

Creating Grassroots Movements for Change: A Field Manual

VERSION 1.0

**ALLIANCE OF
YOUTH
MOVEMENTS** | Summit



Field Manual Contents

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Please note: This is a working document based on initial conversations with Summit participants as well as their responses to an extensive survey. The Field Manual will be updated after the Summit based on the discussions and best practices shared during the conference. We encourage collaboration from all interested parties; the end of each chapter includes a link to the corresponding Howcast wiki guide, where users can edit their own version. For the latest updates, always check info.howcast.com/youthmovements/fieldmanual.

Preface

In May 2007, coalition troops in Iraq discovered an al-Qaeda “how-to” manual at a terrorist safe house just outside of Baghdad. The manual provided guidance on how to torture enemies, recruit new members, and carry out terrorist attacks. This is not the only such toxic tutorial in circulation. A number of extremist groups are spreading information over the internet detailing how to make bombs and disseminate violence.

On December 3, 2008, the Alliance of Youth Movements gathered for three days to promote their own guide, to stand together and say that hope, not fear, is the greatest viral virtue. Seventeen of the world’s most successful antiviolence movements that began online shared and synthesized their best practices, and the result is *Creating Grassroots Movements for Change: A Field Manual*, which can be found at Howcast.com (<http://info.howcast.com/youthmovements/fieldmanual>). This manual is a “how-to” guide for individuals and organizations looking to push back against violence and oppression. All youth around the world who choose to stand up against violent extremism are encouraged to download, forward, email, comment on, and post links to the manual. The Alliance of Youth Movements is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that stands ready to help. Visit the Alliance of Youth Movements at <http://youthmovements.howcast.com/>

Warning

Think strategically and realistically when forming a grassroots movement. The best—and safest—way to do so depends on your circumstances; if there are oppressive or violent elements at work in your country or region, simply talking about your cause could put your freedom or very life in danger. If you believe that you may be at risk, please consult Chapter 7: “Potential Challenges” before proceeding with any action. Above all, know what is and isn’t allowed in your specific circumstance so that you never unwittingly put yourself or others in harm’s way.

Chapter 1: Getting Started

Rich or poor, free or oppressed, there exists in everyone the power to rise up against social injustice, to simply say, “No more.” But you don’t have to speak out alone, or even loudly. After all, a million whispers can drown out even the loudest voice of tyranny.

Before you can get started, you will need:

- A desire for change
- Creativity
- A computer with internet access
- Friends and family to solicit for advice

Take the following steps to harness the conviction of your ideals:

Step 1. Choose your cause

Many movements begin in response to a particular incident, but any issue or cause that you’re passionate about has potential. Talk to people about your idea to confirm others are interested—a cause needs to be widely accessible and broadly supported for your movement to be successful.

Tip 1: *Research news archives to find incidents or injustices tied to your cause. Real-world examples will help persuade people that your cause is relevant and important.*

Step 2. Consider names

A catchy name for your movement helps build your “brand.” People who may know nothing about your cause will create an initial perception of who you are and what you stand for based on your name alone, so pick something that represents your beliefs and sounds like a call to action. For instance, a phrase like “Million Voices Against ...” is popular because it sounds like it already has popular support, and it clearly defines a cause.

Step 3. Choose a name

When you have a list of several possible names, search for them online and on various social-networking sites and reject any that already exist or sound too similar to another group. Ask friends what ideas your remaining names conjure up, and weed out any that seem unclear or have negative connotations until you’ve settled on a winner. Ideally, you’ll be able to secure a URL to match.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Young Civilians, a group dedicated to establishing a liberal democracy in Turkey and opposing military intervention in Turkish politics, chose a red sneaker as their logo—an irreverent protest against the army boot. Visit the Young Civilians at <http://www.gencsiviller.net/>

Tip 2: Consider using an acronym to make a long or unwieldy name catchier. If your name needs to be easily translatable, however, an acronym might prove difficult, or signify something negative in another language. When possible, check foreign translations of your top choices before settling on one.

Step 4. Develop a mission statement

A mission statement clearly defines the specific goal of your movement and tells the world what you stand for. It will also help keep your group focused on your ultimate objective and serve as a means by which you can measure your own success as you grow. Solicit ideas on what the goals of your movement should be, and from that list write a simple, concise statement of purpose.

Step 5. Design a logo

A logo, whether it's your movement's name in a stylized font or a symbol that represents your goals, should help visually communicate your mission statement. Keep it simple and in black and white so that it can be easily reproduced, but distinctive enough that it can become a recognizable symbol of everything you stand for.

Tip 3: Consider incorporating a national symbol, or symbol of some historical or cultural significance, into your logo—it will help galvanize support and inspire pride in your cause. Avoid using or mimicking corporate or commercial logos, however, as they may be registered trademarks.

Step 6. Craft a message

Your name, mission statement, and logo will all help convey your goals, but you'll also need to craft a more detailed message for your online presence, emails, and press releases. This message should communicate powerfully and memorably why this cause matters, and why people should care. Cite an example of the injustice that you seek to address, as well as the manner in which your movement intends to effect change.

“You must have a central motivator; a history, an event, a detonator, which touches the fiber of people and is the hook by which people feel motivated to join.”

Oscar Morales

ONE MILLION VOICES AGAINST THE FARC
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6684734468>

“Our mission is to end genocide and mass atrocities. We are a network of community and student leaders empowered to protect civilians, stop perpetrators, and hold policy-makers accountable. We envision a world without genocide where all human beings live free from widespread, intentional, and systematic violence.”

Mission Statement

GENOCIDE INTERVENTION NETWORK
<http://www.genocideintervention.net/>

CASE STUDY

In 2007, Buddhist monks captured the world's attention when they filled the streets of Burma's capital to protest military rule. The demonstrations inspired students Alex Bookbinder, Imran Jamal, Sophie Lwin, and others to launch a Facebook group called “Support The Monks' Protest In Burma,” which counted 450,000 members at its peak. Out of this group emerged the Burma Global Action Network (BGAN), which expanded on the online success. Dedicated to promoting the struggle for justice and democracy in Burma, BGAN has developed into a worldwide network of young human-rights activists speaking out against the atrocities and brutal rule of the country's junta.

Visit the Burma Global Action Network at <http://www.burma-network.com/>

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2448-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-1-Getting-Started>

Chapter 2: Building Your Online Platform

DID YOU KNOW?

On a typical day, 13% of all internet users visit a social-networking site.

The good news is that your audience is probably already online—you just need to make it easy for them to find you. Create social networking groups, design a web site, and tie everything together into a unified platform. The internet is a new movement's best friend, when it's used strategically—all you need is a computer and your cause.

