

UPRAISE

Youth participation for social change



UPRAISE Toolkit for Successful Online Campaigns & Petitions



Erasmus+



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Introduction - Social Media for Social Change

Young people are immersing in the digital world especially as users and consumers of content created by others. When it comes to influencing larger audiences on the causes they really care about, they are often lacking the skills to make use of social media to get their messages across to a wider audience.

At the same time, youth workers need to deepen their understanding of how the social networks work in terms not only of content, but also technical aspects.

Like every community, online communities have their own "savoir vivre" and with this intellectual output we intend to support both youth workers and young people to promote social change by leveraging social networks and social media.

The specific objective of this intellectual output is to enable youth workers to understand social media, and to provide them with tools and procedures to run successful online campaigns together with the youth on issues that affect the youth and the society they live in.



Another important issue we wish to address is the fact that young people find it difficult to understand the concept and the need for dissemination of projects like for example Erasmus+ projects. The partners need to expand the impact of the projects they are implementing. To do so, it is crucial to train youth workers and young people on how to use social media and how to navigate on social networks aiming to promote social messages.

This intellectual output will provide tools that can be used to mobilise young people to bring about social change.



How should NGOs leverage Social Media?

Non-profits organizations can be humanitarian-focused, or donation-backed. Social media has helped them to be on the top of the audience and supporters' feeds.

These organizations have spread their wings on every possible social network, to drive awareness, galvanize donations, and start two-way communication. Be it reaching the audience with Facebook, or giving insights on Instagram, non-profits organization are steadily capturing online space.

Here are some of the ways by which non-profit organizations can craft effective social media marketing strategies.

Encourage supporters to share their experiences:

Involving customers is a pure genius technique to spread the word. This tactic is applied by many organizations for fundraising.

Create campaigns for events and special holidays:

NGOs can create campaigns for their events and special holidays. This spreads the message far better than anything else.



Start blogging:

Use blogs to tell your story, and harness the power of storytelling in your marketing campaigns. Engage people to share their experiences through writing a piece, then you can post it on Facebook and send links on Twitter.

Collaborate with the donors and fundraisers on giving a brief to the people about the working style of your organizations.

You can also use images and videos along with the blog to justify and give character to your stories. This supplements the sense of relativity.

Try to share your content more than once, sharing the headline with a link in a tweet is an engaging way to connect with the supporters. Add an image with a hashtag, or ask a question and share it at a different time of the day, week, or month.



Create your own Wikipedia page:

A Wikipedia page is a great social space to help managing your brand online. They are good for SEO too.

To create a page, you need to create an entry at Wikipedia, once you've created the entry, be sure to check back often and track any changes.

Use the power of images and videos:

A picture is worth thousand words, so just think what impact a video would have to engross the society.

Be sure to leverage YouTube and upload as many videos as possible of your work, praises and change you are taking in in the world in your own way.

Images have their own impression, post every detail of your work in the form of images on various channels. If you're not using Pinterest, you're missing out on major target donation. It has emerged out as one of the most effective volunteering social network.

You can use images of donors to post them on your Facebook page and invite people to volunteer. This also works well on Flickr.



Create a Facebook page and group:

Make your Facebook page and engage people by the information and feeds on the page. That can be links redirecting to your website, images, videos, and testimonials of fundraisers or volunteers.

Make sure the content you put up there is related to your organization and the people connected to it.

Facebook groups are more resourceful than pages, here you can also personally message the members. Though you might have to dilute your brand and choose something around your cause.

Incorporate Facebook Ads:

You can use Facebook ads relating to the demographic you're serving to. You can create Facebook ads for an event or your next marketing strategy.



Partner with brands and influencers:

By partnering with well-known brands and social media influencers, you'll deliver the message effectively and reach out to more people. These brands and influencers will share about your organization on their social media channels and on their website, post videos, and they can even promote your organization through their products.

You need to convert them into your brand ambassadors and you will benefit from them in fundraising and volunteering. It also helps in building a face-to-face relationships with the audience.

Create a crowd funding campaign:

As an alternative to events and special occasions, you can also create a simple crowd funding page. Share the page with your social media followers, asking for a quick-and-easy donation.



Connect with like-minded partners on LinkedIn:

Your motive is to expand your community, for that you need find valuable partners, supporters on LinkedIn and Twitter. You can also find relevant marketers, influencers and supporters on Facebook. You can also use Facebook to interest a list of new followers and fans. You can also keep a check on other organization who are rounding your cause on different social networks.

Monitor those who follow you:

Keep an eye on the accounts who are following you. They might have great influence in a space important to you or they might have many followers you can reach out to which you otherwise would not have been able to reach out to.

Thank your sponsors:

Post a thank you message to all the people who help make your work possible. Thanking them for all their efforts is a great way to elevate your marketing strategy. Posting on sponsors' pages will also engage strong followers, adding the post to your page will bring you more supporters, too.

**Ask questions and respond to everyone:**

Asking questions encourages conversations with supporters, donors, and volunteers. It leads to a higher number of interactions and responses. Responding is also one way to set yourself apart from others on social media. Maintain a timely manner to respond, it can be 24 hours or less, and keep it a little less for Twitter.

Keep it transparent:

Add credible names and captions to validate the contribution of your supporters, volunteers, and collaborators. Appreciate the donors, supporters, and employees by soliciting their efforts on social media. It is one of the significant ways through which non-profit organizations can spread their message. It is important to build a brand with the loyalty, impression, and excitement that every organization dreams of.



What can NGOs achieve using Social Media?

Social media gives you the power to share pictures, videos and text that can reach a global audience. This will give people the opportunity to:

- gain insight into your work;
- become involved in your cause;
- volunteer;
- donate; and
- give you feedback.

This is a great opportunity for you to get into contact with other organisations in your area and potential donors. Although it can be difficult to constantly come up with social media post ideas, it's definitely worth it in the long-term.

Social media has grown to accommodate all the needs of social causes, meaning that it's perfectly adapted to help your NGO. Most digital platforms now have functions to help you:

- organise fundraisers;
- plan events;
- coordinate volunteers;
- encourage donations; and
- share ideas.



