

Making an Impact on MySpace: Best Practices for NGOs/Campaigns

STEP 1: PIMP YOUR PROFILE

- **BE CREATIVE!**
 - MySpace pages are fully customizable using either HTML or CSS. Make your MySpace profile look unlike a standard profile – it will help you stand out.
 - URLs for inspiration: www.myspace.com/rainn_dc, www.myspace.com/ronpaul2008, www.myspace.com/kivaloans, www.myspace.com/nationalcampaign, www.myspace.com/skate4cancer, www.myspace.com/blakemycoskie, www.myspace.com/oxfam
- **GET VIRAL!**
 - **VIDEOS**

Create and upload videos then post one or two on your profile. Users will be able to take & share these videos on their own profiles to show their support, which will in turn introduce your video to all of their friends.

If you have several videos, upload them all and swap out the ones you feature on your profile every week or every month to keep the profile content fresh. Send a bulletin every time you change the content on the profile.
 - **PHOTOS**

Upload photos through your profile & create slideshows to post on your profile. Update your default photo regularly. New photos will keep your community active on your profile. Typically when a new photo is posted, profile views increase – so it's another way to engage and activate the community.
 - **SKINS/BANNERS**

Design skins/banners that users can grab and post on their pages to show their support, which will again introduce your page to all of their friends. Eg: <http://www.myspace.com/joinred> (Skins, banners, desktops)
 - **MUSIC**

Once your profile is created you can add music by finding an appropriate track on a band's page & simply adding it to yours.

STEP 2: BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY ON MYSPACE

- **Keep MySpace users within the community**
 - MySpace users tend to click back at a very high rate when directed out of the MySpace community – you will inevitably need to link folks back to your organizational website at some point, but give them ways to take actions, absorb information, and show their support before they have to follow a link
 - Instead of “click here to sign up for our newsletter,” embed a form into your profile (see www.myspace.com/rainn_dc)

- Instead of “click here for more information,” provide short blurbs/video/visuals about a host of different programs before providing the link where users can learn more
- If appropriate, highlight employees/volunteers/beneficiaries of your org who also have MySpace profiles. link to their profiles so users can interact with them/ask them questions directly.
- **BLOGS**
 - Regular blog entries allow you to converse with your community and keep them up to date on any and all new developments and information. Even weekly or monthly entries will help keep content on your profile fresh and interesting and engage your community. This area can also be great for announcing specials offers or running an impromptu contest or sweepstakes based around comments/posts within the blog area.
- **EVENTS**
 - Create Events. For every event you have, go to the Events page and post it. It will appear in the event listings based on search criteria that users input.
- **FORUMS**
 - Participate in Forums. Your profile will appear when you post comments and people active within the discussion will be able to click-thru to your profile.
- **Leverage existing communities to drive traffic/involvement**
 - **GROUPS**
 - Check out the Groups area of MySpace. There are groups for every interest. Join some of these or view the profiles of the people in groups dedicated to bands that have a similar audience as your band and send friend requests to them.
 - Click “Add to friends” when viewing a profile (you will find this under the header “Contacting...”) and this person will receive a friend request from you in both their MySpace email and regular email account.
 - To personalize it, and increase the likelihood that the member will add you as a friend, send the person a message. Select “Send Message”
 - When someone accepts your friend request or adds your organization as a friend, post a public comment on that person’s profile thanking them for their support. This is a powerful way of spreading links to your profile across the site, using the standard MySpace etiquette.
 - Find a few active Groups that are relevant to your org, and participate in their forums to get the word out
 - If you have relationships with local bands, politicians, or celebrities who have communities of supporters on MySpace, ask them to post your badge for one day, send out a bulletin, or in some other way highlight you
- **SEARCH**
 - Use the Search function to look for people you know athletes, bands or celebrities with profiles on the site and send them friend requests. Even if these are fake or fan profiles, they tend to have a lot of friends, so you will at least connect with people who have common interests.



- **OTHER NGO/CAMPAIGN PROFILES**

- Check out other profiles on MySpace and add them as friends. View the friends of other profiles to see if their interests align with your brand and then send them a friend request.

- **BULLETINS**

- As you build up friends, post bulletins to share news, event info, updates, etc. Bulletins are similar to an email blast – they go to all of the friends in your profile and appear on the home page of the profile when someone logs in. This is a great way to stay connected and active on the site.
- Encourage friends (on-line and off) to put you in their top friends or send bulletins to their friends about your org.

STEP 3: SPREAD THE WORD OUTSIDE MYSPACE

- **CO-BRAND** with your MySpace URL to let folks who come across you in other contexts know that you're on MySpace, too.
- On your **OFFICIAL WEBSITE**, provide a link your MySpace page so that people already engaged in your cause can go & connect with the MySpace community likewise engaged .
- Produce **STICKERS** with your profile image/logo and your MySpace URL. Posting them around town and handing them out at events are great offline ways to drive people online to your profile page.

➤ **HELPLINES**

To contact MySpace, check out the FAQ's here:

<http://www.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=misc.contact&MyToken=083733b9-e4b1-4229-9f54-2e69021666c7>

To report any kind of abuse:

abuse@myspace.com

MySpace Impact Team:

impact@myspace.com

➤ **CONTACT US ONCE YOUR PROFILE IS ONLINE SO THAT WE CAN ADD YOU TO OUR DATABASE**

Our dedicated Impact team is here to support you and is open to possibilities of greater levels of partnership down the road. Creating a profile is the first step.

➤ **MORE RESOURCES:**

A great guide to do-it-yourself MySpace design -

<http://www.mikeindustries.com/blog/archive/2006/04/hacking-myspace-layouts>

10 Commandments of MySpace Advocacy -

http://www.mrss.com/news/Ten_Commandments_of_MySpace_Advocacy.pdf

Create viral banners/badges - www.wordofblog.net



Edit video online, create polls and other widgets – www.flektor.com

Case study of a successful, grassroots MySpace campaign -
http://beth.typepad.com/beths_blog/2007/06/using-social-ne.html

➤ **RECOMMENDED DESIGNERS:**

PingWorx, 1200 W.7th Street. Ste. 340, Los Angeles, CA 90017 [MentorLA profile]

P: 1.888.262.6161, Email: Sales@PingWorx.com

Or you may contact me directly at 213.986.1085 or Madrim@BroadSpire.com

Rupa Modi - rupamodi@modiadesigns.com (designed www.myspace.com/kivaloans)

Eoban – a student who designed several candidate profiles including John Edwards' (www.myspace.com/johnedwards) - eoban@eoban.com

Joe Chung – works for MySpace but also does freelance work (including www.myspace.com/thinkprogress): jchung@myspace.com

Matt Velick - velick@gmail.com (we use him often to design internal programs)

Joey Groh - Superstar Media | <http://www.superstarmedia.com>, work: 509-334-1456 |
cell: 509-280-9176 (designed www.myspace.com/rockfordarfur)

Dana - BandSpaces | www.bandspaces.com - work: 905-586-0448, email:
dana@bandspaces.com (designed www.myspace.com/skate4cancer)