Before you can get started, you will need:

- A computer with internet access
- A mission statement
- Facts and figures
- An FAQ
- Videos, brochures, newsletters, and blogs

The following steps will help you create an online platform that not only accurately reflects your movement's goals, but ensures its message will reach the greatest number of people:

Step 1. Research social networking sites

Explore a variety of social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Orkut, Bebo, and Hi5. Choose a few you like best—there's no need to restrict yourself to just one. If you're already a member of several, start with the one where you have the most connections.

Tip 1: *While you should choose a platform you're comfortable with, be savvy about what kind of audiences the sites reach. For example, people in Brazil and Iran are more likely to use Orkut, while in many other countries Facebook has the most users.*

Step 2. Create a group

Sign up for each site that you've chosen and create a group page for your movement. Remember that looks sell—you want to convey your message cleanly and clearly. Use a simple, straightforward design that presents the most important information first, such as who you are and your basic message.

Tip 2: *While you want your site to look professional, it's a good idea to maintain an element of passion, energy, and fun.*

Step 3. Build a web site

Keeping in mind the design principles you used to build your social-networking groups, create a stand-alone web site for your movement that allows you to offer more content and present your ideas in greater depth. This will also help you reach people who may not be members of the social-networking groups you've chosen. Many different publishing and blogging platforms, such as WordPress, Blogger, and Ning, allow you to set up a basic site for free.

Tip 3: *Choose a URL that is easy to remember—just make sure another group is not already using it. A web registration service like Whois.net can provide this information.*

Step 4. Spread out your information

Post your mission statement, facts and figures, member profiles, upcoming events, and an FAQ, but not all on the home page. Most people can't digest a lot of facts at once, so spread your information evenly across the site. Put just the most important information and time-sensitive notices on the home page, and direct people to other, more detailed pages with links.

Step 5. Include a variety of sources

To make your site more interesting and informative, include a variety of additional content—like videos, brochures, newsletters, articles, discussion forums, and blogs. Include related links to other relevant materials on the web.

Step 6. Link your sites together

Link all your sites and networking groups to each other to create a unified online cause. That way your audience can choose how they want to keep in touch with the movement.

Step 7. Keep your sites current

Keep all your sites up-to-date and consistent with each other. Now you're ready to start actively drawing in members.

Herman Lochner, founder of One Million People against Crime in South Africa, suggests keeping the following three principles in mind when building a web site:

- It should look good and be professional—design matters.
- It must work properly, which includes both sound usability and simple, clear information design.
- It needs a fun component; It should be a journey, not only something that does the job.

Visit One Million People against Crime in South Africa at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6340297802>

“We are in the midst of uncertain times, but I am hopeful about the future because young people are using social-networking sites for change in every corner of the globe. They are building civil society in places never before imaginable, standing up to violent extremism wherever it exists and for the first time, are really aware of their value as a demographic.”

Jared Cohen

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

<http://blog.facebook.com/blog.php?post=39269812130>

“Online platforms represent a unique and new means to reach unprecedented large audiences across national boundaries in a very cost-effective way. Online platforms are the way in which today’s young people are communicating. Every social movement should learn to employ online tools and benefit from harnessing the power of the Internet to promote their cause”

Marc Wachtenheim
CAMBIO

http://www.cubacambio.org/index_english.cfm

For the Howcast video “How To Create a Grassroots Movement Using Social-Networking Sites,” visit <http://www.howcast.com/videos/88596-How-To-Create-a-Grassroots-Movement-Using-Social-Networking-Sites>

For the Howcast video “How To Launch a Human-Rights Blog,” visit <http://www.howcast.com/videos/88721-How-To-Launch-a-Human-Rights-Blog>

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2451-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-2-Building-Your-Online-Platform>

Chapter 3: Recruiting

Your movement is poised to take off, but the way you spread your message will have a huge impact on the extent to which it reaches potential members. Remember: A grassroots movement depends on the power of many. The more members you can recruit, the stronger you become. To effectively grow your membership, you will need:

- A computer with internet access
- One or more group profiles on social-networking sites
- Friends and contacts
- An email address
- A mobile phone

These steps will ensure your message is spread far and wide:

Step 1. Get your friends on board

Approach people you know first. Invite everyone you’re already friends with on the social-networking sites you’re using; if you’ve just joined and aren’t already linked to friends, seek out family members, childhood friends, classmates, coworkers, and any other acquaintances who know you by name. Not only are they likely to join your group—after all, they probably know about your dedication to this cause and will take the invitation seriously—their membership will help legitimize your movement.

Tip 1: Consider talking to or sending personalized messages to these initial contacts, especially if they don’t know you well enough to know of your dedication to this cause.

Step 2. Grow by referral

Ask every new member to invite all their friends to join the group. Support creates attention, and attention creates more support in a snowball effect; the faster you're able to grow your membership, the more willing and excited people will be to join and invite their friends.

Tip 2: *Sites like Facebook and MySpace have news feeds that alert site users when their friends join a new group. So the faster your numbers grow, the more users will notice your name, visit your group out of curiosity—and hopefully join out of conviction.*

Step 3. Take advantage of existing groups

Make contact with other groups that have a similar mission or would be sympathetic to your cause. Ask the creators or administrators of online communities and blogs to advertise your group by posting links, notices, and invitations in solidarity with your mission.

Step 4. Contribute to discussion forums

Search for discussion forums on sites like Google Groups and Yahoo Groups that relate to your region or cause—anywhere your target audience might frequent—and post short, powerful messages about the injustice your group addresses and links to your group.

Step 5. Use video platforms

If videos exist that document the problems you're fighting or that highlight your movement, take advantage of video platforms like YouTube, Howcast, MySpace, Dailymotion, and Metacafe to drive viewers to your group. You can also upload your own videos to these sites.

Step 6. Send mass emails

Collect and organize a database of email addresses from members, friendly organizations, and other contacts who might be interested in your cause. Send them a plea that's concise and includes links to your group online as well as any supporting material, like articles or videos that illustrate why they should care.

Tip 3: *Don't spam—you'll lose credibility and members. Maintain excellent organization of your database, refrain from sending messages too frequently, and allow recipients a way to easily and effectively remove themselves, or "unsubscribe," from your list.*

Step 7. Encourage member marketing

Some of your members will likely have an interest in helping to spread the word and attract a larger audience. Include information on your site about how they could help by starting their own blogs on the topic, creating a signature that directs recipients to your group, and referencing the group in their personal social network profiles and status updates.