Picking the suitable social media platform

- **Facebook:**

Originally designed to connect college students on campuses around the United States, Facebook has quickly become a worldwide social network with a variety of useful features for digital activism. For instance, Facebook allows users to create both publicly visible and private groups that help activists and their supporters share information and coordinate their efforts. Facebook groups also help causes and organizations find new supporters and pool their resources when needed.

Tips! Some tips in getting supporters for your campaign in Facebook

When you first set up your Facebook group, page or cause, have your content ready. Post your campaign logo, your campaign name, goals, activities and your contact details. Target your invitations to your allies. Sending invitations to everyone in your friends' list will not bring your campaign more support.



Only those who are already interested in your issue will join your campaign. Send a clear message to the people who have joined you to invite their friends to your Facebook group, page or cause. Send clear messages about your campaign so that the people you invite will know what it is about. It is also good to be clear about what actions your members can take. Keep your Facebook group, page or cause updated. Post questions about your issue or new information regularly to keep your members interested in your campaign.



- **Instagram:**

For many, Instagram has become one of the go-to resources for news. The app allows user to quickly and easily share visual-impactful content, making it an extremely accessible tool for activists. Digital activists can create profiles for supporters to follow and quickly disseminate news via the main feed or direct messaging. The nature of the platform has led digital activists to post information in forms that closely resemble hardcopy fliers from the pre-internet age, giving it a slightly more relatable or personal touch than other platforms. Instagram also allows users to post and livestream videos. Activists have used this as a way to document their work, give visual proof of their success and turnout at events, and more.

- **Twitter:**

One of the primary sources for news for many around the globe, Twitter serves as a real-time information hub for activists and their supporters. Although it has many of the same features as Facebook's newsfeed, Twitter was one of the first social media sites to connect publicly visible posts using the "hashtag" feature. For example, if a user makes a post and includes the hashtag #blacklivesmatter, the post will be included in a publicly visible list or feed of all the posts that include that same tag. Activists can use hashtag and retweets, or the re-posting of another's post, to help disseminate information, gain followers, locate like-minded activists working in similar areas, and quickly organize protests, boycotts, and the like.



- **Tik Tok:**

You can use TikTok to create high quality videos in minutes. No experience is required. TikTok gives you the opportunity to drive online sales, increase app installs, raise brand awareness or build a community. Given its immense popularity and extensive usage, TikTok has proven itself as the current platform for activism, at least for the younger generations. We can also see the increased TikTok content distribution on other social media apps like Facebook and Twitter.

- **Podcast:**

Podcasts are audio broadcasts distributed via the Internet. Podcasters create digital-media files and upload them to their website where users can listen to them directly from the website or download them to their MP3 player to listen to later on. Podcasts have also become connected with RRS feed technology which allows users to subscribe to a podcast they particularly enjoy, whereby additional instalments are downloaded (to their iTunes or other digital media player application). There are some requirements of course – podcasters need to have access to the Internet; a reasonably fast computer; a webspace to upload their podcast to; and a microphone to record the audio.



Practical steps for online campaigns & petitions

- **Create a webpage to host the signature form**

To become an active promoter of the initiative you have to create a website which will host the signature form. You can easily embed it into a page through an iframe (a specific html code customized for your organization). This allows you to target specific messages, monitor the campaign and manage the email contacts of the signatories.

To learn how to create a website, check Annex 1 on page 62!

The next step to launching your digital campaign starts with utilizing online tools to get your cause noticed. There are several essential tools and platforms that can make your voice heard. In addition to helping your efforts gain momentum by getting others involved on-the-ground, some tools allow you to reach out directly to governing bodies who can directly affect changes in our society from the top down.



- **Set Up Your Campaign's Page on Facebook & Twitter**

- Choose the profile and cover photo.

To complete the pages on social media, you need to write a description.

- **CHANGE FACEBOOK AND TWITTER COVERS**

During the crucial moments of the year-long campaign (launch, closure, specific events, etc.) change the image of your facebook and twitter pages. You have to use a profile and a cover photo. This is often very effective in showing that your organisation is fully committed to support the petition. Both must contain a clear statement of purpose.

To get an idea for the profile photo and the cover photo, check Annex 2 on page 65!

- Now you're ready to start your campaign and promote your cause.

Here are some tips to help you promote your cause!

- **Clarify your cause:**

Being able to clearly and concisely articulate the problem and the solution is critical to social movement success. To plan your communication content better, **check Annex 3 on page 66**.

Tip: Answer the questions that are given in the template by writing 2-3 sentences each. It's better to have them written and run back to them anytime to check if everything is going well.



- **Develop a deep understanding of context**

Nothing inhibits efficacy like neglecting the context of your actions. If you aren't familiar with the landscape of a particular issue, you won't be able to determine the best route forward. Developing a deep understanding of context is an ongoing process that will take time, but it's worth the effort. Consider the following contextual aspects and do whatever research is needed for you to grasp the big picture.

- **Establish your strategy**

Now it's time to establish your strategy. This is the most in-depth portion of your plan—you do not want to skimp here. Thoughtful planning will go a long way in making your activism more effective, so you may need to consult with others or revise your plan over the course of several days, weeks, or even months.

- **Hashtags**

Create your campaign's hashtag/s and ask your audience to use them while posting for your cause.



- **MAKE A PRESS RELEASE - PUBLISH AN ARTICLE**

- Give numbers (e.g. 300+ organisations, 1 million signature, 12 months)
- Focus on the objective (e.g. "We ask for a dedicated legally binding framework covering the main soil threats in EU: erosion, sealing, organic matter decline, biodiversity loss, and contamination.")
- Explain the reasons behind your commitment. Make use of the ECI petition to promote your mission and your activities.
- Make a connection to ongoing political debates. Although the ECI was designed to impact EU policies, it has also helped to change laws at local levels.



- **Set Goals For Your Campaign**

- Identify your broad vision for an ideal world.
- Brainstorm many different goals and objectives that could help you reach your vision. Be creative — there are no wrong ideas at this stage.
- Which of these goals and objectives seem achievable and realistic, given the context of your issue, your local environment, and your current skills?
- Narrow your list down into 1-3 specific, achievable, and realistic goals that are the most likely candidates for helping you reach your vision.
- Identify how you will measure your progress towards your goal.

