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Chapter 7

Marketing Strategies for the Social Good

Alicia de la Peña

Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

Social network sites (SNS) have proven to be a good environment to promote and sell goods and services, but marketing is more than creating commercial strategies. Social marketing strategies can also be used to promote behavioral change and help individuals transform their lives, achieve well-being, and adopt prosocial behaviors. In this chapter, we seek to analyze with a netnographic study, how SNS are being employed by nonprofits and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) to enable citizens and consumers to participate in different programs and activities that promote social transformation and well-being. A particular interest is to identify how organizations are using behavioral economic tactics to nudge individuals and motivate them to engage in prosocial actions. By providing an understanding on how SNS can provide an adequate environment for the design of social marketing strategies, we believe our work has practical implications both for academicians and marketers who want to contribute in the transformation of consumer behavior and the achievement of well-being and social change.

Keywords: social marketing, social network sites, well-being, behavioral economics, prosocial behavior

1. Introduction

Colorful ribbons, bumper stickers, billboards, door knocking, protests, and marches are no longer the only tools and activities employed to raise awareness, collect funds for a cause, or promote social change. Nowadays, YouTube challenges, using hashtags, posting profile pictures, and signing online petitions have become the contemporary ways to engage individuals in prosocial activities [1].

It seems that nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and private firms have adopted social network sites (SNS) as one of their key channels to communicate with their stakeholders,
create brand awareness, build community engagement, and distribute useful content [2, 3]. SNS are web-based services that allow individuals to connect with other users and exchange information using different formats (e.g., comments, videos, photos, etc.) [4]. Besides SNS individuals are also using microblogging sites like Twitter and content-sharing sites like Instagram and YouTube to interact with brands and social causes and demonstrate their preferences, opinions, and interests.

With more than 2 billion monthly active users, Facebook is nowadays the most popular social network worldwide [5]. With those numbers in hand, there is no wonder that many NGOs have embraced the opportunity to build their own Facebook fan page or their own Facebook communities in order to engage with their stakeholders, ask for their support, and create awareness about their programs. With thousands of communities to choose from, how are NGOs getting individuals to join their particular Facebook community? What tools are they using to engage visitors and convince them not only to navigate through the page but to take specific actions? How are individuals responding to those communications and marketing efforts?

We aim to answer these questions with a netnographic study and analyze how consumers use the interactive features of SNS to demonstrate their support and participate in prosocial activities. We begin this chapter with a brief description of prosocial behaviors, fourth-generation NGOs, and a general overview of how online social communities can be used to promote social change. Then, we describe how to nudge and incentivize individuals to participate in prosocial activities. In the second part, we describe our research method and present our main findings. The chapter concludes with an outlining of the implications for NGO leaders and small nonprofits willing to adopt SNS as a channel to communicate with their stakeholders.

2. Prosocial behaviors, NGOs, and online communities

Prosocial behaviors are voluntary actions intended to benefit others. Among those actions are helping, sharing, comforting, and cooperation. Psychologists suggest that prosocial behaviors can be learned in early childhood, when parents encourage their children to share their toys or act kindly toward pets and friends; prosocial behaviors are also fostered at school while working in a project or playing with other classmates [6]. It is said that children whose parents are empathic, warm, and comforting are themselves highly empathic with others [7]. Unfortunately, as they grow into adulthood, some individuals begin to lose the impet to act kindly or to demonstrate empathy towards others [8]. It seems that for some people, problems like poverty, hunger, or the prevention of diseases must be solved by institutions, governments, and public firms. On the other hand, there are individuals who believe that even though laws, technology, institutions, and public policies are needed to address social problems, the active participation of people and communities is required to achieve social change in a macro level; therefore, volunteering and cooperation are needed to achieve collective outcomes [7, 9].

NGOs are some of the institutions that have emerged to address some of the humanitarian, social, and environmental problems that affect our world. NGOs are private, self-governing organizations which share values that work to improve the quality of life of people in
disadvantage. Usually, NGOs work at different levels. Some are involved with small-scale community relief activities, while others operate at the international level. The latest are known as fourth-generation NGOs and either work with welfare relief, community development, sustainable development, or people’s movement. Having a set of goals established, or a cause to fight for, are not the only elements that NGOs need to be successful. The attainment of the objectives also depends on the support provided by a complex social network, a good communication effort, and effective marketing strategies [10].