Step 8. Search engine optimize

Put some effort into search engine optimization so that your web site will be easily found by search engines like Google. Use the most important keywords to your cause on your site frequently, and code them into your HTML. Request other sites to link to you, and ensure that your site pages are indexed, or able to be crawled, by visiting search engine directories, such as Google Webmaster Tools, and submitting a feed.

Step 9. Advertise

If you have the funds and the freedom, consider advertising online or off. Facebook's and Google's advertising services allow clients to target by keywords, which could help put your group in front of interested users. A less expensive option is to hand out flyers or pamphlets at populated public spaces or events.

Step 10. Be compelling

Above all else, be passionate about your cause and honest about your group's motives and goals. Members will be attracted to your dedication and clarity of vision.

CASE STUDY

Genocide Intervention Network, a movement founded to provide a systematic response to the recurring problem of genocide, began as the idea of some American college students. They built a web site and Facebook and MySpace groups, and then recruited volunteer student outreach coordinators. These coordinators were charged with contacting and working with existing Darfur groups on high school and college campuses nationwide, as well as creating new chapters, which they did via email, posts on student activities boards, and phone calls.

Visit Genocide Intervention Network at <http://www.genocideintervention.net/>

CASE STUDY

Fight-Back, a group launched in India to resist gender violence around the globe, aims to engage people “where they live, work, and play.” To that end, they hung posters around colleges, media outlets, advertising agencies, and apartment buildings; their TV commercials ran in a number of coffee shops and restaurants around the country; and their specially designed wallet cards were distributed outside women’s restrooms in train stations and at a series of popular rock concerts.

Visit *Fight-Back* at <http://www.fight-back.net/>

DID YOU KNOW?

As of 2008, the Save Darfur Coalition had more than one million members of its Facebook cause, 1 million names on its email list, 43,500 MySpace friends, and 26,000 web site members.

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2449-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-3-Recruiting>

Chapter 4: Building Discourse

So, now you’ve got a lot of members—how do you keep them active and engaged? Building a lively—but civil—discourse is crucial to the life of any movement. Here’s how you can keep your membership interested—and talking to each other.

Before you can get started, you will need:

- A computer with internet access
- Online platforms, like blogs and message boards
- A sense of diplomacy

Follow these steps to keep your members committed to the movement:

DID YOU KNOW?

Youth for Tolerance, a group promoting respect and acceptance of diversity in Lebanon, created a Facebook game called “Whack-a-Politician,” which let players bonk politicians with a virtual gavel to prevent their inflammatory speeches.

Step 1. Stimulate conversation

Liven up the discourse. Come up with interesting topics that are relevant to your group, and invite everyone to discuss them on your online platforms, like blogs and message boards. Don’t be afraid to ask your group for input. Ask questions and consider current events, ongoing controversies, studies, statistics, and big-picture ideas—the more galvanizing the subject the better. Your group must engage the world passionately and honestly to maintain its relevance.

Tip 1: *On your forums and message boards, designate your key conversation starters to be “sticky topics,” which means they’ll stay at the top of the page and not get buried under less-important threads.*

Step 2. Respond to questions, concerns, and crises

Respond to any questions, concerns, and crises raised by your group. Let contributors feel that their voices are being heard, and assure everyone that they are integral to the community. Allow members to vote on group actions, or at least explain decisions you or the group leadership makes.

Step 3. Moderate the discussion

Play the mediator when the discussion gets heated. It’s your group—it’s up to you to keep it together. Emphasize mutual respect, and keep the discourse well mannered and civil. If factions develop, remind members that while they might disagree on some points, they all share a common goal.

Tip 2: *However, if someone flagrantly crosses the line—and refuses to apologize for their comments—don’t hesitate to ban them from the discussion. It is your responsibility to keep the conversation not only useful but civil.*

Step 4. Microblog to keep the group informed

Use microblogging sites, such as Twitter, and microblogging social-networking features, like status updates on Facebook, to send your

members short updates on what's going on. You can point out new initiatives, challenges, successes, events, and activities—it all helps to foster interest and a sense of involvement in the community.

Tip 3: *That said, don't bombard your membership with meaningless messages. Keep it relevant, and only send out large bulletins for important developments.*

Step 5. Keep content fresh

Continue to refresh your online presence, posting new updates, pictures, and videos to your web sites, discussion boards, and blogs. New content is crucial to keep members engaged.

Step 6. Encourage involvement

Recognize that your members will have differing interests. For some, just joining the group will be enough, but others will want to take a more active role. Encourage their participation by offering a variety of ways to engage beyond discussion, like submitting logo designs, distributing materials, uploading photos or videos, etc. It will give your members a sense of community and help the group flourish.

Step 7. Prepare to scale

If your group grows faster than you're able to manage, your members will lose interest. For example, most social networking sites like Facebook limit group messages to relatively small memberships, meaning large social networking groups cannot send out mass communications. Stay organized. Maintain databases of email addresses and/or mobile phone numbers from your inception so when your group grows you'll be able to stay in touch via email even if you can't use your social networking site to do so.

CASE STUDY

Elias Kuri, Iluminemos México's founder, suggests the following for encouraging and maintaining discourse.

- *Have a clear objective and identify concrete, measurable, and achievable actions that the group can take.*
- *Address and answer all questions, comments and emails from people, regardless of whether they were for or against the cause. People are grateful that you take the time to reply.*
- *Consider creating pre-agreed rules—and determine sanctions for failing to respect the agreement.*

Visit Iluminemos México at <http://www.iluminemosmexico.org.mx/>

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2450-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-4-Building-Discourse>

Chapter 5: Taking Action

Now that you have a committed online membership, it's time to act offline. Transform your movement from a virtual phenomenon to a real-world presence by staging a march, protest, rally, sit-in, sleep-in, or other political act, such as circulating a petition and presenting it to lawmakers. Remember, sometimes actions speak louder than words.

Warning

Know the law in your area. If public gatherings or demonstrations are forbidden, planning and participating in one can put you and your group members at risk of imprisonment or worse. Even peaceful civil disobedience in the most liberal democracies can result in detainment by the authorities.

Before you can take action, you will need:

- A computer with internet access
- An online platform for your movement
- Time to plan and organize

Take the following steps to organize an offline political event:

Step 1. Choose an action

Decide what kind of political act your movement should undertake. Think about what will make the most impact given the cause you're supporting. If you're unsure, you can always put the question to the group: Are they interested in holding a march, rally, protest, sit-in, or sleep-in? Use your online platforms, such as message boards and blogs, to test out ideas. Whatever the decision, it's crucial that you harness the support of the group.