Break your goals down into 1-4 even smaller, manageable objectives. For each objective, identify your targets (who you will be influencing), your tactics (what methods you will use), and how you will measure your progress.

You can find a goals & objectives template for this process in Annex 4 on page 67!



- **CUSTOMIZE AND SHARE VISUALS**

You can use the suggested visuals of the media toolkit to create attractive news, peak interest on the petition and increase your online engagement. Identify the most important organizational factors you will use to bolster your movement. You may wish to revisit your organizational checklist.

- **CREATE VISUALS FOR YOUR SOCIAL CAMPAIGN**

Free online tools can help you to develop amazing social media images. Canva is an online graphic design platform. It offers free access to a wide assortment of design tools and options, as well as premium options for paying customers. www.canva.com

Pablo allows you to search a library of 50,000+ royalty-free photos and find the right image for your post. You'll always find something amazing! <https://pablo.buffer.com/>

- **A communication plan in a campaign is important because it will:**

- Guide how you will implement your campaign
- Make it easier for you to track your campaign performance
- Make it easier for you to make changes to your campaign
- Give you a picture of the different ways or tools to communicate your campaign.

You can find a communication plan template in Annex 5 on page 68!

- **Act**

Now that you have a clear understanding of your cause, context, vision, strategy, goals, and tactics, it's time to put the act in activism.

Actions will take many diverse forms, involve varying numbers of people, and garner different types of attention and response based on their unique contexts. Keep in mind how you plan to measure success and enjoy each victory, no matter how small.



- **Check back in**

Set a date to check back in on your progress. Write it down in your calendar. On that date, answer the following questions:

- Was your actual action different from your planned action? If so, why?
- What measurable progress did you make? Did you achieve any of your goals?
- Overall, what have you learned? Are there any changes you want to make to your strategy, goals, or tactics moving forward, or any skills you need to develop?

It's okay if you find that you need a new plan after you've taken some action or learned more about your issue area. Paradoxically, it's often only through creating and following through on a plan that we learn how our first plan was inadequate. Give yourself permission to explore many different tactics and try different paths to see how you can best create change.

Now that you have at least an idea of your next steps forward, let's review the research on your impact as an activist.

- To start planning your online campaign, we recommend using a communication template. This will help you answer some important questions about your campaign. This will also guide you to design your online campaign. Here are some basic elements of a campaign communication template:
- Clearly define what you want to achieve by having a clear set of goals and objectives

The campaign goal is the “big” change that you want to achieve over a relatively long period of time and usually described in very ambitious language.



- **Set SMART Goals**

A campaign may have one or several goals depending on the scale and magnitude of your campaign. If you have more than one goal make sure that they are related. Many organisations nowadays are already very familiar with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) objectives. In this example, the objective is very specific about what it wants to achieve (e.g. village and religious leaders will sign a covenant), measurable (e.g. x number of village and religious leaders), achievable and realistic (if based on an assessment by the group), and time-bound (e.g. “in one year’s time”).

- **Know Your Audience**

Knowing who your audiences are is vital. Campaign audiences can be categorised either as “decision makers” or “opinion or influence formers”.

- Decision makers are people who have the formal mandate and power to enact the change that you want to achieve. These could be elected officials or appointed officials in the government or non-state actors such as religious or community leaders (in situations where the state has relegated certain functions to regulate and implement laws according to customs or religion), or leaders of an armed rebel group in situations where formal government functions no longer exist.



- Opinion or influence formers are individuals or groups who may have no formal authority or power but are nonetheless influential. These could be your allies or your adversaries – people or institutions who are opposed to your agenda because it conflicts with their interests. Your campaign plan has to reflect who are the decision makers and the opinion/influence formers you want to reach, and who you aim to reach first and later. In order to reach a particular decision maker you may have to work through an influential person or institution first. Or you may have to reach both the decision makers and the influential but adversarial groups around them at the same time. It is very important to note that those who will benefit from your campaign, e.g. the women in the communities, can also become a very influential campaign voice. Always include in your campaign plan how to build their capacities and enable them to become an important part of your campaign.

- **Be very clear in your message**

Your campaign communication plan needs to formulate very explicitly what your key messages are. These messages must be distinct, clear, succinct and explicit and are directly linked to your goals and objectives. They should contain the following:

- What is the problem?
- What solution are you proposing?
- What action do you want your allies and targets to take?



- Be very creative and innovative when you choose the channels and tools to communicate your message When campaigners want to influence a decision maker, they have basically two options:
 - Direct influence: An example of this is lobbying with authorities.
 - Indirect influence: One turns to a part of the “public” to gain support for one’s case, as in alliance building and public-opinion building.
- The channels and tools to communicate your campaign agenda and objectives can take the form of real or face-to-face activities, or virtual activities, through the internet.

When you select the forms or channels to communicate your campaign it is important to consider the following questions:

- What tools/channels are accessible and available to you and your allies?
- What tools/channels will reach your priority audiences?
- What tools/channels will widen the reach of your campaign?



• Create an online identity

- We are constantly faced with questions that partly reveal our “identity” – who we are. What is your name? Where are you from? Who are your friends? Who is your family? What is your job? What is your address? What do you do? On the internet, these identity markers are just as important. They allow other people online to identify you and to connect with you. Without an online identity you will not be able to interact with other people on the internet. Your online identity is the name and character you build for yourself on the internet. It is determined by various pieces of information and content, such as:
 - Your name (or the name that you use online)
 - Your email address
 - The images that point to you
 - Your location
 - Your sex/gender
 - Your interests.

Creating a campaign identity is important to distinguish your campaign from others.

- It allows your campaign to have spaces on different social networking sites and interact with potential supporters for your cause. To set up your online campaigning spaces, your campaign will need :
 - A name
 - A description
 - An email account.



- **What is an online identity?**

This section will guide you to develop the different aspects of your campaign's online identity.

There are three main things to remember when you develop your campaign's name:

- The main title of your campaign

The name, as much as possible, must be based on the goals and key messages of your campaign. It must capture the imagination of the public, especially whom you want to influence with what your campaign is all about.

- Your campaign's slogan

This is the text that usually follows the title of your campaign and which further describes what the campaign is trying to achieve. This is optional.

