



# SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SOCIAL GOOD

How Nonprofits Can  
Leverage Social Media

## INTRODUCTION

# Social Media for Social Good

## How Nonprofits Can Leverage Social Media

Nonprofits have long relied on traditional channels to gain support and drive donations. But today — with the help of social media and its influencer community — viral campaigns, worldwide visibility, and instant donations are within reach.

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## Executive Summary

Tracx hosted a series of lunch events for nonprofits and associations in New York City and Washington, D.C. The series, called "[The Power of the Hashtag](#)," was an opportunity for nonprofits to learn how to create a strong social media presence and run successful campaigns that drive awareness, donations, and engagement.

While overnight success isn't out of question (hello #IceBucketChallenge), it's not as simple as it may seem. In fact, many nonprofits have adopted social media at rapid rates but still struggle to realize its value, using social as a traditional publishing/broadcasting tool. With the added layer of budget constraints, it's no wonder nonprofits showed up in spades at our recent lunch and learn series.

Nonprofits and specialized agencies of all sizes attended to hear panelists representing socially savvy organizations like the ALS Association, the American Diabetes Association, AAAS, Environics, GoodWorld, Porter Novelli, and Platoon22. The events focused on how nonprofits can overcome their biggest challenges to craft engaging campaigns and achieve success on social media. Our key takeaways are summarized in this [whitepaper](#).

# TOP 3 CHALLENGES

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Nonprofits are charging full speed ahead with social media, but they are running into a few roadblocks. In the process of trying to get socially integrated, nonprofits are lacking resources, receptive audiences, and real conversations.

Across the board we heard nonprofits of all shapes and sizes voice frustration over these three big challenges when it comes to optimizing their social media presence and campaigns.

1

# Doing More with Less

The nature of nonprofits means resources are allocated first and foremost to the cause, meaning marketing and social media may fall to the bottom of the list, or off the list altogether. Many participants felt the results they wanted were unattainable without a large budget or team.

As digital marketing strategies shift more to paid channels, nonprofits are often left empty-handed, lacking the funds and resources needed to pursue these high-visibility tactics. As a result, nonprofits need to strive to be more creative in their use of social media, relying more on their grassroots supporters, influencers, and most vocal audiences.



## #DiabetesDanceDare

ADA kicked off a social media campaign encouraging participants to dance for 23 seconds to raise awareness that every 23 seconds, an American is diagnosed with diabetes. This campaign has relied heavily on celebrity influencers to get attention with their dance moves.

**20,000,000+**  
reached

**Shaq, Usher,  
Kelly Clarkson**  
participated

## Few funds for Paid Advertising

Effectiveness Rating for Nonprofit Paid Advertising Methods



**97%**  
Of Nonprofits Are Using Social Media

**BUT ONLY**

**50%**  
Are Using Social Ads To Expand Their Reach Beyond Their Own Followers.

2

# Locating Biggest Advocates & Audiences

It's often difficult to find where the best advocates are hiding out, and specifically which platforms to use to engage with them. Facebook and Twitter may be the most established networks, but maybe not the most passionate and engaged platform for a specific cause.

For example, the #22pushupchallenge was wildly successful on Instagram, and United Way found SnapChat to be an effective tool for recruiting volunteers to come out for their annual "Day of Action." Social listening tools can help uncover the most captive audience so posts don't go in one ear and out the other.



## #22pushupchallenge

The #22pushupchallenge is a nod to the military with an easily shareable call to action: pushups. To raise awareness for veteran suicides (22 vets take their lives every day), Platoon22 motivated social media users and celebrities to complete 22 pushups for 22 days and share the videos, tagging their friends and family to join the movement.

**76,209,174**

pushups completed

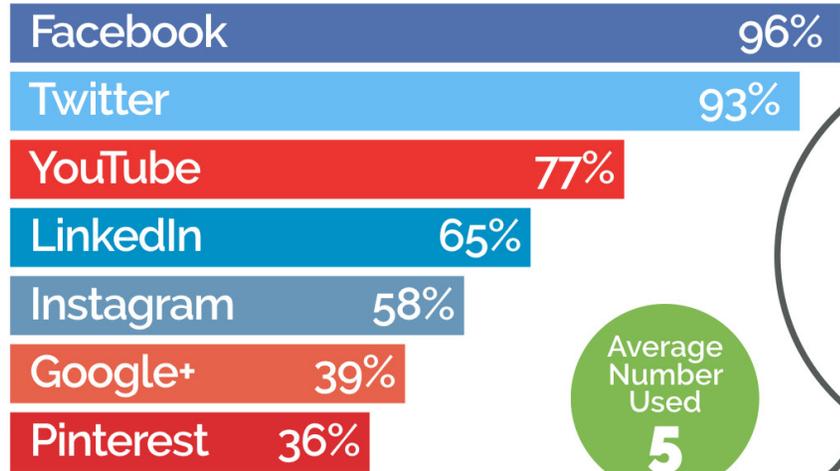
**125,517**

posts on Instagram tagged #22pushupchallenge

**106,664**

posts tagged #22pushups

## Most Used Platforms



Average Number Used  
**5**



3

# Ditching Traditional Communication Styles

Nonprofits gravitate towards using social media to broadcast scripted messages and announce events in a very traditional manner. Instead of relying on this "more comfortable" communications approach, nonprofits need to break out and focus more on driving two-way engagement and personalized campaigns. By striving for authenticity and originality, nonprofits stand a better chance of igniting passion (or action) with social posts.

