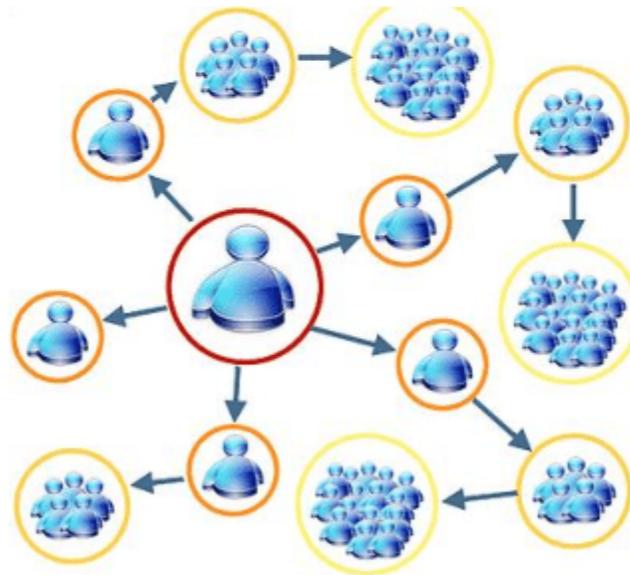


Social Media – A Strategy for Governments



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Social Media Introduce Substantial and Pervasive Changes to Communication

“Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge.” - Jimmy Wales, Founder, Wikipedia

“You can’t isolate some things you like about the Internet and control other things that you don’t like” – Mark Zuckerberg, Founder, Facebook

“Technology will move faster than governments, so don’t legislate before you understand the consequences” – Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman, Google



Facts

Because:

- **5/6** of the global Internet population (app. 1.7 billion people) visit social Internet networks
- **Facebook:** 700 billion minutes per month spent on the website, **30 billion** pieces of content shared each month and 15 million people become friends everyday
- 200 million **Twitter** users, generating **1 billion tweets a week**
- 48 hours of video uploaded to **YouTube** per minute and **3 billion views per day**
- 19 million articles available on **Wikipedia** in 282 languages
- **6 billion photos** archived on **Flickr**



The Power of Information

Key Politicians using Twitter to engage voters

The image shows two Twitter profiles side-by-side. On the left is Barack Obama's profile (@BarackObama), which includes a bio stating it is run by campaign staff and has 8.7 million followers. On the right is Dmitry Medvedev's profile (@MedvedevRussiaE), which identifies him as the President of Russia and has 105,095 followers. Both profiles show a 'Follow' button and a dropdown menu icon.

- ▶ **8.7m followers** - Will personally tweet during 2012 presidential campaign
- ▶ **2% of US internet population** used Twitter for politics in 2010
- ▶ **105k followers**. 2-3 tweets per week

Benefits for Governments

- Increase government's access to audiences
- Increase government's access to youth population, many of whom are otherwise disconnected from the political debate
- Improve the reach of government communication  **first hand information in real time**
- **Reduce government's dependence** on traditional media channels and bypass the media filter
- Rapid response to counter press coverage
- Quickly and accurately gauge public opinion
- Increase the **speed** of public feedback and input
- Develop a social media **monitoring station** to understand what and where people are talking

Facebook Figures in the Arab World

- The total number of Facebook users in the Arab world stands at 27,711,503 (as of April 5, 2011), having almost **doubled** since the same time last year (14,791,972 in April 2010)
- Eight Arab countries, with **UAE at the top**, had acquired more Facebook users (as a percentage of population) than the US, one of the highest ranking countries in the world in terms of Facebook penetration.¹