- Short name(s) of your campaign

This is the nickname of your campaign. There can be more than one short name for your campaign. It can be the acronym of your campaign name or short words to describe your campaign name or slogan.

To determine your campaign's name think about the following considerations:



- **Easy recall**

Your campaign's name must be easy to remember. This can be done in different ways:

- It must make sense in a few words. Your campaign name must capture the important points about your campaign (such as the main issue, the action that you want your allies and targets to do, etc.) so that other people will know what it is about. But you have to be able to do this with just a few words. If your campaign name is too long and too descriptive you will have lost other people's attention even before they finish reading your name.
- It must strike a balance between familiarity and uniqueness. Your campaign name must be unique but at the same time it cannot be so unique that no one understands what it is.
- It must be interesting. Your campaign name should encourage other people to know more about it. So it is good practice not to give out all of your campaign information at once. But you will have to phrase your words in such a way that other people will want to know more.



- **Association**

Your campaign name should be something that your targets and allies can connect with. In order to be relatable to your targets and allies you will need to understand them and ensure that:

- It uses familiar words. You should not use words that your allies and targets do not understand. If possible, do not use jargon or acronyms in your campaign's name. If your targets and allies are unable to understand your campaign name then it would be hard for them to want to join your campaign.
- It evokes a feeling. Your campaign's name must be able to make people feel something.
- It is action-based. Your campaign's name must be able to say what main action you want your allies and targets to take.



- **Tip: Be easy to translate!**

Since you are planning an online campaign, your campaign has the potential to reach a global audience. In designing your campaign's name you have to use words that are easy to translate.

- Effectively using social networking to support campaigns requires the use of a combination of social networking tools. Different social networking services can play different roles in your campaign. There are three main roles that available social networking services can have in your campaign:
 - Main website - Campaigns are usually based on intensive and exhaustive content (research papers, articles, blogs) that present the issue you are working on and the change that you are trying to make. It is necessary for your campaign to have a main space where all of this information and knowledge can be stored. Having a main website for your campaign also makes it easier for people to know more about your campaign activities and issues. Blog services like WordPress, Blogspot or LiveJournal can be used as main spaces for content. In some cases organisations invest in websites built on content management software (CMS) like Drupal19 or Joomla20 as their main campaign site.



- Hosts for multimedia content - You will need to have different kinds of content to support your campaign messages, including photos, audio (or podcasts), graphics (posters, logos, etc.) and video. For example, you may collect and publish photos that will illustrate your issues. You will then need to choose social networking services that handle specific types of content like EngageMedia21 or YouTube for video, Flickr or Picasa for photos, and Odeo for podcasts.
- Services for updating your allies - Drawing allies and targets into your main website to understand the issue requires being able to send them smaller messages that will entice them to find out more about your campaign. This is where micro-blogging services like Twitter or Facebook can be used. Through these services you can send links to your site or specific entries from your main website or your multimedia content with short, inviting descriptions that will encourage them to delve deeper into your issue. This is also a good way to keep your allies and targets updated on your campaign. They also make it easier for others to spread the message to their networks.



• Blogging

- Setting up a blog for your campaign - For this toolkit we are using WordPress as a blogging service. WordPress is a free blogging service that allows for a lot of flexibility, such as:
 - You can have a private or a public blog
 - There are different themes (layout and design) for you to choose from
 - You can change the way your blog looks very easily
 - You can determine different categories
 - You can post different kinds of content (video, photos, links)
 - It allows you to have “pages” – static content that can have important information (such as the "About" section for your campaign)
 - You can display information in different ways
 - You can install WordPress on your own server.

• Newsletters

Asking your members and supporters to sign the petition through a specific newsletter is the most effective way to collect signatures.

- Content. Make use of the ECI campaign to promote your mission and activities (past, present and future).

Important! Ask your contacts to sign and share the petition on the social networks.

- Object. Should be simple, clear and contain a strong call to action in order to attract the readers.

• Protecting your data

- The internet is considered one of the greatest inventions in modern time. However, it has plenty of downsides – and foremost among these is the issue of security, i.e. intrusion into one’s privacy and unauthorised access to vital personal information. Online security is about ensuring that communication and data are kept safe from other people. There are two main areas to consider when you set up your online security:
 - Protecting your identity - No one should have access to your online identity. This includes making sure that no one can use your email account, your social networking spaces or your credit card information; and making yourself anonymous online.
 - Safekeep your data and all other information about you and your group, and secure access to your online files. This includes protecting your computer files from unauthorised users, keeping your computer virus-free and backing up your files and data.

• HOLD SIGNATURE EVENTS

- To collect one million signatures across Europe, it will be necessary to organise specific events and attend with stands at the most important festivals: take advantage of any occasion to collect signatures!
- Before attending a public event, download and print the official signature form in your language from the website. Keep in mind that all the paper signatures should be sent to the promoters by ordinary mail.



- If information on paper forms is unreadable or missing, the signature may be declared invalid by national authorities. So, even in public places, we suggest to collect signatures using electronic devices (smartphone, tablets, etc.): the electronic system automatically provides helpful messages to fix the possible sources of errors.
- You can also create your own easy-to-use paper forms and have campaign staff later enter this information online.

• **MAKE SPONSORED POSTS**

- If you have a budget on sponsored posts, in the most important events of the campaign you could buy sponsored promos and posts, addressing specific stakeholders to influence their audience (environmentalists, web activists, etc).



- **Five Websites to Start Your Own Petition**

If you're looking to start a petition, online platforms can be a great way to do so. Here are the five best websites you can use.

Change.org is perhaps the most popular online petition website that empowers common people to make a change. It claims that each hour a petition on its platform achieves its goal.

Starting your petition on **Change.org** is fairly simple and takes little time. On its home page, click on Start Petition in the top menu. Then, select the category of the petition and enter a title.

Choose any person, organization, or legislature that has the power to act on your petition as the target. Next, write a description and add an image or video to your petition. Finally, publish your petition and share it in your circle to build momentum.

Thanks to the huge number of visitors this website gets, Change.org can help your petitions get more signatures. Starting a petition here is free, but you can donate to the platform.



- **Five Websites to Start Your Own Petition**

iPetitions have collected a total of over 44 million signatures and have helped hundreds of petitions succeed. So if you want to create a true impact, iPetitions can help you reach your goal.

