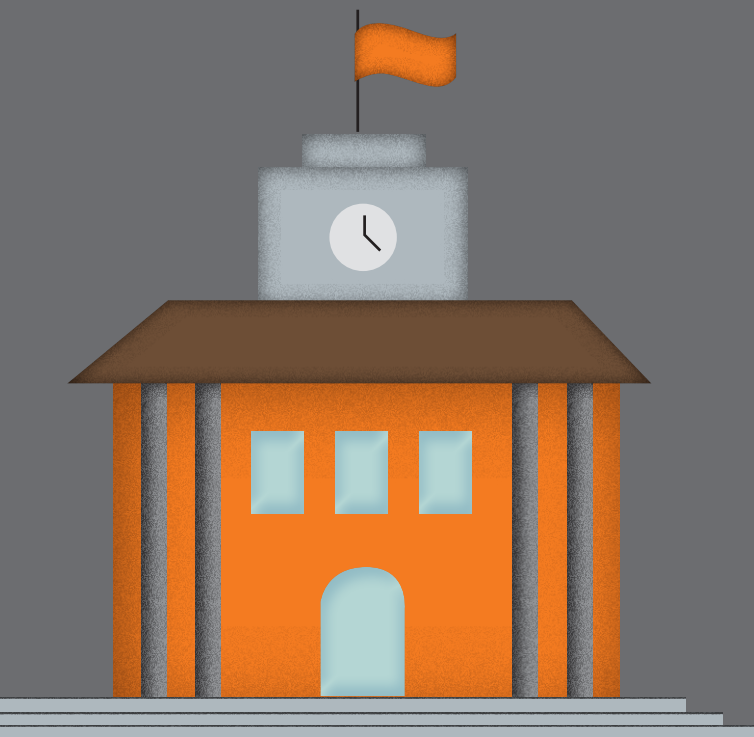


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# Social Media Strategy for Government Organizations



Government Industry Ebook / 2012

# SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

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## Introduction

It's time to cast your vote in a revolutionary way: by updating your status. With social media, it's no surprise that governments are starting to benefit from its advantages.

President Obama's "Yes We Can" campaign was hailed as one of the most social political races to date. The [report prepared by Edelman](#) highlights that through social media, Barack Obama was able to get his message to a wider audience than previously possible. Looking at the possibilities in upcoming elections, we can see that there is no denying the presence of social media. Having a Twitter handle is no longer a value add but a necessity to fully understand what constituents are saying. Whether you are running for president, mayor or student council, using social to understand the public consensus is a great new tool at your fingertips.

Before you get started diving into social, you'll need to learn a few things. Here's what this ebook will teach you:

- How to avoid "the Three Ds" that could cost you public opinion, or your job.
- How often you can talk about yourself without driving your public away.
- How to use social media to gain valuable competitive intel.
- Four simple phrases that can get you through nearly any difficult social media situation.
- Five things you should be listening for to get real business value from social media.

Before we continue, there are a few questions we want you to keep in mind:

- How are you already listening to and engaging in the social media conversations around your organization?
- What is your current social media strategy?
- What are some ways you can build off this strategy as the needs of your organization and your public change and evolve?

Whether you are just getting started in the social media space or have an existing social media presence that you want to take to the next level, this ebook will help you answer questions you might already have as well as provide additional content to get you thinking and inspired.

So pull the curtain and get ready to cast your social ballot!

## Chapter 1

### WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

#### Where Did it Start?

Personal computers have drastically changed how governing bodies and their constituents interact. The web first empowered the public with vast amounts of information. Now social media has given them something even more powerful: personal and professional connectivity.

Social media began as a way for friends and family to connect online. But organizations quickly saw its game-changing advantages for marketing, advertising, and public care and feedback.

The social web is changing how governments complete their affairs. It's shifted how they communicate within their own walls and how they communicate with the public. Residents now have a platform for feedback, opinion, discussion, and collaboration.

#### Where Do you Start?

Your organization may already have a basic social media strategy. Perhaps it's just a listening ear. But now you — or your boss — decided to get serious about social media. You're full of questions. What must you do to tie your social media activities to your bottom line objectives? How can you make sure your social media presence helps you reach your goals?

Step 1? Breathe! Let's begin your social media journey by introducing common social media platforms and the etiquette that goes along with them.

## Chapter 2:

### HOW DO I USE SOCIAL MEDIA EFFECTIVELY?

Social media now covers a variety of sites and information with new avenues created daily. It can be a lot to take in, but basic rules of conduct apply to them all.

#### Social Etiquette

We all remember that big poster board from elementary school listing the rules for proper etiquette in the classroom:

"We say please and thank you."

"We use our indoor voices."

"We treat others the way we would like to be treated."

We were referred to these rules whenever we squished scented markers on our neighbor's face or said something cruel by the tire swings. These old-fashioned rules haven't changed. Being polite and respectful is still Social Etiquette 101. Proper etiquette on the social web means being aware of your audience, understanding how they communicate and being a helpful, welcome and positive contributor to the community.

#### Memorize the 3 R's:

- *Reciprocation* - It's above give and take. Promote others more than you promote yourself. [Chris Brogan](#) recommends promoting others 12 times for each time you promote yourself.
- *Respect* - Listen carefully, respond quickly, and share helpful information. People would rather trust their money to organizations that treat them with decency.
- *Reliability* - Your Facebook and Twitter accounts carry the implicit promise you are available to answer questions and deal with problems. Better to not be on social media at all than fail to deliver.

#### How do you live out these principles?

- Join conversations because you're interested in the subject matter or because you have something beneficial to add. Period. Don't push your agenda or aggressively share your opinions.
- Say hello when you jump online to encourage conversation. Saying goodbye at the end of your time online lets people know when you're heading offline. No one likes to be left hanging in the middle of a conversation. If you do this consistently, your community will come to know when you're available.

