Evaluating Social Media Efforts: One Approach

When implemented effectively, social media strategies—that is, online technologies such as Facebook and Twitter, that facilitate interaction with audience members—can be an important component of a comprehensive communication plan. In particular, they can also be a useful tool in environmental change efforts, specifically as a channel for social marketing[1] efforts. However, evaluating social marketing strategies that employ social media can be challenging.

The place to start when evaluating social media efforts within the context of a larger health-change strategy is to consider the specific outcomes you want your strategies to accomplish.

- First, develop clear and quantifiable social media goals and objectives.
- Second, arrange these according to four basic outcome domains—exposure, engagement, influence, and results. Each of these builds on one another and can be achieved to varying degrees with different social media channels.
- Third, use existing social media analytic tools (available online) to measure the degree to which your goals relative to each domain are being met.

	Outcome Domain			
	Exposure	**Engagement**	**Influence**	**Results**
Type of outcome:	• How many people are seeing your message? • What is your reach?	• How many people responded to your message, took some type of action, or engaged in some type of interaction?	• How is your message being received by others, and should you tweak it? • Do people care about your message? *This is a quantitative measure that builds on exposure and engagement.*	• Are your social media efforts directly meeting your social media/ prevention goals and objectives (i.e., policy change, behavior change, increased awareness of prevention issues)?
Metrics	• Number of Facebook fans, Facebook friends, Twitter followers,	1. *Low engagement:* One-way communication, where followers, fans, or friends	• How did people respond to your message (i.e., were comments positive, neutral, or negative?	• Did you attain your goal— that is, did fans, followers, or friends change their

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[1] Social marketing is the use of commercial marketing techniques to change behavior.

			behavior? If so, to what degree?
LinkedIn connections or YouTube subscribers • Number of online newsletter subscribers • Number of website hits • Number of times a video is viewed • Number of re-tweets, shares, and re-posts—and how many people each of those actions reached	might simply have read the message 2. *Medium engagement:* Two-way communication, where followers, fans, or friends responded in some way to the message (i.e., "liked", commented, shared, @replied, or retweeted) 3. *High engagement:* Two-way communication, where followers, fans, or friends not only responded, but also provided feedback, took action, and/or did something, and became partners with you.	• Did your followers, fans, or friends influence take any action to influence your campaign (e.g., influence others in the community)? If so, who? • Were there any changes in behaviors or attitudes as a result of your message? • Did the message make your followers think about making a behavior change? • What other sentiments did followers express in response to your message?	• If your fans, followers, or friends didn't change their behavior, how might you change your message to elicit a different response?
Analytic Tools	• *Tweetreach* helps measure the reach and other metrics of your message(s) • *Twitalyzer* reports on metrics associated with your Twitter username (aka "handle") and messages • *Topsy* monitors social networking activity • *SocialBro* analyzes your Twitter community • *Vizify* creates a visual synopsis of you or your organization, based on your social media profile • *Bottlenose* can detect what is being said on social media about you or your organization (also known as "trending") • *Symplur's Healthcare Hashtag Project* identifies relevant, health-related hashtags. • *Facebook* Insights provides analytics for your Facebook profile. • *HowSociable* assesses the presence of your organization or identify on different social networking sites (also known as "scoring") • *Google Analytics* offers a set of tools to help you analyze the websites you operate • Other third-party platforms, such as *Hootsuite*, allow you to measure Web activity, as well as manage your online engagement. • To measure changes in knowledge, satisfaction, attitudes, or behavior, you may also want to implement an online survey.		

Sources :

Mashable Website: www.mashable.com
National Prevention Information Network: http://www.cdcnpin.org/scripts/index.asp
Social Media Measurement Standards Coalition (#SMMStandards) Website: http://www.smmstandards.com/

Developed under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies contract. Reference #HHSS283201200024I/HHSS28342002T. For training use only.

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