With its intuitive platform, iPetitions makes it simple for a layman to become an online activist. It has multiple features that offer flexibility and full control over your petitions. You can add custom questions to your petition and redesign it to reflect your cause.

You can start a petition in no time by entering minimum information and edit it post-publication. iPetitions lets you filter out duplicate signatures by limiting the number of signatures from an IP address. You can also download real-time petition data for your petitions.

Creating a petition on iPetitions is free, though you can promote your petitions by paying. iPetitions is a great choice for people who want more customization options.

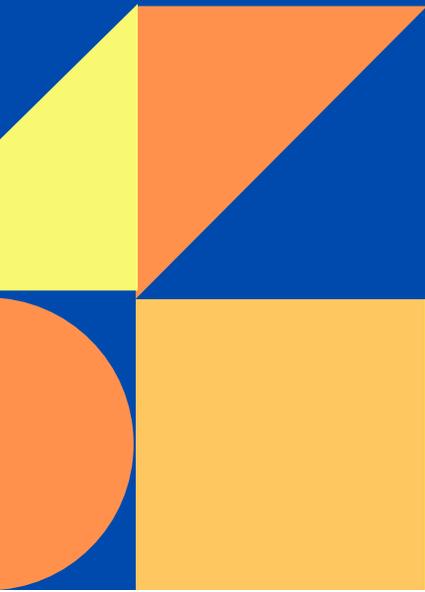


- **Five Websites to Start Your Own Petition**

GoPetition is another popular petition platform, with more than 80,000 petitions from 100+ countries. As it gets over 40 million monthly visits, GoPetition is a good option to raise awareness for a better world.

On GoPetitions, you can add custom questions or form fields and design the petition page with HTML formatting. It lets you raise funds from your supporters. Another notable feature is that it shows you a signature map with location-wise signature clusters to give you insights into your campaign.

To prevent abuse and spam, GoPetition uses multiple filters. If you enable the Contact Author feature, your supporters can reach out to you on GoPetition. Moreover, people can discuss the petition with other signers on its built-in message board.





- **Five Websites to Start Your Own Petition**

Avaaz is another campaigning platform with around 70 million members worldwide. This platform is striving to close the gap between the present world and the world we dream of.

Avaaz has all the necessary features of a petition website and is quite easy to use. It supports petitions in 17 different languages. Avaaz has a great community and numerous visitors that have supported hundreds of causes.

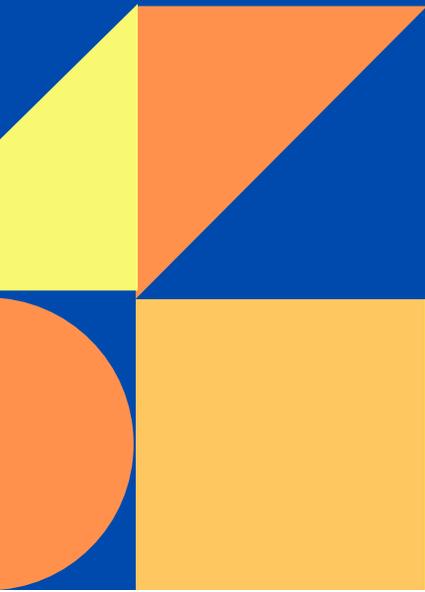
In fact, the former UN Climate Chief, Christiana Figueres has appreciated Avaaz for its role in pressing for the Paris Climate Accord. So, it's a great platform for people who want to create a real-world impact through online petitions.



- **Five Websites to Start Your Own Petition**

RallyCall is another platform where you can create petitions and gather people's support. It's a relatively simple platform with a great site design. The process of creating a petition is very similar to other websites. But RallyCall allows you to add more sections to your petition. You can set a campaign duration, mention decision-makers and influencers, and write petition highlights. You can also tell signers why they should care and how they can support your cause.

RallyCall is a great but lesser-known platform. So if you have a large following or community ready to support your cause, then RallyCall can be a good choice.





- **How to measure the impact of your campaign or petition**
- Here is the list of matrices that you need to consider while measuring the impact and success of a campaign or petition:
 - Social media reach
 - Engagement on social media
 - Media impressions
 - Brand mentions
 - Keyword rankings
 - Social shares
 - Website traffic
 - Number of backlinks
 - Lead generation

Social Media Reach (Improvement in Number of Social Media Followers)

In the modern technology-driven world, social media influence is growing rapidly. According to Pew Research, 79% of Internet users (68% of all U.S. adults) were active Facebook subscribers in 2016, while 32% of Internet users were on Instagram and 24% were using Twitter last year.

If you want to know how many of them have seen your post or message, social media reach is your best bet. It refers to the number of followers you acquire on various social media channels. People will follow your social media profile and pages only if it is entertaining and shares valuable content with the target audience.

Benefits of Calculating Social Media Reach

- It enables a digital PR agency to understand the context of its content and how far it can circulate on social media.
- It also enables you to measure the audience growth rate.
- It can help a PR agency understand the latest algorithm of a social media platform and design the campaign accordingly for maximum effect.

How to Measure This

The easiest ways to measure social media reach is to compare the number of followers on various social media channels before the start of the campaign to the number at the end of the campaign. However, most leading social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube now offer inbuilt tools to calculate your reach.



Facebook's insights to measure the success of your campaign

- Go to your company's Facebook Page, select Insights > Posts, click on Reach: Organic/Paid.
- To calculate the total organic reach for your digital PR campaign, add the organic reach for each post published in last 30 days.
- To calculate average monthly reach for the posts, divide this sum by the number of posts published during the same timeframe.
- Divide the average monthly reach by the number of Facebook fans your page has to calculate the % average monthly organic reach for the page.

Engagement on Social Media

Though social media reach metrics can tell you how big the audience for your PR campaign is, it can't tell you everything. It is also important to know whether or not people are engaging with your social media posts and updates. Engagement is measured by the actions taken by users on the posts.