- Introduce yourself and introduce others. Anytime you friend, follow or engage with strangers, let them know who you are.
- Say please and thank you. If someone has shared your content, thank them. Though you may not be able to respond to every comment on your blog or Facebook page, you can take a moment to respond to a few and then make a general statement thanking everyone who shared your content.
- If your social circle is large, it contains people you don't know well, if at all. Review your friends/follower lists frequently. Set some time aside each week to manage your following/follower ratio. Step outside your comfort zone and expand your horizons when it comes to connecting

## The Three Ds

Saying the wrong thing on social media can be disastrous. Here are the three Ds to avoid:

- *Disclosure* - Steer clear of disclosing trade secrets or intellectual property. This could cost you your job and give your competitors an unfair advantage.
- *Defamation* - Do not make statements about someone that are false and could potentially cause economic consequences.
- *Discrimination* - It takes only one offensive tweet to damage your organization beyond retrieval. Remember, the social web is a public place where your voice is amplified.

For a more detailed look at proper social media etiquette, check out these great posts:

[An Insider's Guide to Social Media Etiquette](#) by Chris Brogan

[The Ultimate Social Media Etiquette Handbook](#) by Tamera Weinberg

[Do we Need to Revisit our Settings for Trust and Transparency?](#) by Valeria Maltoni

## Social Sites

Most of your networking will be done in several major sites. Here's how to use them.

### Twitter

Twitter is more than just telling the world what you ate for breakfast. It's more like "conference call IM." It's a second phone on your desk.

Here are a few things to keep in mind if you're just getting started on Twitter:

- Use your real name and a profile picture, or include the real names of the team members who are tweeting behind your government or representative's Twitter handle. It lets your followers know that there are real human beings behind the organization. Build your bio the way you'd introduce yourself or your representative in person.

- To get the ball rolling, search Twitter for people you know by entering their names and plug in topics that interest you and see who's talking about them. As you get more followers, check out the people they're following. That's the most organic way to build your network.
- Treat Twitter like a conversation. Start with 30 minutes, twice a day. The best way to build relationships and a community on Twitter? Participate. Spend some time sitting back and listening, then join the conversation. Jump on in and say hello.

## LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the interactive version of that pile of business cards in your drawer. It's your online resume, but it's also a mechanism to demonstrate your expertise and benefit from other's knowledge, make business connections, and help connect others in your network to each other.

So here's our down-and-dirty guidebook for LinkedIn along with a handful of tips.

- Use a real photo. The real you.
- Share your goals more than your daily tasks. Focus on what makes you and your abilities different from the next person with your same title.
- Are you a blogger by night? A speaker in your own time? Share that too!
- Connect! Find connections, request them and watch your network grow.
- Ask for recommendations from those who know your work, and display them on your profile. Offer to write recommendations for those whose work you're familiar with.
- Join the conversation! Check the LinkedIn Answers section for opportunities to lend your expertise to questions in your field. Join relevant groups and contribute with content and conversations.

## Facebook

There's no denying Facebook's reach and popularity. You, your friends and your family are likely all using it. Since you know the basics already, it's an easy place to learn how to use social media for business.

- Remember that social networks are searchable, and you just never know who might come knocking at your virtual door. Use a picture that you'd be proud to show off in public. Set privacy settings to ensure the public sees only what you want shared publicly.
- Choose who you'd like to connect to. Some people prefer to keep their connections to people they know personally. You should check in once a day or so to catch up with friend requests and peek at the "people you may know" sidebar, just to see who's lurking out there. Say hello to them!
- Install only those applications you'll use. Facebook has a lot of applications. Choose wisely as they are a reflection of you and how you spend your time.

- Start and nurture a group. Group members are looking for dialogue, interaction, and discussion. Give your fans, friends and loyal supporters some meaty topics to digest and discuss. Mix organization topics (“What do you think of our current tax rates?”) with topics of interest to your audience (“What public services do you use the most?”).

## Blogging

Should your company blog? It depends. Do you have something to say? Do you want to share thoughts, interests, ideas? Are you interested in others weighing in on what you have to say? If so, starting a blog is great idea.

Learn on the job. There’s no better way to learn about blogging than to immerse yourself in it.

- Read like crazy. Read lots of blogs, both inside and outside your interest area. Pay special attention to things like tone, writing style, and how writers break up the content. Try [Google Reader](#) to aggregate your blogs.
- Comment on blogs. Share your voice; the authors want to hear from you - it’s part of their validation that they’re writing something of interest.

Ready to start writing?

- Set a goal, such as three posts a week. They don’t have to be mammoth. Just get comfortable with the medium. Talk about what you know. Write to share something valuable with others in your community, and serve as a discussion hub and a resource.
- Get feedback and ideas from across your organization.
- Scribble down post ideas when you have them. Start blog post drafts and save them unfinished. You can always come back to them later when inspiration strikes. If you get a burst of writing done, schedule your posts in advance.
- Share. Ask questions. Get people talking. You’re a conversation catalyst.
- Engage with comments on your blog. Commenters like to know that you’re listening and paying attention. How often and how deeply you respond is up to you, but comments are an important part of the blog ecosystem, so find a way to engage.
- Link to the posts that inspired your writing. Point your readers to more resources.
- Disclose relationships you have that may have bearing on the opinions you write about disclosure is the law if you’re being paid to do so. If you’re including other people’s work, attribute it.

Once you’re comfortable with social media, you’ll be thinking of how you can transfer that knowledge to your staff. Let’s dive in to training!



## Chapter 3:

### HOW DO I TRAIN MY STAFF FOR SOCIAL MEDIA?

Training your staff on how to use social media can be daunting. Many people in the government world are still learning how they can best use the medium. You'll notice your staff can be classified as follows:

*Digital Native:* They've grown up in a highly digital world and are totally at ease with using online platforms and learning new ones.

*Savvy Technologist:* They feel comfortable using most online social platforms and digital tools. These people approach new platforms with caution and often let others fumble around before joining in.