Besides supporting the efforts of NGOs, individuals have joined forces to take action and solve their problems, creating groups and communities of like-minded people, willing to drive social change [11]. The members of those groups not only gather in face-to-face meetings, go door knocking asking for donations, or participate in placard-carrying protests. Nowadays, they are taking advantage of SNS to create online communities, also known as issue-based online social change communities (issue-based OSCC) [1]. In general, online social communities are computer-mediated forums where groups of people communicate in various forms (e.g., texts, photographs, videos, hyperlinks, etc.). More specifically, issue-based OSCC focus on particular social issues (e.g., child labor, global warming, etc.) and have a specific agenda that they wish to address through the use of social media. Usually, they use Facebook to form the community and tend to name it by the activity and people they serve, such as breast cancer patient support community, ecotourism, etc. [12, 13].

Usually, the leaders of the issue-based OSCC employ different tools to educate, motivate, entertain, and offer different resources to the members of the community, so they can show their support, have access to newsletters, buy merchandise, or make an online donation. In fact, most nonprofits and NGOs like Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature have also built their own Facebook communities to take advantage of the features that this SNS offers [1]. Being available 24/7, Facebook allows members of communities to interact more frequently and intensely with each other and with their favorite cause. Besides, given that each community has its own set of shared values, language, meanings, and practices, these spaces have the capacity to foster a shared sense of civic identity that might yield a more organized form of prosocial participation and build engagement and a meaningful connection between members of the community [14, 15]. If such engagement is present, we can at least expect that members of the community will engage in positive forms of evangelism, recruiting other people to get informed about the issue-based OSCC or to contribute to the cause [14].

Additionally, Facebook allows individuals to build social capital (i.e., resources accumulated through the relationships among people), which can be linked to different positive social outcomes, such as lower crime rates, better public health, an increased commitment to a community, and the ability to mobilize collective actions, leading to spontaneous grassroots movements that motivate individuals to take responsibility for their community and its main concerns [1, 13].

2.1. Marketing strategies and nudges to create a more participative citizenship

Although NGOs and nonprofits (as their name say) do not work for an economic profit, they still need to develop and implement a strong marketing and communication strategy in order to share their vision, raise awareness, mobilize and motivate people, and create social and
political support [10]. Social marketing has played an important role in the improvement of society’s well-being since its introduction during the 1970s, when it was initially defined as the design, implementation, and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas [16]. Specifically, social marketing campaigns can be designed to raise awareness about different social causes like global warming, obesity prevention, reduce water usage, etc. [17].

In order to communicate with different stakeholders (i.e., donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, public policy-makers, etc.), NGOs and nonprofits can use traditional media (i.e., radio, television, newspapers, magazines, billboards, etc.), but given that more and more individuals and organizations are moving to the Internet to collect and share information, it is important that NGOs also use this communication space to improve relationships with stakeholders, raise funds, inform the public, attract and retain volunteers, and increase advocacy efforts [10, 18].

It is important to acknowledge that today’s citizens are taking advantage of SNS and blogs to remix content, share meanings, and motivate others to take action. Videos, photos, stories, signs, and symbols play an important role in the effort to communicate a social cause or a political point of view. With a simple e-mail, an individual or a NGO can reach thousands of supporters and collect in a couple of days enough digital firms to exert pressure against a firm that is polluting the environment or exploiting children in a factory [15]. With SNS individuals have been empowered, and they can easily demonstrate their affinity with a social cause, using public forms of endorsements such as liking a Facebook page, sharing content, or posting new information [3]. When supporters of a NGO demonstrate their affinity, they become ambassadors for the organization and have the power to influence their peers and spread the message to other publics via viral marketing. Usually, SNS offer other advantages too: the cost to spread a message is low, the speed to share a message is high, there is a possibility to receive prompt feedback, and individuals around the globe can be easily reached [19].

And, even though communication activities are important to position a NGO among its different publics, the goals of the organization will not be fully accomplished unless individuals become volunteers, make a donation, or sign a petition. Therefore, other efforts have to be made in order to transform goodwill and intentions into specific actions. In other words, NGOs need more than followers and likes; they need dollars, people’s time to work as volunteers, and even blood and organs in order to fulfill their mission. And, given that some of the issues that NGOs and nonprofits are trying to solve are complex (e.g., alleviating poverty, reducing hunger, saving endangered animal species, etc.), they also need to establish partnerships with other organizations to join forces and be able to foster the desired behaviors for the common good [20].