Table 1: Facebook Users and Official Population Figures for the GCC Countries

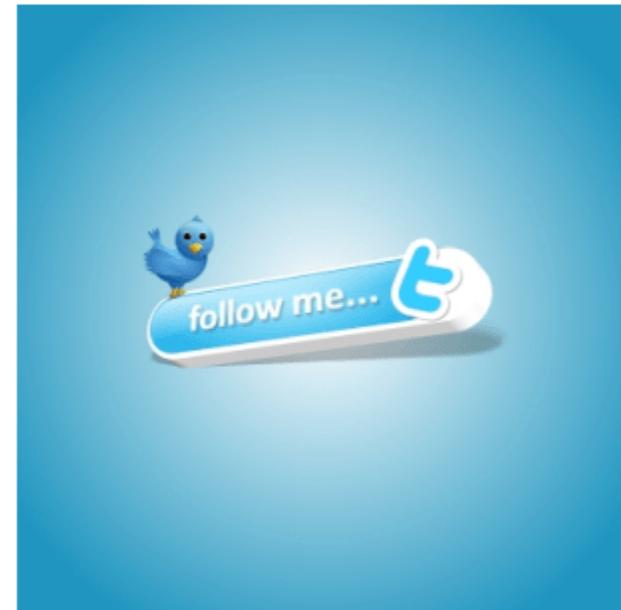
| Country | Population | Facebook Users | Facebook penetration (%) |
|--------------|------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Oman | 3,103,580 | 277,840 | 8.95 |
| Saudi Arabia | 27,136,979 | 4,092,600 | 15.08 |
| Kuwait | 3,484,881 | 795,100 | 22.82 |
| Bahrain | 1,234,596 | 302,940 | 24.54 |
| Qatar | 1,699,435 | 481,280 | 28.32 |
| UAE | 8,260,000 | 2,406,120 | 29.13 |



¹ <http://laborsta.ilo.org/>

Twitter in the Arab World

- Worldwide the number of tweets had **risen to 155 million a day**, up from 55 million a day around the same time last year, with a **41% increase daily** in the number of tweets (according to official Twitter statistics, at the end of the first quarter of 2011).
- The estimated number of active Twitter users in the **Arab region** at the end of March 2011 was **1,150,292**.
- The estimated number of tweets generated in the **Arab region** in the first quarter of 2011 (Jan. 1 – March 30) by these “active users” was **22,750,000 tweets**. The estimated number of daily tweets is 252,000 tweets per day, or 175 tweets a minute, or roughly three tweets a second.



China's Communication Platforms

- Sina Weibo, the microblogging site which is "the Twitter of China", has 200 million registered users, up from 140 million in the first quarter of 2011. It adds 660,000 users a day.
- The top 100 users now have over 485 million followers combined.
- Sina will launch an English language version before the year end. Already more than 10% of Weibo users are from outside China.
- 26 million tweets posted in the first five days after the Chinese railway crash in Wenzhou, in July.
- More than 4,500 government officials maintain profiles, and use the platform to disseminate information and respond to news coverage.
- "In the last year, microbloggers, especially Sina and Tencent, have played more and more a major role in coverage, especially breaking news."
- Footnote: Professor, Zhan Jiang Beijing Foreign Studies University, New York Times, 28 July 2011

The Way Forward

- Meet the founders and CEO's of the leading Internet companies, in Silicon Valley:
 - Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook
 - Jack Dorsey, Twitter
 - Chad Hurley, YouTube
- Commission research into the effects of social media in the “Arab spring” uprisings, and in particular, how different reactions from government impacted fast moving events.
- Establish Abu Dhabi as the centre for Internet companies in the Middle East and host regional headquarters for the likes of Facebook and Twitter
- Educate a generation of Emiratis in the ways of the leading Silicon Valley innovations; consider the value of an incubator that spins off tens or hundreds Internet businesses based in the region
- For Abu Dhabi to be at the forefront of e-government initiatives; to deliver “open data” to developers; for members of the Royal Family to embrace technology to connect with the youth population
- Conceive, design and build a leading edge technology platform to intelligently monitor and access social media in the region, detect any possible threats to stability at the earliest stages, and fashion a 21st century response