Tip 1: *Once you've settled on an act, continue to solicit feedback and ideas on how to carry it out. Keep the group engaged—you never know where good ideas might come from, and a real-world activity may encourage new members.*

Step 2. Pick a place, date, and time

Choose your location. Whether it's a city park or a government building's plaza, make sure it suits the type of demonstration you're planning. If possible, find a spot with historical or cultural resonance. When picking a date, see if your event can coincide with a significant anniversary. As for timing, figure out when the most number of people will be able to participate: a weekend? During their lunch hour? In the evening?

Step 3. Appoint local organizers

Think beyond your online audience. Every member of your group is linked to a large number of people who aren't in your group. To leverage these connections, you'll need to appoint local organizers who can canvass their particular community for support. Send an invitation via your online platform asking for volunteers. Collect their email addresses, and track what communities they will be reaching out to.

Tip 2: *Give this role a title, such as "ambassador," "community organizer," or "municipal leader," so that the volunteers feel empowered and involved.*

Step 4. Congratulate the organizers

Send a mass email to the community organizers

congratulating them on being chosen and expressing your enthusiasm for their commitment to the cause. You'll convey your appreciation, get everybody on the same email chain, and energize your team.

Step 5. Distribute guidelines

Come up with broad guidelines for the event, both philosophical (such as the purpose and goals) and practical (such as dates, times, geographic boundaries of the event, and directions to the location). Distribute them to your local organizers.

Tip 3: *Make sure that your event complies with all legal rules and regulations. If you need to apply for any permits, do so well in advance.*

Step 6. Announce your event

Announce your event on all your online platforms, and use digital notices, such as event invitations on Facebook, to increase awareness. Publicize the event offline, too, with flyers, posters, and simple word of mouth.

Step 7. Distribute the specifics

Draft a logistical plan for your event. For example, if you're planning a protest, come up with slogans, tactics, timelines, specific objectives, and potential challenges. Think about potential presenters and speeches. Send the plan to your organizers and ask for their feedback. Make it clear that this is only a draft.

Tip 4: *Think beyond just having a catchy slogan or chant. You can use costumes, specific colors, props, or stunt-like performances to make your point. Just be careful not to undermine your message by veering into the realm of bad taste.*

"We tell people to turn off their computers and go spend time with other people or get the help they need."

Jamie Tworowski
To Write Love On Her Arms
<http://www.twloha.com/>

Step 8. Revise and redistribute

Revise your plan based on the input from your organizers, and redistribute an updated plan. Ask for volunteers to take on all tasks that need to

be accomplished at the event, like distributing literature or setting up a loudspeaker. Discuss emergency procedures and be sure to have contact information on hand for legal and medical assistance should the need arise.

Step 9. Keep up communication

Keep up constant communication with your organizers as the day of your action draws near. That way you'll be aware of any confusion, last-minute problems, and changes to the plan that might have to be made.

Step 10. Enjoy

Enjoy your event! Keep presentations brief and to the point, and refrain from any incendiary language. Be provocative, but peaceful. As it's unfolding, be sure to take note of anything that might be improved upon next time, and take plenty of video and photos for future use and inspiration.

Step 11. Follow up

Engage in any follow-up action that might help further your cause, such as presenting lawmakers and media outlets with any petitions, resolutions, or multimedia that came out of your event.

Step 12. Thank the participants

Thank all your participants on your online platforms, and provide an outlet for their photos, videos, or comments from the day of the event.

Step 13. Thank the organizers

Send a special email singling out and thanking your organizers. Ask them for any suggestions for how the event could have been improved.

DID YOU KNOW?

Just one month after starting as a group on Facebook, One Million Voices Against the FARC mobilized protests attended by 12 million people in over 40 countries around the world.

CASE STUDY

In 2001, a mass demonstration in Manila helped topple the corrupt government of Filipino President Joseph Estrada. Fifteen years before, protesters gathered in the same spot to bring down the authoritarian regime of Ferdinand Marcos.

CASE STUDY

When allegations of voter fraud and political corruption swirled around the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election, supporters of the opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko conducted mass protests, strikes, and sit-ins swathed in orange, the color of Yushchenko's campaign. Their efforts became known as the Orange Revolution, which succeeded in Ukraine's parliament implementing political reform, the Supreme Court declaring a revote, and Yushchenko ultimately securing the presidency.

“We tell people to turn off their computers and go spend time with other people or get the help they need”

Jamie Tworowski
TO WRITE LOVE ON HER ARMS
<http://www.twloha.com/>

“We learned early on that, at a national level, the best use of the online organizing was an entry point for people to connect, then meet offline. You cannot have just an online community. It's not real. It can disappear at the click of a button. You have to combine the two.”

Janessa Goldbeck
GENOCIDE INTERVENTION NETWORK
<http://www.genocideintervention.net/>

For the Howcast video “How To Smart Mob,” visit <http://www.howcast.com/videos/88587-How-To-Smart-Mob>

For the Howcast video “How To Protest Without Violence,” visit <http://www.howcast.com/videos/88725-How-To-Protest-Without-Violence>

For the Howcast video “How To Be an Effective Dissident,” visit <http://www.howcast.com/videos/88612-How-To-Be-an-Effective-Dissident>

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2452-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-5-Taking-Action>

Chapter 6: Attracting Media Attention

Capturing the attention of local, national, and international media will spread the news of your cause and activities far and wide. Whether a reporter prints a notice about your upcoming rally in a small-town paper or a major television outlet runs a primetime special about your movement, the press you receive can generate interest, increase your membership, and create untold opportunities.

Warning

If there is limited freedom of the press where you live or where your cause is focused, attempting to disseminate information could put you or others in danger. Proceed with caution.

To get press coverage, you will need:

- A strong cause
- A computer with internet access
- Media email addresses
- Communication skills
- Events
- Sharp timing
- Determination and patience

Take the following steps to ensure the media hears about—and is sympathetic to—your cause:

Step 1. Be relevant and timely

The media wants to cover topics that are of interest to as many of their readers or viewers as possible, so the more socially relevant, and of the moment, your movement is, the more likely they will be interested. Further, the press must feel confident that your goals are noble and free from hidden agendas—in other words, that your movement deserves press to promote your cause, not you personally or anyone else.

Step 2. Develop contacts

Collect the email addresses of as many individual members of the media as you can off the internet and send each of them a personalized message. Seek out outlets and individuals who have an interest in your cause or have reported on similar issues before.

Tip 1: *Email addresses tend to be consistent within an organization: a first initial followed by the last name, for example, such as `jsmith@localnews.com`. If you have the address of one person, use it to deduce the addresses of other people at the same outlet.*

Step 3. Develop relationships

Try to develop personal relationships with as many people in the media as you can; if a contact replies to you, take the opportunity to politely begin a conversation. Being on the media's radar might not generate press now, but chances are that it will, eventually.