*Reluctant User:* They are aware of the digital world and social media but hesitate to explore into the digital space. They do not think about or use digital tools more than necessary and generally resist incorporating those tools into their lives.

*Digital Contrarian:* They fear and dislike the digital world. They sneer at social networking and use email only because they're forced to. They prefer phones and fax machines.

*Digital Newbie:* Last spotted in 1997. Believed to be extinct.

Your challenge as a leader is to get all these people working together.

#### Training Program Prep and Framework

Involve your staff when you plan your training framework. Their input will make your program better.

Establish a few different things:

- Who within each team is going to be using social media
- If there will be a single point person to oversee department social media activities or if everyone will have an even distribution of tasks
- Which social media tasks each team has been assigned to perform
- The social media comprehension levels of all team members (not just general use, but understanding of how social media can be applied in business settings, crossing various departments within your party)

Your findings should give you a clear view of the various user levels you must accommodate, what conversations have already happened around your company's social media initiatives, and how people are feeling about those plans.

The folks within your organization who are enthusiastic about social media and "get it" can help your training program take flight. Make them your friends.

### **Social Media Training Team**

Create a cross-functional social media training team that coordinates courses, benchmarks employees, answers questions, and provides constructive feedback. They should tweak the training program as needed.

Make sure your training program includes:

- Clearly-stated purposes for why governments are adopting social media and why a training program is in place
- Achievable goals and measurable objectives for each piece of the program
- Different course levels to account for different levels of adoption, as well as multiple opportunities for achievement. Break the process into easily digestible mental bites
- Tactical how-to training, conceptual training and example scenarios
- Testing or benchmarking to gauge the progress of employees as they move through the program
- A review process for assessing the effectiveness of the program

Developing a successful team takes planning and training but in the end, you'll have a solid foundation and a dependable team to create great social strategies.

Now that your team is ready, you need a technology platform.

## Chapter 4:

### WHAT DOES A SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING PLATFORM DO?

Social media listening, tracking, monitoring and engagement tools allow governments to execute their social media strategy. This enables organizations to become socially-engaged enterprises, with strong insight into social media through metrics, measurement, sentiment and analytics reporting.

#### Social Media Monitoring

A social media monitoring and engagement platform, such as Radian6, lets you listen to conversations about your organization and services in real time. You can glean information from your online conversations and share important reports with those who need them.

Social media monitoring not only discovers public sentiment surrounding your party, but can also be used to deal with crisis situations, to benchmark your competitors, to generate interest from new voters, and to grow support for your services. Social media monitoring helps you reach out to a whole new audience.

#### How Does this Sync Up with Social Media Marketing?

Social media marketing is changing how you interact with your public. Instead of your public clamouring for your attention, it's up to you to reach out to them. Take your messaging to where they're gathering – the social web.

Make the switch from traditional marketing. Interact more with your public; engage with them at their point of need. Don't robotically push your message; talk about what people on the social web care about at the moment. Monitor public sentiment to understand how your latest campaign is faring. The social web gives you options that are almost limitless.

#### Social Media Strategy

If you're seeking rewarding online relationships with your public, you must craft a social media strategy.

Your strategy plans how you will engage your community. It will cover everything from how often you post, to how you handle complaints. It will help you connect with followers consistently and helpfully — and attract new supporters to your organization.

A social media monitoring platform will help you execute your strategy by:

- Scaling your mountain of content. These platforms cull through content based on a number of algorithms so you don't have to!
- Tracking trends. Over time, you'll start to see trends emerge as you view the data.
- Lightening your load when it comes to reporting. Platforms can aggregate your data so you can simply pull the information you need.
- Getting information to those who need it most. Log in and grab the data - it's that easy. You can often segment by different user settings or admin rights.

Social media monitoring platforms let you know your community inside and out. Once you understand their past preferences, you can give them a richer experience in the future. You'll also discover who is most influential in conversations surrounding your government. These loyal supporters will spread your message even more widely throughout the social web.

A strong social strategy has three components: listening, engaging, and measuring. Let us walk you through each one.

## Chapter 5:

### HOW DO I START LISTENING?

Listening – or social media monitoring – involves searching for online conversations about your organization using key words and phrases.

#### Listening: The Ws

##### **What to Listen For:**

Monitoring social media can be overwhelming. So much information, so many sites, and all of it screaming by at the speed of light.

Start with a tiered system that takes you from organization-centered listening, to competitive listening, to industry-wide listening (some more specifics on these are below).

Tag those conversations as:

- Complaints
- Compliments
- Questions
- Leads and Inquiries
- Opportunity Conversations

##### **Where to Listen:**

Start by casting the net wide. You'll begin to see where people are talking. Pay attention to those forums.

Social media is bigger than Twitter and Facebook. For your organization, it's wherever people are creating and sharing content. It could be anywhere — blogs, forums, message boards, LinkedIn, or niche online communities.

##### **Who Should do it:**

Who in your organization should be listening? Ask yourself:

- What's the central focus of our social media participation? Public service? Marketing? Product ideas?

- Do we have dedicated human resources for this, or does it have to be part of an existing role?
- Is someone on our team already interested in this?

You might anoint a Chief Listener, but try to make listening pervasive throughout your organization. Since a wide array of people can benefit from social media intelligence, they should all be given the tools — and the encouragement — to listen.

## Listening: The How

So, let's get down to brass tacks. What do we search for?

### Organization

Concentrate your organization searches around terms, words, and phrases that are directly related to your government. You can go broad or narrow, but in general, you'll want to develop a stack of keywords and phrases that reflect:

- Your organization name
- Your organization, business units, or service offerings
- Names of specialized services you offer such as rebate programs
- Names or terms around specific campaigns
- Key stakeholders in your organization
- Nicknames, abbreviations, or misspellings of any of the above

These terms will reveal whether it's you that people are talking about. If they're not, that's intelligence in itself. If they are, you'll want to know if it's positive, critical, or neutral, as all of those things will frame your future strategy.