2.1.1. Creating awareness with iced cold water

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge is one of the best examples on how to effectively use SNS to create public awareness about a cause and to raise funds. Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a rare disease that at this moment has no cure. Resources are needed to sponsor medical research to identify its roots and develop an adequate medicine and therapy. To raise awareness about ALS and also to increase donations, the ALS Association created a challenge:
individuals were given the choice to either donate $100 to the ALS Association, share a video of soaking themselves with ice water, or pass on the dare to another three people. Athletes, politicians, CEOs, and many celebrities participated in the challenge. More than 17 million of shared videos on Facebook were linked to the challenge, and the ALS Association reported donations by more than $100 million. An analysis of this Ice Bucket Challenge reveals that the viral power of SNS was one of factors that contributed to its success [19]. As people began sharing their videos, society become conscious about the existence of ALS disease and were moved to contribute to the community.

2.2. All we need is a little nudge

To nudge a good intentioned individual and convince him to take action, some ideas can be taken from the behavioral economic field [21]. Behavioral economics is a research field that blends psychology, economics, and the scientific method to examine human decision-making. In short, authors in this research field posit that human beings usually make irrational decisions, but the environment and context in which they make their decisions can be restructured to facilitate and nudge better choices. According to behavioral economics, consumers are highly loss averse and seek to gain in every situation; they often make decisions on autopilot; rely on heuristics or shortcuts to make a choice; are influenced by anchors, like to receive feedback and incentives; prefer simplified information; and easily respond to descriptive norms (i.e., norms that refer to how most people behave in a situation) [22, 23].

When NGOs and nonprofits have those traits and characteristics in mind, they are able to design specific strategies to influence individuals when making a decision. For example, when asking for a donation, NGOs and charities usually offer a range of options such as $25, $50, $100, or “others.” Giving options is an example of how charities are using anchors to nudge donors and obtain a bigger amount of dollars from each one [21].

A review of the normative social identity literature shows that individuals usually respond to descriptive norms and want to present the right identity to others (i.e., they want to be seen as good, responsible citizens who comply with the norms) to gain social approval; this information can be used to design specific messages in order to encourage the adoption of certain behaviors. For example, in their efforts to save resources and use water wisely, hotel managers around the world have launched environmental programs in which they ask hotel’s guests to reuse the towels. To accomplish the task, they leave printed tags near the towels in each room with messages like “75% of your fellow guests have participated in our reuse and recycle program. If you would like to join our efforts in saving the Planet, please reuse your towel” [23]. It seems that these simple texts convey a powerful message that moves individuals and leads them to engage on prosocial behaviors.

2.2.1. Ostriches and peacocks in the donors’ arena

Individuals might have many reasons to embrace prosocial behaviors and donate to charities. While some people are altruistic, and want to maximize the benefit and well-being of others, others are moved by more egoistic reasons and want something in exchange for their good deeds. They might seek public recognition, enhance their self-esteem, create a good impression, or
increase their sense of belonging [20, 24, 25]. There are donors who want to remain in anonymity, and others show a conspicuous donation behavior (i.e., they want to overtly display their support for charities with the use of merchandise or symbols) [24, 25]. For the latest, NGOs and charities usually have empathy ribbons, pins, and badges that visibly demonstrate one person’s affiliations, interests, and participation with different causes.

For those NGOs that have moved to the digital world, there is also an opportunity to provide donors with virtual tokens to strengthen relationships with the different stakeholders while providing the desired visibility. Among other tools, there are “twibbons” (i.e., virtual ribbons that can be used both in Facebook and Twitter), photo frames, and badges that donors can share or embed on social media pages [25]. Some Facebook pages also allow donors to update their status and share the information with their own peers. These virtual tokens transform private actions (i.e., blood donation) into a publicly recognized behavior, which might motivate donors who seek social value and benefit from the warm-glow that comes from behaving prosocially [20].

To enhance conversation, share information about a cause, or demonstrate support, members of an OSCC can also use the hashtag symbol (#). The hashtag allows ordering and quick retrieval of information about a specific topic, but it also serves as a channel to get out a message and to attract visibility and attention from different publics. Hashtags can easily become trending topics and inspire others to follow the conversation, turning a simple character into a powerful form of digital activism [26].