Step 4. Call on others

Ask or appoint group members to contact the local press in multiple cities, and call upon anyone sympathetic to your cause who has a prior relationship with the press to make contacts on your behalf. There may even be group members who are journalists themselves.

Tip 2: *If you have members who live abroad, or if you've made contact with foreign ambassadors or any visiting dignitaries, ask them to contact media outlets where they live. This can help garner the attention of the international media, especially if the media is restricted in your country.*

Step 5: Be strategic

Determine the best audiences to target, and the media outlets that reach those audiences. Personalize your communication with each outlet to position your message and relate your story in a way that will convince them that their readers or viewers should know about your cause.

Tip 3: *If you have a leadership structure within your group or members who are willing and able to take on responsibility, divide the duties of press communication among a few people, with one person in charge of keeping the information and message uniform. This will help your movement develop contacts more effectively and ensure your group will always deliver news as it happens.*

Step 6: Communicate effectively

Ensure your group's reliability and legitimacy by providing the press with information that is accurate, spelled correctly, and grammatically correct, both in correspondence and in any literature your group creates, whether online or off. Keep your message simple, consistent, and to the point.

Step 7: Use press releases

Write a press release when you need to disseminate critical information quickly, like to alert the media to an upcoming event or a recent success. Keep it as short as possible to increase the likelihood that it will be read and understood, email your contacts with a brief summary to alert them prior to its release, and post it on any of the numerous free newswire organizations. If it will not put you at risk, include your contact information on every communication you issue.

Tip 4: *Create a media kit that contains images of your events to send to outlets that didn't attend, and post them online so they're always available for reproduction.*

Step 8: Be compelling

Allow the passion that drew you to this cause to inform your communication with the media. Journalists are interested in compelling and engaging stories, whether it's a clearly articulated injustice or the experiences that led to your group's founding. Convince them that they should care on a personal level—in the same way that you call the community and group to action—and you'll create powerful champions for your cause.

Step 9: Have events

The media is far more likely to cover an event or activity than an idea or discussion, no matter how important or spirited. Give them a reason to cover your movement by hosting a rally, march, sit-in, fundraiser, or some other kind of awareness-raising event. Make it appealingly innovative, keep it well organized and publicized, and give the media plenty of advance notice.

Step 10: Host press conferences

When you have an announcement that you want to receive broad and immediate attention, announce a press conference and invite all your contacts in the media. Tell them the topic that will be discussed, like the details of a major initiative, and what other outlets may be coming. You want the media to feel

confident that your press conference will be worth their time to attend.

Tip 5: *Choose the location of your press conference wisely, like a place that has historical significance to your cause: even better if it provides a great visual backdrop for photographs and television footage.*

Step 11: Follow up

Stay in touch with your contacts in the media, and follow up, particularly when there's some new angle or information to give them. If you've had a successful event or enjoyed press from another outlet, seize this momentum and make your case again that you are more socially relevant and deserving of attention than ever. And when you do receive press, let the reporter know you appreciate it.

Step 12: Take advantage of controversy

Now and then, your movement may generate controversy or dissent. Perhaps you'll receive bad press, or maybe detractors will spread rumors about your leadership. Whatever the case, use the negative attention to your advantage by publicly responding. Stay on message, avoid sounding defensive, and remain true to your ideals.

Tip 6: *Consider using humor or taking a creative approach to capitalize on attention, like posting a satirical response to a negative article.*

Step 13: Be popular

The best way to get the press's attention is to enjoy popular support. If your online social-networking group gains members very quickly, if word of mouth about your cause spreads on the street, or if an event you hold attracts huge numbers of participants, the press will hear about you and will contact you directly. And the more coverage you receive, the more coverage you'll generate. As more and more journalists hear, read, or see press about your movement, they'll want to talk about, write about, or broadcast your story, too.

DID YOU KNOW?

When Save Darfur Coalition rallies in New York City and Washington D.C. gathered tens of thousands of people in 2006, the group scored a photo on the front page of The New York Times.

CASE STUDY

Five days after starting a Facebook group, *One Million Voices Against the FARC* was the most popular network in Colombia. The movement created a press release and collected a database of over 100 journalists to alert them to this phenomenon. The local newspaper *El Tiempo* devoted an editorial to the movement, which was picked up by *Agence France-Presse* and *Reuters*, beginning an international groundswell of press that quickly included *CNN*, *Radio France Internationale*, *Univision*, *Italy's RAI*, *Brazil's Globo*, *El País* of Spain, *La Nación* of Argentina, *El Heraldo de México*, *The Miami Herald*, *The New York Times*, and *The Economist*.

CASE STUDY

Worried that the average press release seemed more self-promotional than cause-promotional, the Lebanese group *Youth for Tolerance* generated their own media, filming and editing advertisements against war and blind allegiances. With limited means and no outside assistance, they created simple but high-quality 30-second infomercials that several local TV stations agreed to run for free.

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2453-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-6-Attracting-Media-Attention>

Chapter 7: Potential Challenges

Who said making a difference would be easy? As you work to create change, you will face potential challenges that you must address head on. Take them in stride, and don't lose sight of the big picture—you're making the world a better place.

Warning

A grassroots movement must always operate strategically and realistically. Carefully examine the situation in your country and identify any tyrannical or violent elements that might do you harm. Remain vigilant and aware of your circumstances to avoid putting yourself or others in danger.

Before you can get started, you will need:

- A computer with internet access
- Appropriate software
- A little technical know-how
- Understanding of local law
- Contingency plans

Take the following steps to overcome potential challenges:

Step 1. Know your legal rights

In most countries, you can develop an online movement free from government harassment. However, some might be uncooperative or—in the case of those that are severely repressive or totalitarian—threaten, imprison, or physically harm you. Know your legal rights, and when possible, work within the laws of the land.

Tip 1: Contact human-rights organizations for pro bono legal advice, which can help you find creative methods of expression that don't break the law.

Step 2. Find common ground

Find common ground. Government should exist to solve the problems of the people. Unless you're working within a repressive regime, you should be able to find a common goal. Emphasize that your movement seeks to build, not destroy, and, if possible, pitch your message in a way that makes it attractive to the government.

Tip 2: Consider allying yourself with a popular movement the government already tolerates. It will lend you legitimacy and make you appear less threatening.

Step 3. Gather local support

If you worry your movement might be seen as undermining other, established groups, work locally to gather broad, grassroots support. You never want to be perceived as an outsider parachuting in. With local support, your group will be better protected everywhere it operates. Doing the will of the people can bring security.

