

UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS:

How to Identify and Empower Those Who Can Engage an Entire Community

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Ever since the March for Lesbian and Gay Rights on October 11, 1987, thousands of LGBT people and allies celebrate October 11 as National Coming Out Day (NCOD). In 2010, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) recognized that NCOD needed a 21st century renovation and turned its attention to social media. Through the creation of their “Coming Out for Equality” Facebook® app, HRC empowered thousands of LGBT supporters; as a result, 125,000 people donated their Facebook status for equality, 6,000+ tweets for equality were sent, and 117,000 new email addresses were added to HRC’s database. By expanding their social network, HRC built an army that was ready to fight when the Marriage Equality Bill was up for vote. HRC constituents voiced their support through 460,000 election-related action alert emails, 51 celebrity videos, 47,199 emails to state lawmakers, and more. Their actions, through traditional channels and social media, were pivotal in the passing of New York’s Marriage Equality Act on June 24, 2011.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The question today is not whether you should use social media, but how you should use the information your constituents are sharing on social media to attract more people to your mission and make your fundraising campaigns more successful. It is a question on every manager’s mind as people flock to social media sites in astounding numbers and social media users influence attitudes about everything from television shows and political campaigns to energy drinks and causes to support. The answer to the question lies in understanding your social media constituents and identifying which ones are the most “social” — those who best interact with and influence others across their online networks — because, while each of your constituents is a potential donor, some are more adept at spreading the word and energizing others. By knowing these active, influential social media constituents, you are in a position to develop mutually beneficial relationships with them that respects their advocacy for your cause.



CONSUMERS TRUST ONLINE FRIENDS OVER ADVERTISERS

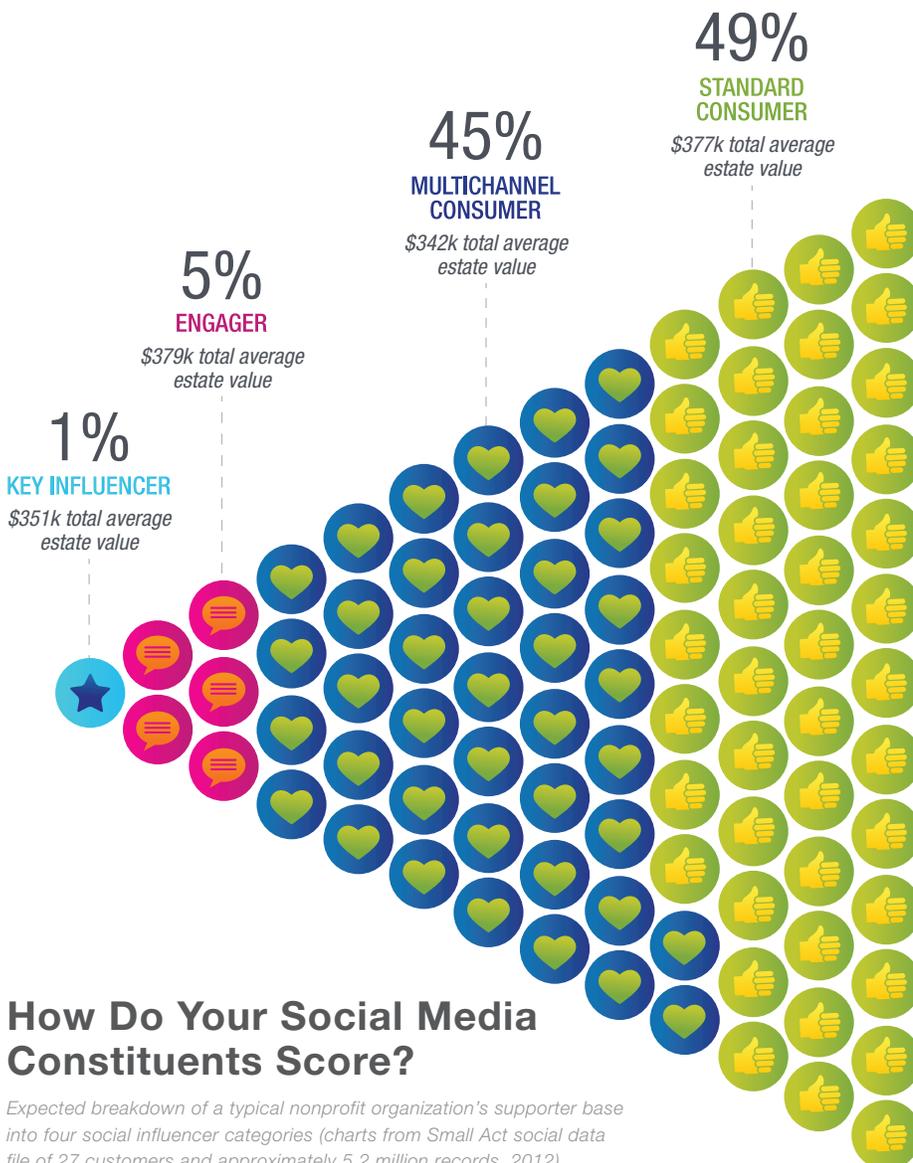
According to a 2011 Nielsen study of online consumers, 92 percent of those surveyed trust recommendations by friends, family, and word of mouth above all other forms of advertising, and 70 percent of consumers trust online consumer reviews by people they don't know.¹ Additionally, research by NM Incite found that three out of five—a full 60 percent—of social media users write product and service reviews, and that 63 percent of users choose consumer ratings as their preferred source of information about products and services.²