Key Indicators of Engagement

- A positive or a negative mention on social media
- If a consumer opens or reads an email or a newsletter
- Retweets, likes, and shares on a social media channel
- If a consumer clicks on an online advertisement
- If a consumer sees an online advertisement

Benefits of Using Engagement Metrics

- It helps a digital PR agency to identify if their message or post is resonating with the target audience. If not, you need to recreate your content.
- It also gives you a glimpse into how your brand, product or service is perceived by potential users.

How to Measure Engagement

Every social network offers different engagement touch points, which is why you may have to calculate engagement differently for each social media channel. Fortunately, several social media management tools can be used to calculate engagement metrics for multiple social media accounts. Hootsuite is one such a tool that offers a host of features at affordable prices.



Hootsuite lets you manage your Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn profiles.

- It also has support for FourSquare, Pinterest, StumbleUpon, Vimeo, and several other platforms via third-party apps.

Media Impressions

Media impression is one of the most common metrics used by companies providing digital PR services. It is the number of times the audience (people your content/advertisement has reached) may have seen your content. For example, if you receive a news feed twice on your Facebook page, it will be counted as two impressions. In simple words, it is the total number of clippings multiplied by the total number of circulations.

Benefits of Calculating Media Impressions

Though both, Social Media Reach and Impressions measure the visibility of content, the latter can help you understand how frequently users can view your posts, messages or advertisement on a social media platform.



How to measure the impact of a PR campaign by monitoring media impressions

Whether or not impressions count for anything is a matter of debate. Most marketers believe that media impressions can't be used to calculate the impact of a PR campaign. However, when used in combination with other metrics such as social media reach and engagement, this metric can prove instrumental in determining the impact of your campaign.

Brand Mentions on Blogs and Social Media

A well-managed PR campaign can easily result in an increase in the number of brand mentions on other blogs as well as social media. However, 96% of the people that discuss brands online do not follow those brands' owned profiles. Therefore, companies need to monitor those unbranded channels to know what people are saying about their brand online.

Benefits of Monitoring Online Brand Mentions

- Listening to social conversations can help you connect with your most active target audience.
- If they are satisfied with your products or services, you can connect with them to increase brand awareness.
- On the other hand, if they are criticizing your brand, you can take appropriate action to minimize the negative publicity.



Tools for Monitoring Brand Mentions: Social Mention

Social Mention is a free online social media monitoring tool.

- Just type the name of your brand in the search box and hit enter.
- You can choose results from a particular location, time frame, and source for better results.
- The result will show top keywords, users, hashtags, strength, sentiment, passion, reach, and sources.

Mention

Mention monitors the Web, including the major social media channels, and sends alerts whenever a target keyword or a brand name shows up in an online conversation.

- You can receive alerts via email or view them directly in the application.
- You can also share them with your team members as PDF or CVS documents and assign tasks to them to deal with the alert.
- After a free 14-day trial period, you can choose from a variety of paid plans.



How Many Times the Coverage You Got Was Shared

Though a digital PR agency gets coverage on a famous online publication, their efforts are useless if the content published on that site isn't getting enough shares and likes. It shows that either the audience did not like it or you probably missed your target audience. By measuring the social share metrics of your article, you can get an idea of the popularity of your content. It can also help you devise a better PR strategy in the future.

So, how do you measure social share metrics of your campaign? A simple tool such as ShareCount can be used to calculate the number of times your article is shared.

How to Use Share Count

Just copy-paste the URL of your content into the search box and hit enter. You can see the number of likes, shares, and comments for five major social media platforms including Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and StumbleUpon. The free plan includes 10,000 daily queries and paid plans start at \$40/mo with 200,000 URL daily queries.



Using Google Analytics to calculate website traffic

- The first thing you need to do is identify which social media sites send the most traffic to your website. Go to Acquisition -> All Traffic -> Source/Medium menu. Here, you will be able to see a list of all websites that send traffic to your site.
- You can check this data from the last thirty days. Collect this data at regular intervals to determine if there is an increase in website traffic.
- Next, go to Audience -> Behavior -> Frequency and Recency menu. Here, you can see the total number of visitors on your website in one month. It shows the number of people that visited your site once, twice, thrice or more in the last 30 days.
- Go to Audience -> Behavior -> Engagement menu. Here, you can see how long people have stayed on your site, i.e. rate of engagement. If the number of people staying longer on your site is higher, it means they like your content.

Number of Backlinks Generated

Though associated with SEO, backlinks do matter. Measuring the number of backlinks generated during a PR campaign can help you determine the popularity of your content. The increase in the number of backlinks indicates that people consider your content valuable, useful, and relevant.



Improvement in Lead Generation

The importance of lead generation can't be overemphasized, especially for B2B businesses. Leads refer to the people showing clear-cut interest in your services. If there is an increase in the number of inquiries, it means your campaign was successful. The potential leads may interact with your sales team through phone calls, emails or even social media.

Make sure to maintain a separate sheet for leads generated from each resource to get a detailed report of the overall improvement in lead generation.

Compare the data collected before the start of your campaign with that collected after its conclusion.

However, merely measuring the volume of leads generated will not be enough for proper assessment of your lead generation efforts. You also need to track and monitor other important metrics to gauge the success of your campaign.



A. Click-Through Rate (CTR)

This is the ratio of people who clicked on a specific link to the total number of recipients of that particular link. High CTR indicates improvement in lead generation. Low CTR indicates that either you are targeting the wrong audience or your content is not engaging enough. Below is a simple formula to calculate click-through rate for a campaign.

CTR = Number of clicks/Number of media impressions

B. Conversion Rate

This is the ratio of people who have completed sales transaction to the total number of website visitors. It is an important lead generation metric. In fact, almost 57% of B2B marketers believe conversion rate is the most useful metric for analyzing landing page performance, i.e. efficiency of lead generation.



The power of digital storytelling

Storytelling has long been used and studied as a method for teaching and learning. According to MacDonald (1998), societies have used storytelling to teach key principles throughout millennia. Likewise, Andrews et al. (2009) explain that storytelling has been used as an information medium in education of all types, including in dentistry, general medicine, law, and business.

Storytelling in the 21st century is made richer and more effective through the use of digital media such as images, videos, and audio files, a method known as digital storytelling. This article provides an overview of digital storytelling and discusses its uses not only in education but also in other fields.

What is digital storytelling?