3. Exploring issue-based OSCC

To gain a better understanding on how issue-based OSCC are communicating with their stakeholders to obtain their support, raise awareness about their goals and activities, and increase donations, we conducted a netnographic study in four different Facebook fan pages [27]. The selected communities for the study have a heterogeneous group of followers, who are highly active by constantly writing comments, uploading photos and videos, or sharing posts with other people; therefore, they provide rich data to analyze. To avoid bias, we chose communities with different goals and agendas: childhood assistance and education (UNICEF), environment (Greenpeace), charity (Suspended Coffees), and social activism (Change.org). The four OSCC are well known and have strong presence in the media. We present the main characteristics of the selected OSCC in Table 1.

During the netnographic study, online data were captured on text files using a word-processing software; photos and other images were captured as screenshots of the computer screen as they appeared online [28]. After a 4-month period of observation, we conducted a content analysis to interpret and classify the data. The procedure allowed us to contrast the marketing and communication strategies employed by the observed OSCC with the literature.

3.1. Different posts for different purposes

People do not usually live in isolation. Most individuals are part of groups or communities in which they share common interests, activities, and meanings. This fact was clearly seen in
the four virtual communities studied, where we observed that its members have their goal to support the causes of their interest through donations, voluntary work, or signing petitions for support, among other actions.

Upon joining the Facebook community, members see regular posts from the issue-based OSCC, published by the administrators or leaders of the community in the Facebook news feed. They can use either videos, photos, stories, or infographics to grab people’s attention, strengthen the links with the community members, and invite them to take action (e.g., make a donation, share a comment, vote for certain issue, etc.). In turn, the latter demonstrate their commitment and loyalty by using the dynamic and interactive tools of the network (likes, shares, hashtags, etc.), which allow them to interact with other members, engage in conversations, viralize the contents they find more attractive and interesting, or demonstrate their position before a social or ecological cause.

With our analysis, we found that most posts can be classified in six categories: (1) for economic purposes (e.g., raise funds, sale of promotional merchandise, etc.), (2) mobilization/call to action (e.g., sign petitions, use hashtags, share publications, collect signatures, peaceful marches, etc.), (3) educational (i.e., provide facts and/or instructions regarding a specific issue), (4) community building (i.e., encourage dialog among followers, with publications that motivate and generate a sense of pride and belonging), (5) inspiration (i.e., share testimonials and achieved milestones, as well as uplifting and inspiring quotes), and (6) empowerment (i.e., give members of the community skills, knowledge, abilities, and the opportunity to make choices).

To be able to collect funds on Facebook, the organization must set up a dedicated page to share their mission and story and then add a donate button to their page header or to specific posts and live videos. Once the button is set, visitors will be able to donate through a website or through Facebook. Of the four studied communities, three of them have an active donate button that leads potential donors to a website (Greenpeace Mexico, Change.org, and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OSCC</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>General description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greenpeace Mexico</td>
<td>925,331</td>
<td>Greenpeace is an independent global campaigning organization that acts to change attitudes and behavior, to protect and conserve the environment and to promote peace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspended coffees USA</td>
<td>357,482</td>
<td>Suspended Coffees is a nonprofit organization partnering with a variety of businesses around the world, helping to bring communities together and change peoples’ lives, by giving free coffee and meals to people in need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change.org</td>
<td>1.5 million</td>
<td>Change.org is the largest online petitions platform in the world. It is revolutionizing the way people cause changes in the network. It allows anyone, anywhere, to start and win campaigns for social change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>6.9 million</td>
<td>UNICEF saves children’s lives, defends their rights, and helps them fulfill their potential. UNICEF was created with this purpose in mind – to work with others to overcome the obstacles that poverty, violence, disease and discrimination place in a child’s path.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Our elaboration with Facebook data.

Table 1. OSCC characteristics.
UNICEF). Even though the Suspended Coffees does not have a donate button on its Facebook page, it does have one to register as member of the community. Once an individual press this button, he/she is taken to a website where he/she can register to receive periodical newsletters and gives the visitor that landed in the website the opportunity to donate through PayPal.

Calls to action are presented in different formats. But the most engaging posts usually have powerful images or videos presenting facts or stories that move individuals into action. Comments on the stories usually contain considerable emotion, either expressed with words or by using one of the six available emojis provided by Facebook to express a reaction (i.e., Like, Love, Haha, Wow, Sad, or Angry emojis). For example, Greenpeace recently published a call to action named “Act for plastic-free oceans.” The video was seen by more than 8000 people, shared with 227, and had almost 500 reactions. Comments contained many expressions of anger and disgust and demanded authorities to provide solutions to the problem.