Step 4. Circumvent internet censorship

Some governments employ proxy servers to filter web content, permitting access to some sites while blocking others. You must find ways to access sites where you can post information about your group, as well as others you may need to research your cause. There are several ways to get around content filters, such as viewing cached pages, using alternate domain names, employing a web-based circumvention service, visiting mirror sites, and running tunneling or anonymizing software (such as the Tor browser bundle).

See the Howcast wiki guide *How To Circumvent an Internet Proxy* at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2446-How-To-Circumvent-an-Internet-Proxy> and the video at <http://www.howcast.com/videos/90601-How-To-Circumvent-an-Internet-Proxy>

Warning

Accessing restricted content can be a serious violation of the law in certain places. It may also violate workplace policies. Proceed with circumvention practices cautiously.

Step 5. Tell the truth

Your group should always have a reputation for telling the truth—but it is especially important when fighting a government or political body that relies on censorship and the spread of disinformation. Your greatest strength will be your honesty.

Step 6. Protect your group's identity

If you feel threatened, protect the identities of your group members. Do as much communication as you can anonymously, and maintain rigorous privacy and security standards, both online and off. Keep a particularly close watch on your database of contact information.

Tip 3: *If you feel you can't properly secure your data, do not keep a list of contact information.*

Step 7. Look for signs of investigation

Look for signs that your group is being investigated. In a repressive society, assume that someone is always watching. Be aware of visits by government agents or any strangers asking questions of group members, friends, employers, landlords, and family members. Use disposable cell phones and watch for mail tampering. Look for suspicious people at your public events, particularly any non-media members taking lots of photographs. Keep a record

of any signs of surveillance, in case you might have legal recourse.

Tip 4: *While it is important to be vigilant, do not let paranoia paralyze you or cloud your judgment.*

Step 8. Marginalize violent fringe

Your movement may include a particularly vocal subset. Should they advocate violence or become violent in any way, take steps to marginalize them. First, communicate your concerns and encourage them to reject violence. If they refuse, take steps to eject them from the group.

Step 9. Deal with infiltration

If you suspect your group has been infiltrated by an outside negative element, confront the person in a safe place in a small-group setting. Ask them to leave the group. If you suspect someone but have no proof, ask probing questions and try to confirm the details of the answers. If the person has been in any way disruptive, calmly ask them to leave the group. If you remain unsure of their loyalty, limit the person's access to any important information and keep them under watch. But remember, in general, you want to instill a culture of openness and honesty, not suspicion.

Step 10. Prepare for the worst

Be prepared in the event that, despite your best efforts, you become the victim of harassment, false allegations or charges, intense surveillance, detention, or physical threats. Safely hide any documents important to you and the organization, as well as all documentation of human-rights violations and other abuses, and send copies somewhere inaccessible to those who would do you harm, like to a trusted overseas sympathizer or journalist.

Step 11. Prepare contingency plans

Your efforts, and particularly any offline actions, could put you and your group members at serious risk, especially if you are operating in a region that limits individual freedoms. In the case of detainment in most democratic countries, the first course of action would be to contact a qualified attorney, who could provide counsel before you offered any information to law enforcement officials. Other forms of government, however, may have very different legal systems. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with local laws and enforcement policies and techniques. If possible, consult regional experts for advice on the best

way to respond if detained or threatened by local authorities, and make sure all members of your group are apprised of any response plans should detention occur.

“Our movement has been the target of threats and sabotage by supporters of the Venezuelan government. But we know that we are the majority, and they have failed to intimidate us. The key is to have the courage to face aggression and to stay focused on your goal.”

Juan David Lacouture
No Más Chávez
<http://www.libertadydemocracia.com/>

CASE STUDY

CAMBIO, the campaign to bring democracy to Cuba, has organized several rallies and marches, and although the demonstrations have been small due to Cuba’s repressive regime, they have not been without consequence. In October 2007, 70 students peacefully marched through Havana wearing CAMBIO materials. The police subsequently detained most of them. In fact, the police routinely detain anyone wearing a white CAMBIO wristband. Members of the movement continue to spread the message—at considerable risk—by distributing CAMBIO materials, organizing meetings, and reaching out to foreign media outlets.

CAMBIO at <http://www.cubacambio.org>

DID YOU KNOW?

In September 2008, the military government of Burma released over 9,000 prisoners, including the country’s longest-serving political prisoner, Win Tin, who had been in captivity for 19 years.

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2454-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-7-Potential-Challenges>

Chapter 8: Growing Your Organization

You’ve started a grassroots social movement that has done exactly what you’d hoped—generated a dedicated following of like-minded people who care passionately about the cause. To have the biggest impact, though, you’ll want to expand that following internationally, and move from online communities to real-world communities.

To successfully grow your organization, you will need:

- Consensus
- Organizational structure
- Forethought
- Diplomacy
- Creativity

Although the ideals you started with—your mission statement—should always guide your movement, the following practical considerations can help broaden your goals:

Step 1: Reach consensus

As your movement grows, more members will have more ideas about what you should do, and how and when you should do it. This is exactly what should happen with a grassroots movement, so encourage a diversity of voices by relying on consensus to shape your plans. If individuals feel they don’t have a say, they’ll become resentful or disenfranchised, as will the majority if they see that a single person or small group of members hold all the power. Put potential projects or plans up for a vote.

Step 2: Consider infrastructure

If your group grows large enough and is active in planning offline activities, you may need the logistical organization that a leadership structure can provide. You may want to elect officers, or leaders may have already emerged naturally through their active participation. In either case, keep this team as small as can manage the tasks required, and make sure their actions and decisions are always transparent to all members.

Tip 1: Think about how you might create a leadership structure before you actually need to do so. If your group outgrows your ability to make

decisions and effect change, it will be more difficult to figure out how to proceed when you have so many other issues to deal with.

Step 3: Consider a code

Whether your group has a flat structure, where each member has equal power, or managers who are empowered to take on specific responsibilities, consider creating a code of ethics by which your members agree to act. The larger you grow, the likelier your members will disagree with each other and factions can develop. A code of ethics or a constitution that members agree to follow can help institute rules that mirror the movement's ethos and goals, and can guide decision-making and planning.

Tip 2: *Friction can develop among personalities within a group for a number of reasons, including success. If a spokesperson is frequently interviewed or highlighted in the media, members could resent their public perception as an authority. If a group grows very large, a faction could develop that wants to take the movement in a new direction. Work to resolve tensions diplomatically, but remember: it's possible that a splinter group could ultimately be positive. After all, the more groups bringing attention to your cause, the better!*

Step 4: Build alliances

You will naturally become aware of other movements, organizations, nonprofits, schools, companies in the private sector, powerful individuals, and even government agencies that are aligned with or sympathetic to your cause. Reach out to them. They may have a well-established presence in a certain geographical area, a mailing list that they are willing to share, or the means to generate exposure for your cause. Be willing to reciprocate.