In its simplest form, digital storytelling refers to the practice of using computer-based tools to tell stories or present ideas (Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling, n.d.). Digital stories have also been defined as multimedia presentations that combine a variety of digital elements within a narrative structure (Digital Storytelling, n.d.).

As opposed to traditional storytelling that uses materials on physical media such as paper, tapes or discs, and film, a digital story uses material that exists on electronic files. As such, digital stories may include not only text, images, video, and audio, but also interactive elements like maps and social media elements like tweets.



According to the Institute of Progressive Education and Learning, digital stories are often presented in compelling, emotionally engaging formats. The concept can also cover a range of digital narratives, including digital web-based stories, interactive stories, and hypertext stories. In hypertext fiction, for instance, readers can use hypertext links to move from one node of text to the next.

As with traditional storytelling, most digital stories focus on one specific topic and feature a particular point of view. These stories can vary in length but educational digital stories can last anywhere from two to 10 minutes (Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling, n.d.).

Elements of an effective digital storytelling

According to digital storytelling pioneer Joe Lambert, there are certain elements that must be considered in the making of a digital story. While Lambert asserts that the last thing aspiring digital storytellers need is a specific formula for creating a story, these elements can be used as a starting point for the process (CDS' Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling, n.d.).

Point of view

A digital story allows a writer to experience personal expression. This is supported by Lambert's view that all stories are personal. As such, these stories should be constructed from the author's own understanding and experience.



This is why many digital stories are written with a first-person rather than a third-person point of view.

According to Lambert, addressing the point of view of a digital story also defines specific concepts that the author wants the audience to realize. Every part of the story needs to help the audience make the realization, so defining the point of view becomes an important part of the editing process as well.

Dramatic question

According to Lambert, making a point doesn't necessarily sustain people's attention throughout the digital story. Stories that successfully hold the audience's attention have a dramatic question, which is resolved at the end of the story. To illustrate, an example of the dramatic question in a crime story is, "Who is the person who did the crime?"

Moreover, in sophisticated story-making, the dramatic question is presented in a way that does not call attention to the story's underlying structure (CDS' Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling, n.d.). Lambert further explains that digital stories become richer and more complex when authors undermine the expectations established by the dramatic question.



Emotional content

Effective digital stories stir an emotional reaction from the audience. Such digital stories work to discover and pursue a new understanding rooted in the concept of being human (Digital Storytelling: Essential Elements, 2020).

Furthermore, according to Lambert and StoryCenter, a story that involves “fundamental emotional paradigms — of death and our sense of loss, of love and loneliness, of confidence and vulnerability, of acceptance and rejection — will stake a claim on our hearts.” Digital stories that deal with these issues are more likely to hold an audience’s attention and can help authors establish a connection with the audience.

Lambert further asserts that according to his experiences with the group production process, people tend to go out of their way to support others who are willing to tell emotionally charged stories.

Recording one’s voice

The author’s voice can add nuance to a digital story and make it more personal. Various characteristics of the author’s voice, including their pitch, inflection, and timbre, can “convey meaning and intent in a very personal way.” (Digital Storytelling: Essential Elements, 2020)



Lambert explains that there are specific concerns that need to be addressed when recording one's voice for use in a digital story. For instance, there might not be enough time for the author to sufficiently practice his/her lines so that the voiceover will sound more natural. Lambert suggests speaking slowly in a conversational style and keeping the writing terse to get the best results.

Economy

Creators of digital stories also have to be economical in their use of text, dialogue, and visuals. Digital storytelling is principally a visual medium, and storytelling with images means properly using the juxtaposition of language and images to create a narrative. An author needs to consider how dialogue and visual elements work together to create a story in the audience's minds. Working with directors, authors must also learn how to keep the story visually rich with only the minimum of dialogue and scenes that will move the narrative forward.

Due to the practice of economy, most digital stories tend to be short. Content from digital storytelling pioneer StoryCenter, for instance, runs anywhere from two to three minutes. Limiting the scope of a digital story offers two benefits: the practice makes the story creation process more manageable and it requires the writer to focus only on the essential elements of the story (Digital Storytelling: Essential Elements, 2020).



Pacing

According to Lambert (n.d.), pacing is considered by many as “the true secret of successful storytelling.” A story’s flow and rhythm determines how it sustains the audience’s interest throughout its duration. Storytellers must be able to pull a story back or move it forward when needed. In some cases, improving a digital story’s pacing requires deciding which parts of the story can be omitted. This ensures that the story’s pacing is as natural as possible. There are a number of visual and audio effects that can help establish a digital story’s pacing. Quick visual effects and upbeat music, for instance, suggest urgency and excitement. Meanwhile, slower music can suggest drama and contemplation.

Soundtrack

A soundtrack can greatly enhance and underscore a digital story, “adding complexity and depth to the narrative.” (Digital Storytelling: Essential Elements, 2020) Moreover, Lambert (n.d.) explains that music in a film stirs up different emotional responses from what visual information suggests. For instance, a swelling treble of strings provides a sense of suspense, while upbeat melodies suggest happy endings.



• Summarizing

- Define your goals!
- Define Your Target Market : Develop Personas!
- Define Your Budget!
- Choose The Channels You Want to Use!
- Do Keyword Research for SEO and PPCSet up Ads on Social Media Platforms
- Manage Your Social Media Profiles
- Formulate an Email Marketing Strategy
- Set Up Remarketing, don't forget to send reminders!
- Craft A Blogging Strategy

We hope that these tips will help you to prepare and run a successful European Citizens' Initiative. GOOD LUCK!



Annex 1: How to create a website

To create a website, you can follow 4 basic steps.

1. Register your domain name

When you choose your domain name, keep in mind that your name should reflect your products or services so that potential customers, partners etc. can find your website easily through a search engine. It is also an advantage if your domain is similar to your business name. You can (and should) also use your domain name for your email address to look more professional when you communicate.

To register your domain name, you will need to find a ICANN accredited domain registrar, but evaluate your options as different registrars have different fees and policies. To find registrars, you can simply look for “registrate domain” in the search engine of your choice. You will need to pay a fee every year, so be sure to note when your domain name will expire so you can renew it in time.

2. Find a web hosting company

You will need to find a web hosting company to get your domain name on the internet. Most of the major internet service providers offer web hosting services. They can also provide you with multiple email addresses.