Hashtags are also used either as calls to action or as symbols of pride and empathy with a cause. For example, after the September 19, 2017, earthquakes in Mexico, most social media users began to use the #FuerzaMexico (#ForceMexico) hashtag. These two words convey a powerful message. They denote the courage and strength needed to rescue the victims and begin to rebuild the destroyed homes and business buildings, but they also mean that even though Mexicans were shocked, scared, and suffering, they still had an inner strength that put them back into their feet. We observed that both Greenpeace Mexico and Change.org began to use the hashtag to encourage people to donate and participate as volunteers. Even though UNICEF did not use the hashtag, they created a specific campaign to raise funds in order to provide safe drinking water and hygiene supplies to Mexican children in need.

3.2. Building a bigger community with a transformative purpose

The studied communities are built around the mission and values of the organizations that they represent. When contrasting our findings with extant literature [14], we discovered that their members engage in the following practices: (1) empathy and solidarity demonstrated through social and emotional support toward the cause; (2) evangelization and inspiration to motivate others to join the cause and join efforts; (3) the celebration of milestones or achievements when the goals are achieved; (4) documentation through narratives, videos, and photos with testimonials of success stories; and (5) the use of specific symbols to recognize followers of the brand (e.g., promotional items with the NGO logo, use of hashtags, and use of common phrases that are shared through the networks).

It was interesting to observe that in these communities, members share a greater purpose that goes beyond their main agenda and their individual goals and mission: the general well-being and welfare of society. While each one of the studied OSCC uses Facebook to publicize their projects, encourage donations, and sensitize their followers, our analysis shows that in these communities there is no competition between causes, but a collaborative work between them. Their administrators usually invite to join other NGOs with similar goals, and even, in situations of great transcendence, they adapt their messages to support other OSCC.

We observed that after the earthquake that occurred in the center of Mexico on September 19, 2017, there was a change in the tone, content, and purpose of the publications of two of the
four communities studied: leaving—temporarily—their traditional publications to focus their attention on the collection of donations, support the victims (people and animals), and awaken collective conscience and sacrificing even immediate objectives of the NGO to join a different project (i.e., provide relief to the victims of the earthquake) with the support, applause, and recognition of the followers of the OSCC. This can be observed in the following comments:

“@GreenpeaceMexico: How can we donate to the rescue teams that are helping the earthquake victims? Can you create a new donate button to raise funds for them?” (K.O.G.)

“@Change.org: we need to create a petition to ask political parties and politicians to donate money for the earthquake victims.” (C.V.B.)

“@Change.org: #eldinerodemisimpuestosparadamnificados (#taxmoneyforearthquakevictims).” (M.Q.D.)

3.2.1. Celebrating achievements of the community

By bringing attention to particular social issues, we found that OSCC can become change agents and a motor of transformation. With almost 1 million of followers, Greenpeace Mexico seeks to promote a change in public and corporate policies for a social and responsible application of environmental solutions. They promote a new model of consumption and production toward a world free of threats to the environment and where the effects of climate change are reduced and mitigated. In order to achieve their goals, they use videos, infographics, and photos with calls to action and specific steps to empower and educate individuals. Each call to action is usually supported with scientific evidence and hard data.

When they reach a milestone, they celebrate it and share posts with the members of the community and other stakeholders. For example, after an intense campaign against an international bakery firm (Do you know what goes into your bread?), which included silent marches and placard protests, Greenpeace announced that the firm was finally giving an answer to the petition by publicly manifesting its commitment to initiate changes in their production processes. The reactions to this victory could not be more enthusiastic:

“You and almost 160,000 other people made the largest bakery in the world take another step and commit to promote organic farming in our country. Let’s celebrate this great victory! Share and let everyone know the news.” (@Greenpeace Mexico)

“Wooooow, I’m super excited. Thanks Green Peace.” (V. G.)

