

Using Social Media as a Political Tool

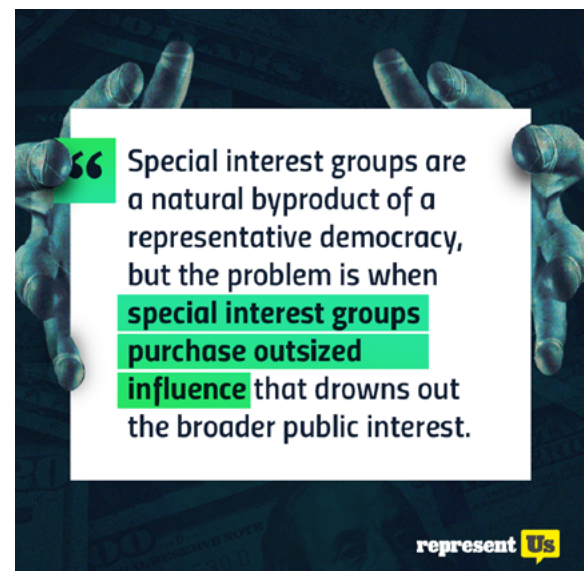
What: The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines social media as “forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as video).” It can be thought of as an online public forum, a place where people can share ideas, thoughts, and opinions. Like most public forums, political content is a part of it.

WHY USE IT AS PART OF POLITICAL ADVOCACY:

- A lot of people use social media
 - » Today [nearly 50% of Americans](#) say they get their news from social media.
- Counter the mis- and dis-information with factual information
 - » While, the fundamental shift from traditional news outlets to digital news and independent news commentators has created new opportunities for tailored content, it’s also created opportunities for spreading misinformation and disinformation. Social media platforms have expressed concern over the difficulties of countering misinformation.
 - » It’s never been more important for those in the pro-democracy movement to take an active role on social media. By leveraging social media to responsibly share factual, engaging content, users can counteract misinformation and help educate folks who aren’t as engaged in the reform movement.
- Provide opportunity to engage others in your campaign
- Advertise events, organizations and groups
- Network with others working on the same issue or in the same campaign

HOW - POSTS YOU SEE:

- Determine if the post is credible
 - » Always important but now even more so with deep fakes and [the use of AI](#)
- Determine if it is fact or opinion
 - » If it makes a claim, does it
 - Have a source attached to it?
 - » If not, can you locate a source quickly and easily?
 - » If it does have a source, is it reputable?



- » Ask some of the following questions?
 - Who is the author? Are they an authority?
 - What is the purpose?
 - Who published it?
 - Why does the source exist?
 - » Is the source part of a larger organization with a clear mission or purpose?
 - » Is it to educate? Entertain? Persuade? Something else?
 - Would other sources report the same?
- » Check for bias
 - If there is a bias, could or should you balance it with a different source?

HOW - WHO YOU FOLLOW

- Follow trusted organizations
- Follow accounts that those trusted organizations connect with
- Encourage others to follow those accounts

HOW - WHAT TO SHARE

- Amplify posts by those trusted accounts
 - » Retweet/Repost
 - Educational posts
 - Event information

HOW - WHEN AND HOW TO RESPOND

- Share facts and sources
- Ask for sources if posts seem questionable

HOW - CREATE CONTENT IN A 5 STEP GUIDE:

- Focus on a Clear Message - stick to one key idea per post
 - » Whether it is about corruption, election reform, or campaign finance, clarity keeps your audience engaged
- Use Powerful Visuals and Text - combine strong, eye-catching visuals with short, bold text that highlight the main issue
 - » For example, text-on-screen videos and infographics are highly effective



- Make it Personal - relate the message to the viewer
 - » Use phrases like “this affects you” or “your vote can change this”
 - » Personal connection is key in political messaging
- Include a Strong Call-to-Action - always end with a clear, compelling call to action
 - » For example, “join us,” “take action now,” or “learn more at [link].”
- Stay Authentic and Concise - keep your tone genuine and direct, avoiding jargon
 - » Political posts should feel relatable, not overly formal or corporate

The pro-democracy movement needs a stronger voice on social media.

It’s never been more important for those in the pro-democracy movement to take an active role on social media. By leveraging social media to responsibly share factual, engaging content, activists can counteract misinformation and help educate folks who aren’t as engaged in the reform movement.

To reach the broadest audience, consider messaging that avoids excluding people. Like it or not, many of us view political leanings like sports teams. So if you focus on individuals, political parties, and hot-button issues, you’re unlikely to change someone’s mindset - just as you’re unlikely to convince someone to switch their sports team. But if you focus on the nonpartisan nature of systemic issues in the political system, you’re far more likely to reach that same person. You may disagree with someone about a candidate or a party, but chances are you both agree on many of the same reforms [for which RepresentUs advocates.](#)



“This isn’t about red vs blue. This is about corrupt politics vs ‘we the people.’”

It’s also important to remember that identifying a problem without offering a solution does little to better any discussion. Consider the RepresentUs “[Strategy to end corruption,](#)” which points to shared values and nonpartisan solutions to address the problems we all face in America’s broken political system.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You can be your network’s primary news source for nonpartisan, pro-democracy reforms. Every time you uplift inspiring and thought-provoking content, you’re educating your immediate network and amplifying the policy goals of the pro-democracy movement. Don’t be afraid to use your social media for good - let’s get to work!