### Government

Listening as a government is proactive. It reveals the background conversation to your organization. It's not about you, but how you might fit into the larger profile of your industry on the social web. Here, you might search for:

- Terms related to products and the governmental space that are not organization-specific
- Phrases that define the markets you serve
- Wider industry keywords or categories
- Professional organizations you belong to or that fit your business profile
- Names of thought leaders in the political arena

Listening will teach you about how people perceive you and the overall public opinion. And you'll find conversations that aren't about your company, but where you can meet new people, share helpful expertise and establish your online presence as a resource and authority without a focus on sales or marketing.

## Competitors

Competitive intelligence was once limited to expensive reports from business intelligence companies, or whatever fragments you could dredge up from your personal network.

The social web has opened up a wealth of competitive data. You can look for:

- Names of competitive representatives, organizations, and services
- Stakeholders in those organizations
- Buzz around competitive campaigns and promotions
- Nicknames and misspellings

People are talking online about your competition. Who they're hiring, who's recently left. Where the competition is missing the boat (which presents all sorts of opportunities for you). And they can pinpoint emerging crises or buzz swells that you might want to be aware of for your own purposes.

The same unfiltered, fast-moving and open information that's out there about YOU is out there about THEM. It can be awfully worthwhile to pay attention.

Your listening program will set the tone for the rest of your social media activities. Fine-tune each piece to ensure you're listening in the places and to the conversations that matter to your organization. Once you've got this part of your strategy solidified, move on to tackle engagement.

## Chapter 6:

### HOW DO I START ENGAGING?

Engagement is the Holy Grail of a listening and monitoring program. Engagement means gaining and holding the attention of the general public through regular organization-to-community interaction.

If someone engages with your messages, they'll buy what you're selling. And if you've done it right, they'll come back for seconds.

#### Engagement: The Ws

The social web has made it easy for people to share their opinions about everything on a mass scale, making it harder for organizations to break through. Successful organizations are stewarded by their loyal fans and long-time supporters. But other political parties are losing favor because people's negative opinions are deterring others from investing in their causes.

That could be avoided if political organizations showed they care about their party member's and prospective member's experiences. That can be done through interacting directly, acting on public feedback collected either passively or actively.

#### What to say:

"What do we say?" is often the hardest question to answer, largely due to the fear that letting people speak on behalf of your organization could create problems like mixed messages, the spreading of inaccurate information, or even legal issues.

These simple responses can reassure people you're listening respectfully:

- We're sorry.
- Thank you.
- How can we help?
- We're listening and we hear you.

Calmly and openly addressing issues can turn sour detractors into organization supporters.

#### Where to engage:

Don't waste your time on big social networks if your audience hangs out elsewhere. Do your research before you commit to engaging on a particular network. Your audience may not be on the same network as that of your competitors. Do your homework.



## **Who (internally) should engage and who you should engage with:**

Some of your workforce are already out there on the social web talking with your public. Their initiative should be rewarded, not punished. Embrace their passion and insight. Work with them to create a more structured and effective engagement strategy.

You should also engage with:

- People with inquiries in need of support
- Party evangelists
- Party detractors
- Government veterans and influencers

Start interacting with just one group to gauge what kind of time and resources your engagement strategy will require to succeed. Add more groups when you feel you're ready and able.

## **Engagement: The How**

So how do we build a solid engagement strategy? How do we start talking?

### **Organization:**

When it comes to speaking on behalf of your organization, the possibilities for engagement are seemingly endless. From saying thank you for a positive mention, to calming down an angry constituent whose support is wavering, the one thing to remember is there is no right, industry-standard way to engage. The right type of engagement for you is defined by the goals you set for your social media program.

Don't leave your team hanging. Establish guidelines for engagement that give those on the frontlines enough freedom to be themselves while still properly representing your political views.

### **Industry:**

Joining the conversation surrounding the political and government issues will establish your organization as not only a thought leader but also as a helpful group of representatives that truly cares about the community.

At the end of the day, you're providing a service and knowledge that solves a problem outside of selling people on your views. That will create trust in your community.

Listen and interact with your community first, catching up with their direct mentions of you before delving into industry discussions. But when you're ready, creating and adding to conversation threads will provide a wealth of perspective to both your organization and community.

Some conversations you might want to get involved in include:

- General questions about the services and special campaigns your government or party offers.
- Requests for opinions on a subject matter your representatives can share expertise in.
- Detracting commentary about why a service you provide is not useful.
- Conversations about specific professional roles, where team members can develop themselves.

### **Competitors:**

Competitive engagement doesn't mean elbowing rudely into conversations. It highlights points of differentiation and it allows you to reach out to people interested in ideas at the right time.

Competitive engagement can also be used to stay on top of industry happenings like other parties initiatives, as well as protect and build your organization through ongoing interaction with people who mention you as well as your competitors.

Engagement is the most important aspect of a social media strategy. From market research to community assistance, engagement gets you tuned into what your market really needs from an organization like yours, and allows you to build relationships that carry into repeat elections and support.

Now that you're listening and engaging in conversations on the social web, you need to track what's being said. Although the idea of tracking millions of conversations can be daunting, the next chapter is here to help.

## Chapter 7:

### HOW DO I START TO MEASURE, ANALYZE AND REPORT?

President Obama is known for his use of social media and with the help of Twitter he was able to take his reach to another level doing the first Twitter Town Hall, during which Obama answered questions submitted through the social platform using the hashtag #AskObama. During this one event at the White House, there were over 70,000 tweets directed at the hashtag and showed the public how they could share their questions and concerns with their elected representative.

From this event, the White House and the United States Government could learn and report on very valuable information about public opinion, especially by making use of social media measurement and analysis.

#### Measurement: The Ws

If you don't measure your social media efforts, you're just drifting with the tides. Take regular soundings to ensure you're still on course. You'll miss your goal if you don't measure.