Nonprofits may be short on resources and research, but they aren't lacking creativity, passion, or an unstoppable desire to make a positive impact. It's time to throw out the old communications playbook and embrace more personalized, authentic and transparent communication approaches.



gates notes

## #IceBucketChallenge

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge started when Pat Quinn, Peter Frates, and Anthony Senerichia (individuals living with ALS) began the challenge on social media with their families. The ALS Association noticed an uptick in donations and quickly began tracking results and creating a strategy to fan the flames.

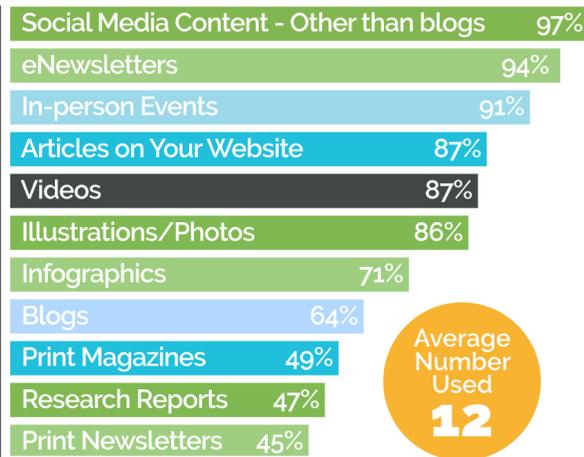
**17,000,000**  
videos on Facebook

**440,000**  
engaged

**\$115,000,000+**  
raised

**25%**  
increase in annual donations

## Social is #1 Content Strategy for NP's



Average Number Used  
**12**

*Which content marketing tactics does your organization use?*

**97%**  
USE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

## HOW NONPROFITS CAN INCREASE DONATIONS BY USING SOCIAL MEDIA

- + Educate on mission
- + Raise awareness
- + Encourage engagement
- + Motivate action

# 6 KEYS TO SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

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Have you encountered these same challenges in your social campaigns? You aren't alone! While there's no "one-size-fits-all" approach for overcoming these roadblocks,

our participants and panelists agreed on six critical ways to drive toward social success. We think you'll find that these six expert tips are a good place to start.

1

# Give users a reason to “share.”

The key to social media success is shareability. While most trends come and go, a few stick around for a while, like the #ALSIceBucketChallenge. The campaign's stickiness can be attributed to it being patient-driven. It was started and shared through

networks with a close tie to the cause, and quickly snowballed into a movement. Users share a post or participate in a challenge when they feel an emotional connection to it. Authenticity is the driving force behind that connection and creates a compelling call to action.

## HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN:

- Begin with an emotional connection to the cause, like a patient starting the #ALSIceBucketChallenge.
- Find a call to action that is instantly recognizable to maximize participation.
- Consider short video clips that drive your point (and cause) home.

Pete Frates, one of the co-founders of the Ice Bucket Challenge, lives with ALS and began the challenge on social media to make a positive impact in his community. The challenge quickly grew into a huge movement due to the personal connection and easily shareable nature.



Yeah to @PeteFrates3 co-founder of the #ALSIceBucketChallenge, for the #NCAA 2017 Inspiration Award! [on.ncaa.com/2g119K8](http://on.ncaa.com/2g119K8)