3.3. Nudges and engagement

SNS and social media present a unique research opportunity for observing how donors and supporters of an OSCC respond to organizational communication and engagement efforts. With this netnographic study, we were able to compare extant literature on nudging individuals with the use of behavioral economics, with current OSCC actions. The observation of the dynamics of the four Facebook pages allowed us to identify specific tactics employed by OSCC in their posts and updates to attract donors and volunteers, place call to actions, and raise funds. Our findings are presented in Table 2.
4. A little piece of marketing and managerial advice

We believe our findings can be useful for small NGOs and nonprofits willing to take advantage of SNS to improve their communication efforts with their several stakeholders. These insights can guide the effective design and delivery of marketing and communication strategies based on the use of nudges and incentives.

1. We recommend to study and observe your public. Who are your main stakeholders? What moves them to donate or to volunteer? Which are their main concerns? With information in hand, nonprofit leaders and marketers will be able to select the appropriate channels to communicate with their publics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nudge</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stick to default settings</td>
<td>By liking the Facebook page, users agree to receive notifications and updates in their news feed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give choices</td>
<td>Users can change their privacy settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conform to social norms</td>
<td>Videos or photos that describe how most people should behave in certain situations (e.g., Suspended coffees photos showing a smiling indigent drinking a free cup of coffee previously paid by one customer; a Greenpeace video explaining how to dispose garbage, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce effort</td>
<td>Donate with the click of a button; show your support or disgust with one of the six reaction emojis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce effort</td>
<td>Use of hashtags to join the conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use anchors</td>
<td>Greenpeace and UNICEF provide a list of dollar amounts, so the potential donor can decide how much money he/she will donate to the cause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce reputation risks</td>
<td>The four OSCC disclose information regarding its activities, mission and goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce economic risks</td>
<td>The websites use encryption technology to protect donors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase social recognition and reputation</td>
<td>Other members of the community can see who is online, read the comments, and see the reactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide feedback</td>
<td>Facebook allows users to start a conversation, and receive comments and visual forms of support with the reaction emojis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide incentives</td>
<td>Badges and emojis can be used to celebrate victories, or to recognize community heroes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a sense of community</td>
<td>Hashtags and twibbons are visual signals that members of the community can use to denote their active participation within the OSCC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use heuristics</td>
<td>Infographics are a good tool to educate and empower stakeholders. Step by step or checklists are always useful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Our own elaboration with Facebook data.

Table 2. Examples of nudges and incentives used to engage OSCC stakeholders.
2. Do not limit to one SNS. Nowadays, it is possible to link Instagram and Facebook posts. While the first one is more visual, the second one offers the possibility to share long texts with compelling stories.

3. Use short but powerful hashtags that convey a clear and strong message and provide supporters of your organization with a tool to start a conversation and demonstrate their affinity with your cause.

4. Remember that a good image is worth a thousand words. Use high-quality photos, with people in real situations.

5. Learn to appreciate lurker and sharers. Even if some individuals chose not to comment or react to your post, they can always share it with their peers and attract new visitors to your page.

6. Write emotional stories or use videos to motivate and inspire others.

7. Always be transparent. Share your goals and motives. If your OSCC reaches a milestone, have a virtual celebration. Individuals want to know that their effort (even if it was a small contribution or a simple like) is giving results.

8. Provide badges and twibbons so your followers can show off their support.

9. Protect your stakeholders. Use technology against hackers.

10. Make a bridge with the offline world. Organize public events, take lots of pictures, and then post them on your Facebook page.

11. Make alliances and partnerships with private firms, schools, universities, public officers, and other NGOs. Joint efforts result in bigger achievements.

12. Go local. Get involved with the community and learn about their concerns. Participation will increase when people feels they are solving the next-door neighbor problem.

5. Conclusion

The virtual world has revolutionized social activism and the construction of communities with a social cause. Thanks to the characteristics of the Internet, and particularly of social media platforms, nowadays people can share videos, sign petitions, make donations, and express their point of view by pressing a simple button, becoming participative actors and not mere bystanders. At the same time, digital tools provide OSCC and nonprofits with different elements to connect with key stakeholders, to spur action, and to drive social change. Notably, individuals are responding to call to action with enthusiasm. They have voice and want to be heard by authorities and private companies. And, social media is offering just the right channel for them.

With the use of videos, infographics, and interesting stories, OSCC are empowering individuals to make informed choices. Motivational quotes and images inculcate positive attitudes.
And, the opportunity to openly join the community provides individuals with the opportunity to participate in the much desired social change.

**Nomenclature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>App</td>
<td>Smartphone application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernment organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCC</td>
<td>Online social change community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNS</td>
<td>Social network site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**References**