#### What to Measure:

But be careful what you measure, because that's how you'll come to define success. Understand what your organization wants to accomplish and what market you want to target to determine what metrics are actually relevant to your organization. For the most complete picture, mix cold hard numbers with human insight.

Remember, you want to change people's attitudes and behaviors. Don't measure superficial things like number of fans or followers. Instead, choose some of the metrics below that relate to your unique goals:

#### Revenue and Business Development

- Number/Percent of Repeat Business
- % Voter Retention
- Transaction Value
- Referrals

- Net New Leads
- Cost Per Lead
- Conversions from Community

#### Activity and Engagement

- Members
- Posts/Threads
- Comments or Ideas
- Inbound Links
- Tags, Votes, Bookmarks
- Active Profiles
- Referrals
- Post Frequency/Density

#### Cost Savings

- Issue Resolution Time
- % of Issues Resolved Online
- Account Turnover
- Employee Turnover
- Hiring/Recruiting
- Training Costs
- New Product Ideas
- Development Cycle Time
- Product/Service Adoption
- Value Awareness and Influence
- Organization Loyalty/Affinity
- Media Placements
- Share of Conversation
- Sentiment of Posts
- Net Promoter Score
- Interaction with Content
- Employee Social Graphs

#### How to Measure

Form a hypothesis and test it. For instance, “An increase in blog subscribers over six months will correlate with an increase in public meeting attendance,” or, “Post activity on our community feedback forum will decrease voter issues,” are strong hypotheses to get started measuring and benchmarking.

Build your goals and objectives based on these hypotheses, and measure against them to see if you're on the right track. The beauty about setting a baseline with your hypotheses is that you have a roadmap to follow to keep you on track. You'll know exactly where you stand at all times. Course-correct in real-time as you track changes in the level of content and public engagement.

## Organization

Measuring engagement around your organization can help you understand if your messages are resonating with your intended community, or whether there's a disconnect between how your organization is presenting itself and how your community perceives you.

To gain insight on just how well your organization is being reflected on the social web, begin measuring:

- *Reverberation*: The total volume of inbound linking and generations of retweeting of a post.
- *Repetition*: The average times per month a source inbound links/retweets your content.
- *Activation*: The monthly total of new sources that have shared your positive content.
- *Engagement*: The amount of repeat commenting and length of those comments.

## Industry

Keep your finger on the pulse of the political conversations to spot emerging trends and topics. These can drive content creation, as well as service improvements. You'll also find the key players and get early insights into the new voices in the industry. Apply these insights to help mold your outreach, engagement, and future business strategies.

To see which sorts of topics and issues are gaining traction in the political conversations, measure:

- *Exuberance*: The monthly count of testimonials (or twestimonials!) and positive posts.
- *Attention Span*: The average span of time a post is commented on and retweeted, or shared on Twitter.
- *Resonance*: The total volume of "in-sync" conversation around an idea.
- *Potential*: The monthly comparison of declared need and estimated potential votes.

## Competitors

Competitive intelligence will clue you in to rumors and insights about your competitors' business moves, how their supporters are perceiving them, and help you identify unmet needs of the crowds.

That information will also help you establish if you're ahead of the social media game, behind the curve, or somewhere in the middle. Benchmarking your competition on the social web can help you clarify how your social strategy should emerge and evolve, too.

To get a handle on how you're comparing in the competitive landscape, measure:

- *Conversation*: The total monthly relative share of conversation versus competitors.
- *Infatuation*: The score of the relative direction of inbound and outbound links/tweets between sources.
- *Bucket Volume*: The monthly count comparison of post types (i.e., complaints, referrals, etc.).

The metrics you select to track your progress must relate directly to your goals. There is no template or best way to measure anything, but the information we've shared here should get you brainstorming on which metrics make the most sense for tracking your social media program.

## Analysis

Analysis takes time. Benefit from some others who are already doing great work in the space.

### Share the Knowledge

We're not talking about exposing internally-sensitive or trademarked information here, but rather methods and metrics that have been found to work well in the social space. If we are sharing this information we can start to learn from each other in a collaborative environment. Collaboration could be done through conferences, white papers or councils. Perhaps you have an idea for a Twitter chat for collaborating ideas? Check first to see if it already exists, and if not, be the leader!

### Try, Try Again

Some metrics will seem promising but don't get the job done. Don't get frustrated or defensive. Try something else.

If you want to see this in action, Google "What is Social Media ROI?" Just a few examples of articles discussing this topic are [Social Media ROI for Idiots](#), [2011 Trending Topic: Social Media ROI](#), and [How to Measure Social Media ROI](#).

## Believe in the Integrity of the Data

Data doesn't lie, but it can be misinterpreted. Don't force the data to say anything that isn't there. Sometimes as much as we want 1+1 to equal 3, it just ain't meant to be.

## Reporting

At some point in your social media journey you'll be asked to create a report that shows how your efforts are doing.

From kindergarten to high school and beyond, we're all very used to seeing our semester grades in an easy to read standard format. Whether it be the letter scale of A – F, a percent out of a hundred or a GPA, each of us could probably take someone else's report card and understand whether they were doing well or need some work. Here's what this can teach you about your own reporting.

## Grading Scale

The point of a grading scale is to be able to compare your marks semester over semester, year after year. It also enables anyone familiar with the scales to jump right in and understand. This touches on the idea of standardization we've been talking about. We don't have across-the-board standards in the social media industry yet, but you can still have a system that everyone internally is comfortable with so no matter who you hand the report to, they will be able to understand.

## Labels

You would hate to confuse your English grade with your Math, which is why report cards have the great advantage of having very clear labels. These are essential to a good report. From the proper date, to time period, to the labeling of information, these are all a must to make sure nothing in your report is misunderstood.

## Easy to Read

Short and sweet (or sour as the case may be) is why parents love the one page format of a report card. In five minutes they know exactly what's going on with the most important parts of their children's lives. Give your department heads a report that's short (and hopefully sweet) and they'll love the five minute read they get.