RETWEETS 7 LIKES 8

6:00 AM - 18 Nov 2016

🔄 7 ❤️ 8 ⋮

2

## Create goal-centered campaigns.

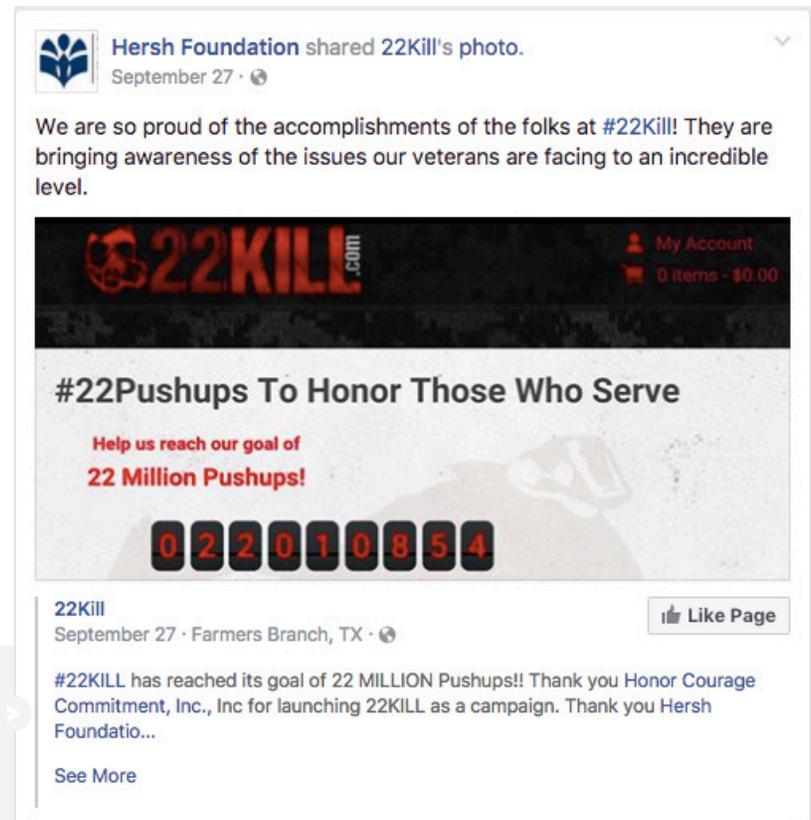
When you publicly state a goal, you get attention. When you create goals that encourage audience participation, you get engagement. Users believe their behavior is the center of everyone else's attention and they have a tendency to follow the herd. When you

make your goals audience-centric, you can use that tendency to your advantage. Specifically calling out groups and individuals creates a friendly obligation to like, share, and participate.

### HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN:

- ▶ Direct your goal at your audience so they'll be motivated to help you achieve it.
- ▶ Eliminate the bystander effect and tag specific people to gain momentum.

A buzzworthy goal that got engagement: a race to complete 22 Million pushups. The best part: all participants had a great reason to share their part in helping to achieve this monumental milestone.



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## Ask for donations on social.

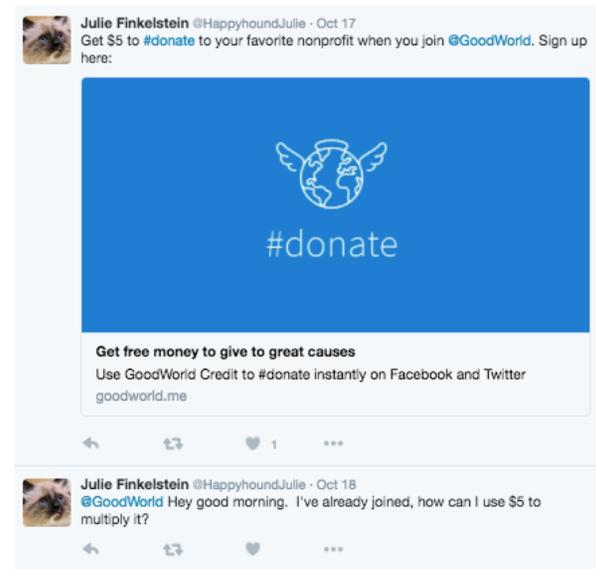
It may seem like sharing a video of dancing, doing pushups, or dumping ice over your head does little to further your cause. These videos have often come under fire as “slacktivism,” or online activism perceived as requiring minimal effort and failing to achieve sustainable results. What critics don't realize is that the more people talk about your cause on social media, the more opportunities you have to ask for donations.

Tech companies on the cutting edge of social giving like [GoodWorld](#) allow you to facilitate instant donations via social media, making it easy to monetize social capital. Don't be afraid to prioritize shares, likes, and comments over dollars and cents in the early stages of your campaign. You aren't missing out on donations, you're just building up to them.

### HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN:

- Encourage sharing and “slacktivism” because exposure fuels donations.
- Be straightforward. Ask your audience for donations on social media.

Social innovation from GoodWorld makes it easy to for social media users to turn talk into action by simply adding #donate to the conversation on social media.



4

## Build loyalty through personal interactions.

Twitter isn't a megaphone. Social media should enable two-way conversations between you and your audience and motivate your followers to act or donate. Rather than using social media just to publish updates, use it to develop one-on-one relationships by writing personalized messages, answering questions, and joining existing conversations. Recognizing your followers' questions and actually

engaging in a conversation shows them you value their support and advocacy for your cause. Nothing builds loyalty like being the first one on the scene to offer an expert answer or a helping hand.

### HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN:

- Exceed followers' expectations by personally replying to their posts.
- Think outside the box. Creative conversations stick around in followers' memories.