Tip 3: *Choose your alliances wisely. If you accept aid of any kind from an organization that is affiliated with anything opposed to your movement, the association could undermine your credibility and hinder your group more than help.*

Step 5: Raise funds

You may find that your movement never has need for much money, especially at the outset, but to truly grow in size and scope, you'll need to find creative methods of raising funds or soliciting donations. Come up with ways for members and other interested parties to donate online, such as the Causes application on Facebook, and at events; sell merchandise with your logo; call upon

alliances you've developed to partner with you in money-making ventures; approach companies for donations of money, goods, or services as part of their corporate social responsibility plans. With any fundraising effort, be clear about how your organization will use the money.

Tip 4: *Although licensing your name and logo to sell merchandise could earn your movement money, consider this: If your group becomes popular offline, allowing anyone—like street vendors or student groups—to sell merchandise using your name and logo could generate more exposure for your movement, which may be more valuable in the long run.*

Step 6. Grow offline

Although most modern grassroots movements start online, if you're afforded the freedom of speech or the ability to gather in your country, they don't have to stay there. Build on the success of whatever activities you've already organized, or take advantage of a critical moment in the history of your cause to plan creative new ways to further your social mobilization. Develop training sessions or workshops, create and screen media relevant to your cause, or host any number of awareness-raising (or fundraising) events.

Step 7. Attract an international audience

Your online presence and popularity may naturally attract members from other countries, especially if there is an expatriate community abroad to whom you can appeal. Likewise, as you seek to form alliances with other groups, look to international ones who can help spread your message to a global audience. Consider hosting or participating in an on- or offline international conference or summit where you can make new connections abroad.

Step 8. Go international

Prepare to extend your reach to foreign soil, not just in online membership but in action. Research the country in question to ensure that the government will be receptive to your active presence there, and be respectful of all local legal and bureaucratic rules and procedures. If you have the money and ability to place experienced group members abroad, make sure they work in partnership with locals who know the culture of both the local movement and the place itself. After all, the most important element of a successful international grassroots movement is that it is grass roots.

How do you appeal to the private sector for help?

“We ask people to sponsor subsets of work or a particular cost, like printing, as part of their CSR [corporate social responsibility] plans.”

Fight-Back
<http://www.fight-back.net/>

“We are proposing a new initiative called Commitment by Mexico— [private-sector companies] are being directly affected by crime so they should get involved in movements that aim at lowering crime rates.”

Iluminemos México
<http://www.iluminemosmexico.org.mx/>

“We engage with financial companies all over the world and pressure them to take substantial action. We have also invited companies that meet our responsible practices criteria to sponsor programmatic initiatives, such as a nationwide concert tour.”

Genocide Intervention Network
<http://www.genocideintervention.net>

CASE STUDY

Since beginning in 2005, Invisible Children has succeeded in creating a number of private-sector partnerships. The clothing brand Guess sold benefit T-shirts for the movement, the proceeds of which generated hundreds of thousands of dollars for the schools in Uganda. Better World Books helps the movement’s student groups manage book drives, raising money, and sending books to developing countries. And Google has donated an online advertising budget to help attract visitors to the site.

CASE STUDY

In 2008 alone, To Write Love On Her Arms participated in events in the U.K., Australia, and Canada and began supporting treatment in those countries, but their plans don’t stop there. They’ve put aside funds for future projects like live counseling on their web site, a nationwide college tour, and launching groups in other countries.

DID YOU KNOW?

By 2008, just three years after it was founded, Invisible Children had grown to employ 35 people in the U.S. and 95 in Uganda, with an annual operating budget of nearly \$10 million.

To edit this chapter, visit the Howcast wiki guide at <http://www.howcast.com/guides/2455-How-To-Create-Grassroots-Movements-For-Change-8-Growing-Your-Organization>

Contributing Organizations

The global groups contributing to *Creating Grassroots Movements for Change: A Field Manual* have all utilized new media, online social networking, the internet, and mobile technology to push back against violence and oppression. They speak for compassion, human rights, and freedom, using unique methods to tell their stories and effect positive change. While they have all created successful online communities, their ultimate goal is to extend those communities offline in order to further transform the world in which we all live.

Burma Global Action Network

Burma Global Action Network (BGAN) emerged out of the famous “Support The Monks’ Protest In Burma” Facebook group, launched by students Alex Bookbinder, Imran Jamal, Sophie Lwin, and others in September 2007. At its peak, the group had 450,000 members, all of whom worked together to organize demonstrations around the world. Operating in conjunction with other nonprofit organizations, BGAN is dedicated to promoting the struggle for justice and democracy in Burma. The organization has developed into a worldwide network of young human-rights activists speaking out against the atrocities and brutal rule of the country’s junta.

CAMBIO/Día de Solidaridad con Cuba

The CAMBIO campaign, which supports democracy in Cuba, is symbolized by white bracelets printed with the word CAMBIO. Thousands have been distributed in the United States, and the bracelets even gained attention from the Cuban regime—Raúl Castro called for cambio when he assumed power in 2006. The unifying message of change (cambio means “change” in Spanish) is something many different grassroots movements can get behind. The first annual “Día de Solidaridad con Cuba” was held on May 21, 2008. The two main groups behind this campaign have organized multiple vibrant online efforts to support the release of dissidents, mobilize young people, plan events, and conceptualize new ways of sharing information.

Fight-Back

Conceived after a tragic attack on two women in Juhu, India, on New Year’s Eve 2007, Fight-Back was founded by Zubin Driver and other professionals to address the issue of gender violence in India. With an active Facebook group of more than 1,600 members, the organization is utilizing the digital space, university campuses, the music industry, and new media to provide information on how individuals can protect themselves from gender violence and get help. From police telephone numbers to human rights lawyers and a gender violence Hall of Shame, www.fight-back.net—in English, Hindi, and Marath—gives young Indians the tools to confront gender violence and fight back.

Genocide Intervention Network

Founded in October of 2004, the Genocide Intervention Network, or GI-Net, was born of the efforts of two students at Swarthmore College, Mark Hanis and Andrew Sneiderman, and Rwandan Stephanie Nyombayire. The group was incorporated in 2005 and has grown remarkably in a few short years, with representatives across the country. In April 2005, they held the “100 Days of Action Campaign,” to commemorate the 100-day genocide in Rwanda in 2004. The group’s student arm, STAND (Students Anti-Genocide Coalition), has 850 chapters at high schools, colleges, and universities across the U.S., with chapters in 25 other countries.