## The Shifts

Most report cards will show you how much you've improved or slipped, semester to semester. This is one of the most effective things to show on a report because these shifts are the bread and butter to seeing if you are meeting your objectives.

## Teacher's Comments

"Johnny is progressing at an expected pace, but needs to pay more attention in class." Even though some of us might have cringed seeing paragraphs of writing on our report cards, teacher's comments were really analysis points highlighting what's working and what's not. Therefore, including comments like these on your reports will help to draw attention to what's working and what's not.

## Pass or Fail

A part of the report most of us jumped right to the bottom to see: the pass or fail. This gave us a clear answer as to whether or not all the grades, notes and shifts meant we were moving on or giving it another go. Incorporating a clear manner to say whether or not your efforts and results line up with your business objectives is key to any report so not only are you giving the "why," but also the next steps, whether they are to move on to the next grade or take a step back and try it all over again.

Now that you have the knowledge to fill out the social ballot, let's look at other government organizations that have taken that path and succeeded in their social endeavors.



## Chapter 8:

# WHAT ARE THE KEY SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS?

Let's review the key uses of social media for your government organization:

- *Public service*: directly responding to public questions, complaints and inquiries.
- *Crisis management*: having your finger on the pulse of an unfolding crisis and responding, assisting and diffusing quickly.
- *Campaign or promotion management*: the use of social media channels to spread the word about a meeting or election that you want your community to hear and talk about.
- *Public loyalty*: keeping your public engaged and interested in the community you create and making it difficult for them to ever fall out of love with your organization.
- *Keeping tabs on the competition*: understanding the successes and failures of rival parties, and using this intel to earn more loyalty points for your party.

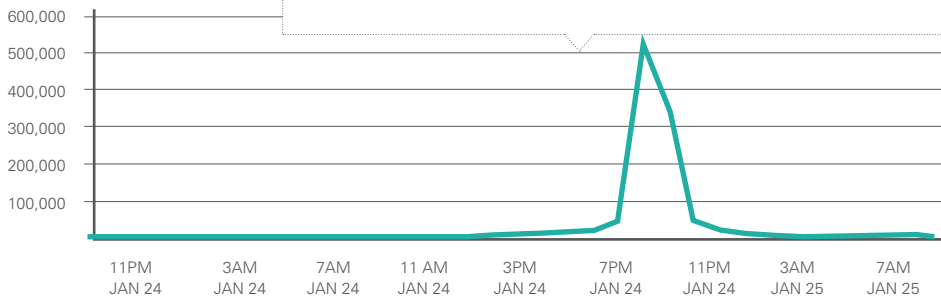
Just as your public researches the views on the important issues, a great social media strategy should be implemented one thoughtful step at a time. Don't burn yourself out in the first week. One thing at a time. Always.

It's time to put some of what we've covered today to good use. We hope you enjoyed coming with us on this journey, and that you're on your way to finding the best fit for your social media strategy when it comes to your organization. We can't wait to hear what exciting things are in store for you and your public.

## White Paper: 2012 STATE OF THE UNION SOCIAL ANALYSIS

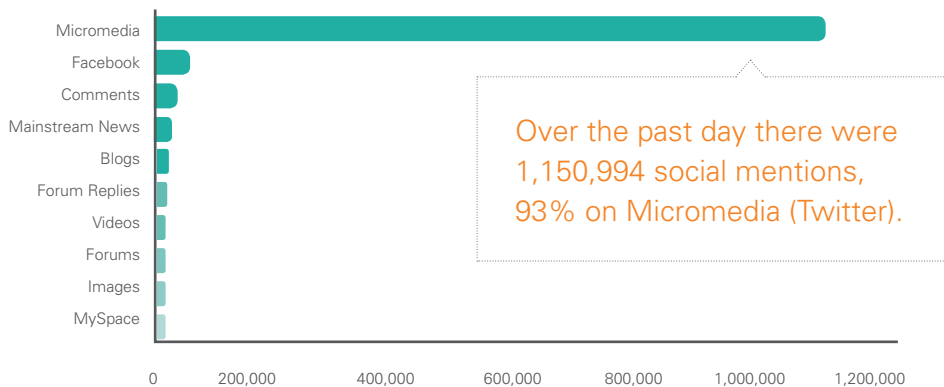
### Mentions

We looked at mentions of “#SOTU” and “State of the Union” to gain an understanding of the volume and type of conversation for the past day. The spike at 9 pm Eastern on January 24th had 517,795 social mentions.



The data related to the State of the Union was compiled on January 25th and looks at the previous day.

In total there were 1,150,994 social mentions.

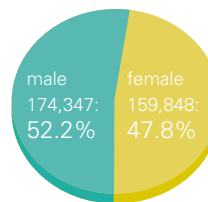


Over the past day there were 1,150,994 social mentions, 93% on Micromedia (Twitter).

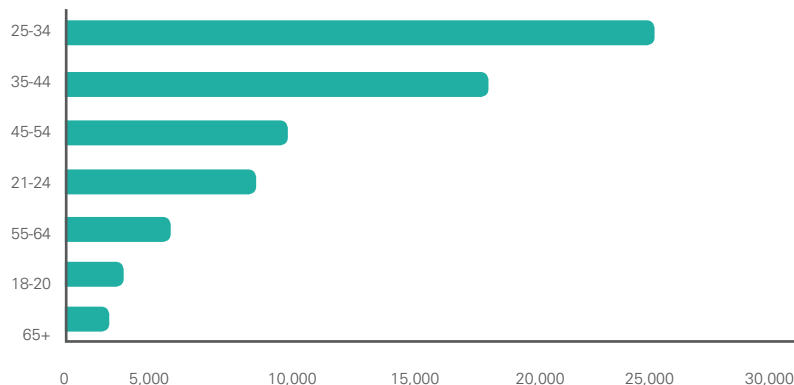
The hashtag #SOTU was used over 3 times more than writing out “State of the Union” in the analyzed social mentions.

For the past day, the gender split was slightly in favor of male with 52.2%.

