

WEST VIRGINIA 82ND LEGISLATURE 2016

Mixed Media Social Media Report

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MIXXED
MEDIA

by Crystal Good

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It is critical that West Virginia legislators understand social media, its power and presence.

Crystal Good

LAST YEAR, MIXXED MEDIA RELEASED THE FIRST MIXXED MEDIA REPORT DETAILING HOW West Virginia politicians used social media as a platform to engage constituents. This year, we've continued to bring you a highlighted report.

We hope this report will encourage representatives to think about how social media can be used to create dialogue in the digital democracy. We've seen some improvement since the 2015 Mixed Media report: many elected officials who didn't have social media last year have created accounts on at least one platform. It's a start.

However, many lawmakers have yet to see the significance of engaging voters through social media—either by not having the platform or by using it for limited engagement.

Social media is the new bully pulpit. It can be an effective place to have and host two-way conversations with voters, and for voters to engage with their elected officials easily, in real-time, anytime from anywhere.

Our lawmakers also play an important role as leaders during times of community need. Our elected officials need to take that responsibility seriously by staying on the communication front lines. Right now, that means digital venues such as Facebook, Twitter, and Periscope. It is critical that West Virginia legislators, regardless of party, understand social media's power and presence.

Social media is a utility that must be learned, leveraged and used as another extension of constituent and community voice. I challenge the 82nd legislature - and all political offices and officers across West Virginia - to step into the 21st Century and join the conversation.

It's important to note that the West Virginia Legislature website (www.legis.state.wv.us), Twitter, Facebook and Google Plus pages offered both elected officials and constituents real-time and quality information.

We hope this report helps to engage both constituents and politicians to use social media platforms toward a greater and more meaningful civic engagement. If you would like full report please email crystal@themixedmedia.com.

4 KEY WAYS

SOCIAL MEDIA CAN WORK IN POLITICIANS' FAVOR & IMPROVE WEST VIRGINIA'S OVERALL SOCIAL MEDIA GRADE



1 CONNECTION

In West Virginia, an election can be won or lost by hundreds of votes— or perhaps followers. Social media appeals to one of the most significant voter demographics: young voters. Sixty-one percent of Millennials (comprised of those in their teens through their mid-30s) receive the majority of their political news from social media, according to a study by the Pew Research Center.



2 ACCESSIBILITY

The best way for politicians to leverage social media and engage with their community is to be ON the platforms and USE them in meaningful ways. Mixed Media understands that many counties in West Virginia have poor broadband connectivity. Quality internet is a necessity to improve and extend a legislator's presence and constituent connectivity.



3 ATTRACTION

Social media provides politicians the opportunity to attract new opportunities for their communities, such as businesses, tourists and media interest. Social Media creates ties and relationships easier and faster. An active social media account can also bring the electorate into the political process by keeping them informed and involved.



4 MONOPOLY

Politicians who engage on social media can create a monopoly on shaping the opinions and perspectives of the people. Social media provides politicians with the opportunity to stay a step ahead of the press with direct, non-passive, transparent interaction.

BOTTOM LINE

If you are in a political office, you need a social media presence. If you are a voter, you need to demand that your leaders and representatives are participating across these platforms. There is no excuse for politicians to keep their virtual office doors shut and for voters not to use their social media voice to talk to their elected officials in meaningful ways.

ACTIVELY ONLINE POLITICIANS

POLITICIANS NOT ENGAGED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

TOP 3 SENATORS



ROBERT BEACH - 95 PTS
(D - Monongalia)
@SenatorBobBeach



CRAIG BLAIR - 95 PTS
(R - Berkeley)
Craig Blair, WV Senator District 15



WILLIAM P. COLE III - 91 PTS
(R - Mercer)
@SenatorBillCole



TOP 3 DELEGATES



CHRIS STANSBURY - 127 PTS
(R - Kanawha)
@StansburyforWV



MIKE PUSHKINS - 99 PTS
(D - Kanawha)
@pushkinforhouse



SHAWN FLUHARTY - 152 PTS
(D - Ohio)
@WVUFLU



SENATE

Donna Boley
Douglas Facemire
Art Kirkendall
William Laird
Mark Maynard
Ronald Miller