The ASPCA answers their followers' questions about food safety with a personal touch, not only helping a family keep their pet happy, but also showing a personal interest in the health and well-being of their followers' beloved pets.



5

# Find a captive audience on earned media.

Owned media, the channels your nonprofit has full control of, is the easiest way to break into social media. Earned media, gained through word-of-mouth or press coverage, is where advocates are won or lost. Audiences trust their friends, peers, and favorite bloggers to lead them to the best and brightest social trends — earned media is your potential goldmine.

With the help of the right influencer, you can go beyond your owned social channels and put your campaign in front of a much larger audience on earned media. With a single post, influencers can motivate their followers to take action in ways you could never achieve on your own. An influencer is the catalyst that can take a hashtag campaign from barely buzzing to trending worldwide.

## HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN:

- > Tap an influencer to leverage their audience for your cause.
- > Run a user-generated content campaign to show diverse perspectives and take advantage of social proof.
- > Use a [social media management tool](#) to find influencers and forage conversations about your brand on earned media.

Celebrities can light a spark with their fanbase and start a fire around your campaign, garnering hundreds of thousands of shares and millions of likes with a single post.



6

# Track, test, and revise for long-term success.

Social media campaigns take patience, hard work, and a lot of luck, but that doesn't mean analytics aren't important to the process. While viral campaigns can't be repeated with guaranteed success, the insights are valuable. Don't write off a viral campaign as a one-time success when you can be harvesting data to inform future decisions.

You may find out your campaign was a flop on Twitter but a bigger success on Instagram. Armed with this insight, you can revise your strategy to target the best platforms for your most engaged audiences.

## HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN:



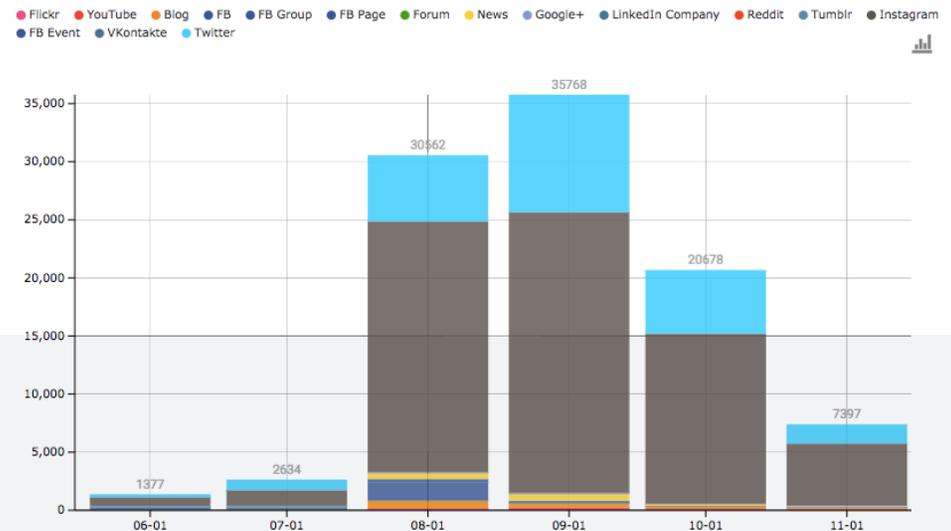
Test as much as possible to isolate what works and what doesn't.



Use past campaigns as a resource to make future campaigns more effective.

### SHARE OF VOICE TRENDS BY PLATFORM

Viewing results over time can inform future campaigns. This chart shows a higher volume of posts on Instagram than other platforms — indicating which platform has the most audience and shareability potential.





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# 10 WAYS TO CREATE SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL CAMPAIGNS

- ✓ Clearly state your campaign goal.
- ✓ Put your mission and cause front and center.
- ✓ Create an emotional, authentic call-to-action.
- ✓ Encourage shares and participate to boost engagement.
- ✓ Build relationships through conversations with your audience.
- ✓ Identify influencers to expand your reach.
- ✓ Leverage both owned and earned media.
- ✓ Use technology to increase donations.
- ✓ Always be prepared to capitalize on a trending topic or current event.
- ✓ Test, revise, and optimize your campaign.

# IN SUMMARY...

The value that social media offers to nonprofits is clear: an opportunity to expand your reach and experience real results without having to dig deep into your budget. The potential for a runaway success isn't out of reach; but it takes a lot more than a hashtag and a Twitter account.

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What are you waiting for?

Crafting a compelling campaign is just the first step. For the best chance of success in a noisy online environment, your nonprofit needs to be thoughtful and strategic, making wise use of every resource available — whether that's a passionate celebrity influencer willing to put their name on the cause or a technology platform that makes donating as simple as writing 140 characters. In a noisy social environment, these tips will help you turn shares and likes into passion, action, and donations.

**See how Tracx is helping other nonprofits get noticed.**