The top tweeting age bracket was 25 – 34 years old.



Top Hashtags connected to the event were: #sotu, #obama, #tcot, #potus, #gop.



## White Paper: 2012 STATE OF THE UNION SOCIAL ANALYSIS

### Top Mentioned Words



@whitehouse

The White House

Obama: if you make under \$250,000 a year, like 98% of American families, your taxes shouldn't go up...You're the ones who need relief #SOTU

11 hours ago via HootSuite

Retweeted by bjgrover and 100+ others



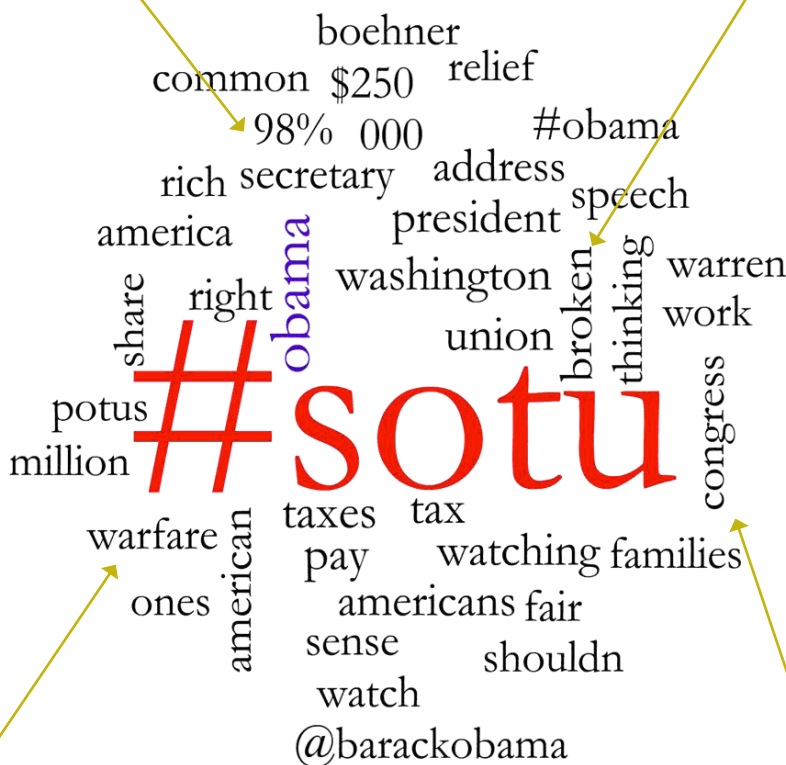
@wsbtv

WSB-TV

Nothing will get done this year, or next year, or maybe even the year after that, because Washington is broken. #SOTU

11 hours ago via TweetDeck

Retweeted by Hornsbyassocial and 9 others



@michellemalkin

Michelle Malkin

O: "You can call this class warfare all you want." We will. #sotu

11 hours ago via TweetDeck

Retweeted by NubbysMom and 100+ others



@TheOnion

The Onion

Obama Begins State Of The Union By Asking Congress To Imagine Newt Gingrich Standing Before Them

[onion.com/wuwaBW](http://onion.com/wuwaBW)

12 hours ago via Onion News Stream

Retweeted by StoryCentric and 100+ others



## White Paper: 2012 STATE OF THE UNION SOCIAL ANALYSIS

### 2012 Election Candidate Mentions

Within the conversation about the State of the Union, the mentions of candidates' names for the 2012 Election were analyzed for the past day below we see those results ranked by volume.

The bottom graphics show us the top 50 top mentioned words for the top 3 candidates. The featured tweets come from the sources with the most twitter followers within the results.

Barack Obama: 389,693 - 91.1%

Mitt Romney: 13,465 - 3.1%

Newt Gingrich: 10,583 - 2.5%

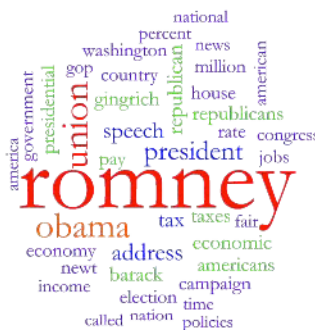
Ron Paul: 6,671 - 1.6%

Rick Santorum: 5,684 - 1.3%

Michele Bachmann: 803 - 0.2%

Rick Perry: 541 - 0.1%

Jon Huntsman: 99 - 0.0%



President Obama: "Ending the Iraq war has allowed us to strike decisive blows against our enemies." #SOTU

11 hours ago via web

Retweeted by Kanat1975 and 100+ others



News Analysis: Obama Sets Sights on Romney in State of the Union  
[nyti.ms/ADCvXA](http://nyti.ms/ADCvXA)

5 hours ago via The New York Times

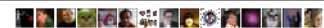
Retweeted by graceearthur and 21 others



Obama Begins State Of The Union By Asking Congress To Imagine Newt Gingrich Standing Before Them  
[onion.com/wuwaBW](http://onion.com/wuwaBW)