Corey Palumbo
Mike Romano
Herb Snyder
Ron Stollings
Dave Sypolt
Mike Woelfel

House

George Ambler
William Anderson
Mike Atkinson III
Frank Blackwell
Anna Border-Sheppard
Ray Canterbury
Mike Caputo
Roy Cooper
Daryl Cowles
Jeff Eldridge
Joe Ellington
David Evans
Allen Evans
Tom Fast
Michael Ferro
Bill Flanigan
Geoff Foster
Bill Hamilton
William Hartman
Kenneth Hicks
Linda Longstreth
Dana Lynch
Tim Manchin

John B. McCuskey
Clif Moore
Rick Moye
Don Perdue
David Perry
David Pethtel
Rupert Phillips, Jr.
Ralph Rodighiero
Matthew Rohrbach
William Romine
Ruth Rowan
Larry Rowe
Stephen Shaffer
John Shott
Peggy Donaldson Smith
Amy Summer
Patsy Trecost II
Danny Wagner
Ron Walters
Terry Waxman
Phyllis White
Mark Zatezalo

Mixed Media only counts Facebook pages that are "like" pages.

MOST IMPROVED

Politicians who made the right call by engaging their constituents socially online.



SENATOR JACK YOST - 64 PTS
(D - Brooke)
Didn't have Twitter last year, now is engaging his followers consistently.
@jackyostwv



DELEGATE JIM BUTLER - 41 PTS
(R - Mason)
Now has 986 Followers.
@jimbutlerwv



SENATOR ROBERT KARNES - 40 PTS
(R - Upshur)
Now has 254 Followers.
@senatorkarnes



DELEGATE GARY HOWELL - 167 PTS
(R - Mineral)
Now has 1,066 followers
@71demon



If a legislator is concerned about how they can protect their accounts from being hacked or online harassment please contact Mixed Media.

PROTECTED ACCOUNTS

Senator Robert Plymale has his Twitter account protected, which means he has to approve his followers. You don't get to approve who are your constituents, so we encourage unprotected accounts.

Delegates Marcum, O'Neal IV, Guthrie, Householder, Sobonya, Storch and White also have their accounts protected.

Mixed Media encourages you to unprotect your social media accounts.

NO ENGAGEMENT

Plenty of representatives have Twitter accounts, but they don't use them. Delegates Azinger, Boggs, Cadle, Deem, Duke, Faircloth, Hanshaw, Morgan, Overington, Weld and Westfall and Senators Hall, Trump and Williams are on the platform, but have yet to engage with their constituents on a regular basis. Get in the Mixx!

POLITICIANS NEED TO BE IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA MIXX



As we move into a political future defined more and more by digital based democracy, it is becoming increasingly important that people identify trusted community leaders and politicians, who can serve as a valuable resource when the people have concerns and need answers. Undoubtedly, whenever people need information, social media is the quickest real-time information hub where they can find it.

Take for example, one of the most publicized bills of late, #HB4012, or the "Religious Freedom Restoration" bill. As dialogue was taking place within the legislature on this bill, West Virginians used the most efficient and real-time way to obtain information on the bill's progress and key developments. The advocacy and education for and against #HB4012 has been documented (forever) online and is but one an example that emphasizes how political officials and their constituents use online communication.

Search **#HB4012** and have a look at the dialogue.

GET IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA MIXX!

HOW SCORES WERE TALLIED

Data was collected February 1st - February 14th



Twitter engagement was tallied via original posts and conversations, which received one point per Tweet.



Facebook engagement was tallied via a yes/no system using only public or professional Facebook pages-- the kind you can click 'like' on.

Followers are tallied as follows:

- 10PTS** Less than 1,000 followers
- 20PTS** 1,001 - 5,000 followers
- 30PTS** Over 5,000 followers

KLOUT

The Klout portion is pulled directly from Klout.com. Klout gives users a score based on their impact and reach via social media. Klout scores are found typically by someone's Twitter handle, so those not yet on Twitter suffer twice!

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