How much you will have to pay for web hosting depends on your hosting service, how large your website is and how many visitors you have.



3. Prepare your content

In order to prepare your website content you need to think about what you want your customers, partners etc. to be able to do via your site. This consideration will help you work out what sections or pages your website needs. Think about what information, transactions etc. your customers, partners etc. might want and then make sure the site is structured in such a way that makes these information and transactions easy to find. It might be helpful to hire a professional to write and structure your website content.

A well designed and easy to use website will help your business stand out. Relevant and appropriate content and images will help customers to understand your products, services etc. and will make them more inclined to use your products, services etc. your business provides.

4. Build your website

To build your website, you can either do it yourself or hire a professional website developer. Also, your work on the website isn't done after the original developing and publishing, as your website needs to be kept up to date, so it's an ongoing project.

When you want to build the website yourself, you can use a website publishing package. They are similar to word processors, but also have built-in features that allow you to convert your text and images into web content and send it to your website.



Hiring a professional to build your website is especially a good idea if you're new to online business. They can build your site quickly and provide guidance on successful web design. It can be particularly useful to hire a professional if you want to build an online shop or other similar services on your website.

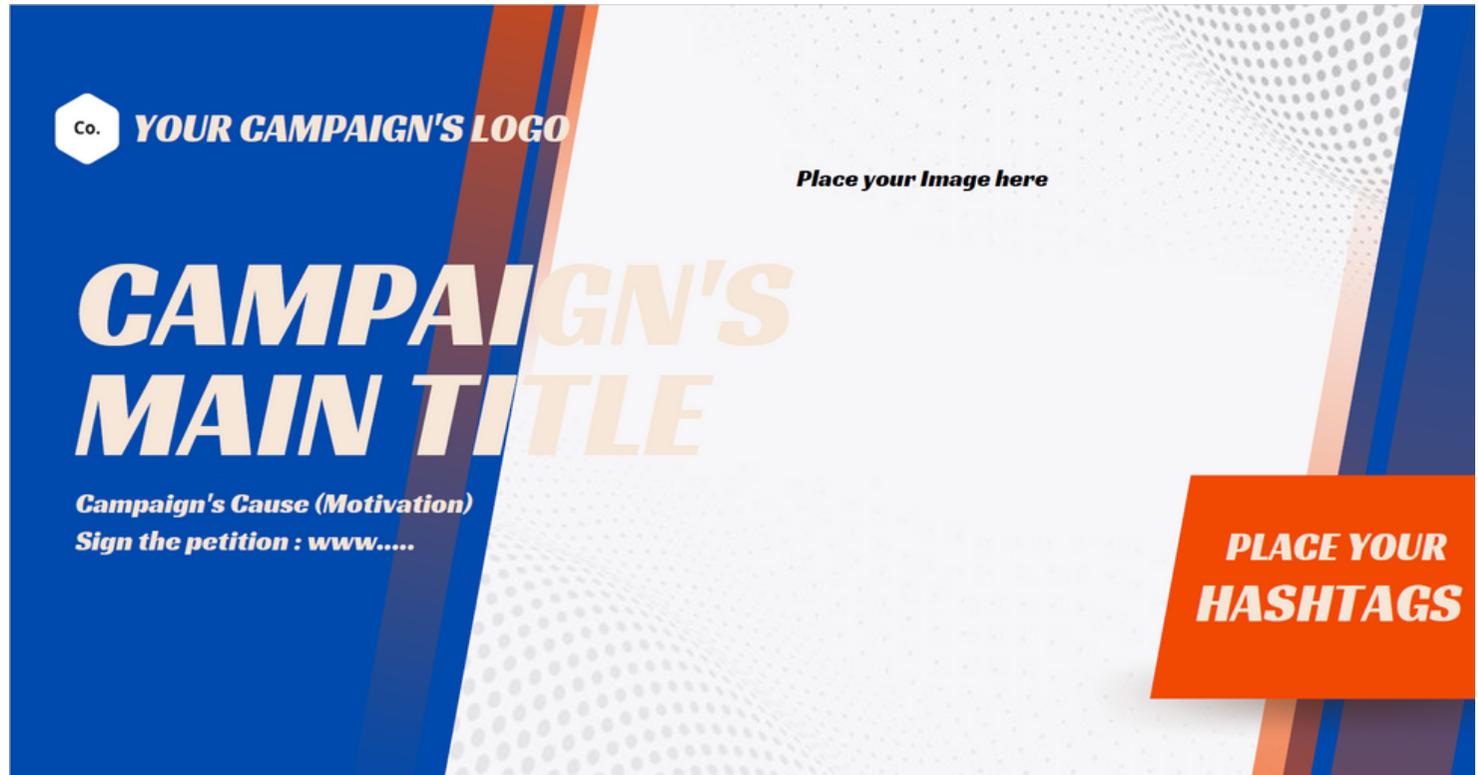
It's important that you optimize your site for mobile users to accommodate to the growing number of people browsing the web on their tablets and phones.

Useful tips for creating a website

- Think about what your customers want to know, not just what you want to tell them.
- An unprofessional website can make you lose potential customers, so think about having professional help to make a good first impression.
- You need to update your website regularly, especially if you include information about your prices.
- Your contact information must be correct and easy to find for customers.
- Promote your website using different marketing strategies and materials - both online and offline. Include it on your business cards, too.
- Make your website search engine optimized (SEO), so that it is easy to find on search engines. If you design your own website without professional help you will most likely need to read up on it.



Annex 2: Example for a profile and cover picture for Social Media



Annex 4: Goals & objectives template

- Goal 1
- Goal 2
- Goal 3

Goals Breakdown

- Objective 1:
 - Targets:
 - Tactics:
 - Measures of success:
- Objective 2:
 - Targets:
 - Tactics:
 - Measures of success:
- Objective 3:
 - Targets:
 - Tactics:
 - Measures of success:

Annex 5: Communication plan template

Communication Plan Situation	Level of Urgency (1-4)	Stakeholder(s)/ DRI	Objectives and Goals	Required Actions, Messaging & Content	Due Date
One					
Two					
Three					
Four					
Five					
Six					
Seven					

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