12 hours ago via Onion News Stream

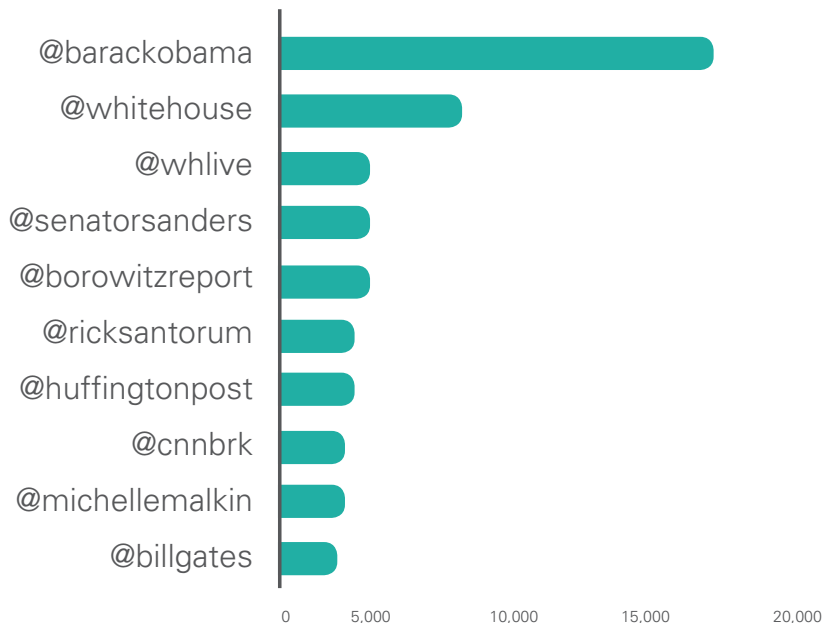
Retweeted by kashin and 100+ others



## White Paper: 2012 STATE OF THE UNION SOCIAL ANALYSIS

### Top Retweeted Usernames

Looking over the past day we see the Twitter Usernames that received the most retweets. These were mainly:



From the ranking above, we see tweets that were shared by sources with the largest twitter followers.

1

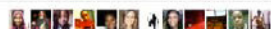


**@BarackObama**  
Barack Obama

"Anyone who tells you that America is in decline or that our influence has waned doesn't know what they're talking about."  
[#SOTU](#)

13 hours ago via web [Favorite](#) [Retweet](#) [Reply](#)

Retweeted by [AlvaroUribeV](#) and 100+ others



2

Want a peek behind the scenes of the [#SOTU](#)? Here's the story of how it comes together [youtube.com/watch?v=FxwcJx...](#)



22 hours ago via HootSuite [Favorite](#) [Retweet](#) [Reply](#)

Retweeted by [BarackObama](#) and 100+ others



3



A panel of senior advisors are answering your [#SOTU](#) questions at the [@WhiteHouse](#) now. Watch live: [wh.gov/sotu](#) & ask Qs: [#WHChat](#)

12 hours ago via HootSuite [Favorite](#) [Retweet](#) [Reply](#)

Mentioned in this Tweet

[whitehouse](#) The White House [Unfollow](#)  
Official WH Twitter account. Comments & messages received through official WH pages are subject to the FRA and may be archived. Learn more [http://wh.gov/privacy](#)

Retweeted by [whitehouse](#) and 69 others



4

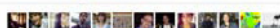


**@SenatorSanders**  
Bernie Sanders

The wealthiest 400 people in America now own more wealth than the bottom 150 million Americans. [#SOTU](#)

24 Jan via web [Favorite](#) [Retweet](#) [Reply](#)

Retweeted by [zaibatsu](#) and 100+ others



5



**@BorowitzReport**  
Andy Borowitz

Couldn't the GOP find someone to make their official response who doesn't seem exactly like a serial killer? [#SOTU](#)

13 hours ago via web [Favorite](#) [Retweet](#) [Reply](#)

Retweeted by [JoyVBehar](#) and 100+ others



## Case Study:

### TWITTER TOWN HALL

## Radian6 Analysis of Political Conversations on Twitter Finds Top Concerns are Financial Security and National Protection

Twitter analysis reveals that financial security and national protection are the two primary political concerns of Twitter users. In July of 2011, Radian6 analyzed 1.2 million tweets from the past eight weeks to understand what people are saying about four key political topics: national protection, financial security, wellness, and development.

The study comes in advance of the White House's first Twitter Town Hall, which took place on July 6, 2011 and was streamed live from <http://askobama.twitter.com>. Anyone had the ability to submit a question for President Obama by sending a tweet with the hashtag #AskObama, and people could track the event by following @townhall. Working with Twitter, Radian6 analyzed tweets and conversations from the Town Hall to uncover key insights into what was discussed, and released their findings in a report on July 13, 2011.

In keeping with the theme of White House's Twitter Town Hall, which will focus on jobs and economics, the study did find evidence that conversations around the economy were a contributing factor in the political concerns among Twitter users. Key findings from the study include:

#### 1) The Economy is as big a conversation on Twitter as Osama Bin Laden.

- The topics of financial security (33.6%) and national protection (37.8%) drove the majority of political conversations.
- According to information shared by Twitter, news of the raid on Osama Bin Laden caused the single biggest spike in sustained conversation in Twitter history. The connected news stories around this event drove many of the national protection conversations.

#### 2) President Obama's speeches can drive significant conversation on Twitter.

- The largest spikes in the wellness and development segments occurred during the time frame of a speech given by President Obama
- The keyword "Obama" was mentioned in 56.6% of the over 1.2 million conversations.

#### 3) Men tweet about politics slightly more often than women.

- The majority of political conversations on Twitter were driven by men, whose Tweets comprised more than 60 percent of the sample.
- Conversations around the topics of education and volunteer service were split fairly evenly between both male and female contributors.



#### 4) Primary political concerns change with age.

- People between the ages of 25 and 34 were more likely to participate in conversations around fiscal responsibility, ethics and civil rights.
- People between the ages of 35 and 44 focused on issues more close to home, like poverty, taxes and family.
- Finally, the majority of Tweets for people between the ages of 45 and 54 focused on health care, rural development, seniors and social security. Specifically, the health care conversations discuss the legal implications of the recently passed health care reform law in addition to the benefits this reform may bring to middle class families.[1]

“Twitter has changed the way people around the world communicate, with more than 200 million Tweets being sent per day,” said Marcel LeBrun, senior vice president and general manager, Radian6. “Radian6’s social media monitoring technology helps businesses, government agencies and organizations quickly determine the issues and concerns that are relevant to them, and discover key insights into what is top of mind for people today.”

Read the final report [here](#).

*[1] Demographics percentages are based on posts where gender and/or age could be obtained.*

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Author: Genevieve Coates

Editor: Amanda Nelson

Designers: Lise Hansen, Lindsay Vautour