Iluminemos México

On August 30, 2008, at 6 p.m., an estimated 2 million people in 88 cities in Mexico and 6 other countries joined the Iluminemos México march against violence. Founded by América Alemán and Elías Kuri, the group joined online and offline efforts to organize the mass demonstration. Many Mexicans were horrified by the recent kidnapping and brutal murder of 14-year-old Fernando Martí, the son of a businessman, and the protest spurred many to say, “Ya basta”—enough crime, kidnapping, murder, fear, and insecurity.

Invisible Children

In 2003, three young men from California traveled to northern Uganda to cover the crisis in Darfur. Plans changed when they discovered a humanitarian crisis involving the children of northern Uganda, who walked every day for miles to escape being kidnapped and forced into combat by the Lord's Resistance Army. Armed with a video camera, they recorded the atrocities and released *Invisible Children: The Rough Cut* in 2004, first showing it to friends and family; then to hundreds of thousands of students at colleges and universities across the country. They used existing student organizations and online social networking to organize two nationwide sleep-ins that mobilized more than 150,000 young people. Focused on the well being of children in the region, the now well-established NGO has many programs, including the Bracelet Campaign, the Schools for Schools Program, and the Visible Child Scholarship Program.

No Más Chávez

Modeled after the No Más FARC movement, this movement originated on Facebook and in Venezuela and Colombia to oppose Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez's oppression of his people. The Facebook group numbers almost 80,000, and the leadership organized protests on April 11, 2008, that mobilized 2,000 people in 25 cities around the world.

One Million People Against Crime in South Africa

To address crime in South Africa, Herman Lochner, a proponent of the power of online activism through social networking, founded a Facebook group. The trilingual group has steadily grown to more than 100,000 members since its founding in October 2007.

One Million Voices Against the FARC

Un Millón De Voces Contra Las FARC is the Facebook group that made news around the world. Founder Oscar Morales created the group on January 4, 2008, and called for a massive march one month later on February 4. In that short space of time, the group gained almost half a million members online, and 12 million people--primarily organized through social networking--hit the streets to protest the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). The No Más FARC rallies are considered to be one of the largest and most remarkable demonstrations ever organized, both in the history of Colombia and worldwide, mobilizing people in over 200 cities in over 40 different countries. The rallies are also considered the largest protest ever against a terrorist organization.

The People's March Against Knife Crime

The People's March Against Knife Crime was formed in July of 2008 to push back against increasing violent crime in Britain. Gemma Alway and Sharon Singh decided that something had to be done, and they organized a mass demonstration in London on September 20, 2008. The march gained the attention of British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, other politicians, and the media. So far this year, there have been 21 teenagers murdered in London alone, and the group has organized multiple vigils for the victims as well as antiviolence protests.

Raíces de Esperanza

Raíces de Esperanza, Inc., is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group sponsoring academic and cultural initiatives focused on youth development in promoting a pluralistic and democratic Cuban society. Our strategy has been to (a) build and unite a student network of campus groups, (b) sponsor academic conferences for Cuban-American youth, (c) mobilize youth abroad in solidarity, and (d) reach out to our counterparts on the Island. We have a committed volunteer core that works on all levels.

Saudi Women Petitioning the Government for Driving Rights

Founded by one of the daughters of the famous driving protest of the 1990s, Saudi Women Petitioning the Government for Driving Rights is an online movement designed to collect signatures that can eventually be presented to the King of Saudi Arabia for women's right to drive. The movement has led to similar efforts both in online social networks and video.

Save Darfur Coalition

Founded in 2004, the Save Darfur Coalition represents the collective efforts of 180 religious, humanitarian, and political organizations dedicated to addressing the crisis in Darfur. While multiple Facebook groups related to the crisis in Darfur have been created, the Save Darfur Coalition has been a central point in the drawing them under an umbrella of existing organizations and NGOs whose focus is working in Sudan. Save Darfur's Facebook Cause online counts more than 1 million members--one of the largest online networks anywhere.

To Write Love on Her Arms

To Write Love on Her Arms began in Orlando, Florida, in February 2006 as a story on MySpace--the true story of a young woman who was denied entry into a drug-treatment center and spent five days with a group of friends who cared for her. The story itself, written by Jamie Tworkowski, was a look at those five days, and TWLOHA T-shirts were printed, distributed to bands, and initially sold as a way to pay for the friend's treatment. Today, To Write Love on Her Arms is a nonprofit movement dedicated to giving hope and finding help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide. TWLOHA exists to encourage, inform, and inspire--and also to invest directly into treatment and recovery. Since 2006, the group has responded to 80,000 messages from people in 40 different countries. TWLOHA has the largest online audience of any nonprofit on both MySpace and Facebook, and was recently featured on NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams.

Genç Siviller- Young Civilians

Young Civilians, or Genç Siviller, was founded in Turkey in 2006. More than 2 million Turks are members of Facebook, a sign of the country's active, proud, and thriving online youth culture. Young Civilians began online in 2006 and quickly grew into multiple offline causes supporting democracy in Turkey. Most recently, the group was part of the successful campaign that pressed Turkish President Abdullah Gul to accept Armenian President Serj Sarkisyan's invitation to attend the World Cup preliminaries in Yerevan, Armenia. Young Civilians is a diverse group, encompassing both secular and religious members as well as a variety of political affiliations (liberals, leftists, feminists, environmentalists, democrats) and a wide array of ethnic and religious backgrounds (Turks, Kurds, Muslims, Jews, Armenians, Allawites). They have all drawn together because of their passionate belief in democracy. Opposing military intervention in Turkish politics, Young Civilians aims to establish a liberal democracy in Turkey based on rights and liberties, rule of law, tolerance, and justice. The political stance of Young Civilians cannot be pigeonholed into a single ideology; instead, Young Civilians follows its conscience. The group's most important "weapon" is humor and popular culture, which is the reason Young Civilians is one of the most popular and prominent youth groups in Turkey.

Youth for Tolerance

Youth for Tolerance, an NGO based in Lebanon, promotes a culture of tolerance that will result in respect, acceptance, and appreciation of religious and political diversity in Lebanon. Its presence on Facebook is small but extraordinarily vibrant, managing to function and be effective in an environment filled with sectarian and political tensions. Using Facebook as an organizing platform, Youth for Tolerance has launched games and an ad campaign airing on local TV stations to raise awareness against violence and blind allegiance. It has also distributed booklets to students on polarized campuses.

*Howcast, the organizing sponsor of the Alliance of Youth Movements Summit, partnered with delegate organizations and other summit attendees to produce *Creating Grassroots Movements for Change: A Field Manual*. The document represents a truly collaborative effort.*

About Howcast Media, Inc.
www.howcast.com

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