majority of adults in America who are online use social networking sites.³ It also shines a light on the fact that organizations no longer drive one-way conversations. Through social media, people have a channel to instantly share their opinions with hundreds, sometimes thousands, of others. Information has never spread so fast and with so much power to affect brands and products. Faced with these new realities, social media-savvy nonprofits are working to better understand their social media constituents and form deeper connections with them.

This is compelling information when combined with the fact that the

WHO'S SOCIAL?

The best way to understand the social media users among your constituents is to use a social media data enrichment service to analyze your database and assign each of your constituents a “social score”, a number that represents the breadth, depth, frequency, and scale of his or her social media interactions. In other words, the social score is a measurement of a constituent's connectivity with others through their social networks. Based on that number, individuals can be segmented into one of four categories: **Key Influencer, Engager, Multichannel Consumer, or Standard Consumer.** Each group plays a different role on social media networks, and each one of them is important to your organization's success. The chart below shows the expected breakdown of these groups within a typical nonprofit supporter base.



How Do Your Social Media Constituents Score?

Expected breakdown of a typical nonprofit organization's supporter base into four social influencer categories (charts from Small Act social data file of 27 customers and approximately 5.2 million records, 2012).

Key Influencers



These are the “super social” people at the top of your social media pyramid; although they account for only one percent of your social media constituents, they are highly engaged and capable of influencing not only the people they know but also social media

members they don't know. When they interact with others, they have a powerful impact. Their posts are widely read and shared by more people than posts generated by any other group. They belong to the top three major social networks—Facebook, Twitter®, and LinkedIn®—and are the few that deliver messages to the many. Think of them as citizen journalists, those who write for a mass market.

Multichannel Consumers



Active on at least two social network sites, multichannel consumers make up about 39 percent of all social media users. They enjoy keeping up with social media content and occasionally participate. They influence to some extent—via normal

friend-to-friend engagement and passing along information to their networks—but due to their level of activity, their sphere of influence is not a dominant part of their persona.

Engagers



These people belong to all three major networks, and although only about five percent of all social media users fall into this category, they drive up to 80 percent of content and communications. They are your broadcasters: They generate

posts, share information, virally spread messages, and collaborate with others. They have well-established social networks and have earned the trust of their groups. They are strong influencers of people they know personally.

Standard Consumers



These social media users typically belong to one social network to keep up with friends, family, and current events. While they read and watch updates more than they create new content or make comments, they are influenced by their

more socially active friends and family. As a group, they account for 55 percent of all social media users.

HOW SOCIAL MEDIA CONSTITUENTS HELP DELIVER YOUR MISSION

Knowing the social score of each of your constituents and which category they fit into is important, because once you understand their level of participation in social media, you can develop plans to proactively engage them in your fundraising campaigns.

KEY INFLUENCERS CHAMPION YOUR CAUSE

With their commanding reach across social media networks, your Key Influencers can help drive the success of your campaigns. They are typically not your largest financial contributors, but they have the energy and power to champion your cause to many others. Here is

where a social media strategy is critical, because traditionally you may have overlooked these constituents, missing the opportunity to have them do what they do best—promote your cause. For example, it was Key Influencers who helped assemble the support for lesbian and gay rights when the Marriage Equality Bill was up for vote, and it was their networks that responded and helped to deliver hundreds of thousands of emails to state lawmakers. Key Influencers are also natural recruiters and can help you get the word out about peer-to-peer fundraising, advocacy, and volunteer-driven events.

ENGAGERS DRIVE YOUR MESSAGES

Engagers are dialed into what is happening in the social media space and create and deliver new content. If they relate to news from a trusted Key Influencer, they will rapidly re-tweet, re-distribute, and relay that information. They will help your compelling stories go viral. They will increase awareness of your organization and expand your constituency. Through them, you can reach more people who are likely to support you because someone they trust has given your organization his or her stamp of approval. Engagers make good social chairs and members of executive committees for local events, and they may form a deep commitment to your organization.

MULTICHANNEL AND STANDARD CONSUMERS RESPECT THE OPINIONS OF KEY INFLUENCERS AND ENGAGERS

Your Multichannel Consumers like getting the news from people they trust. If their social media friends endorse your cause and believe in your mission, Multichannel Consumers are inclined to support you

as well. This may come in the form of joining your Facebook page, participating in an event, or contributing to a friend who is fundraising for an event. Multichannel Consumers are generally willing online donors.

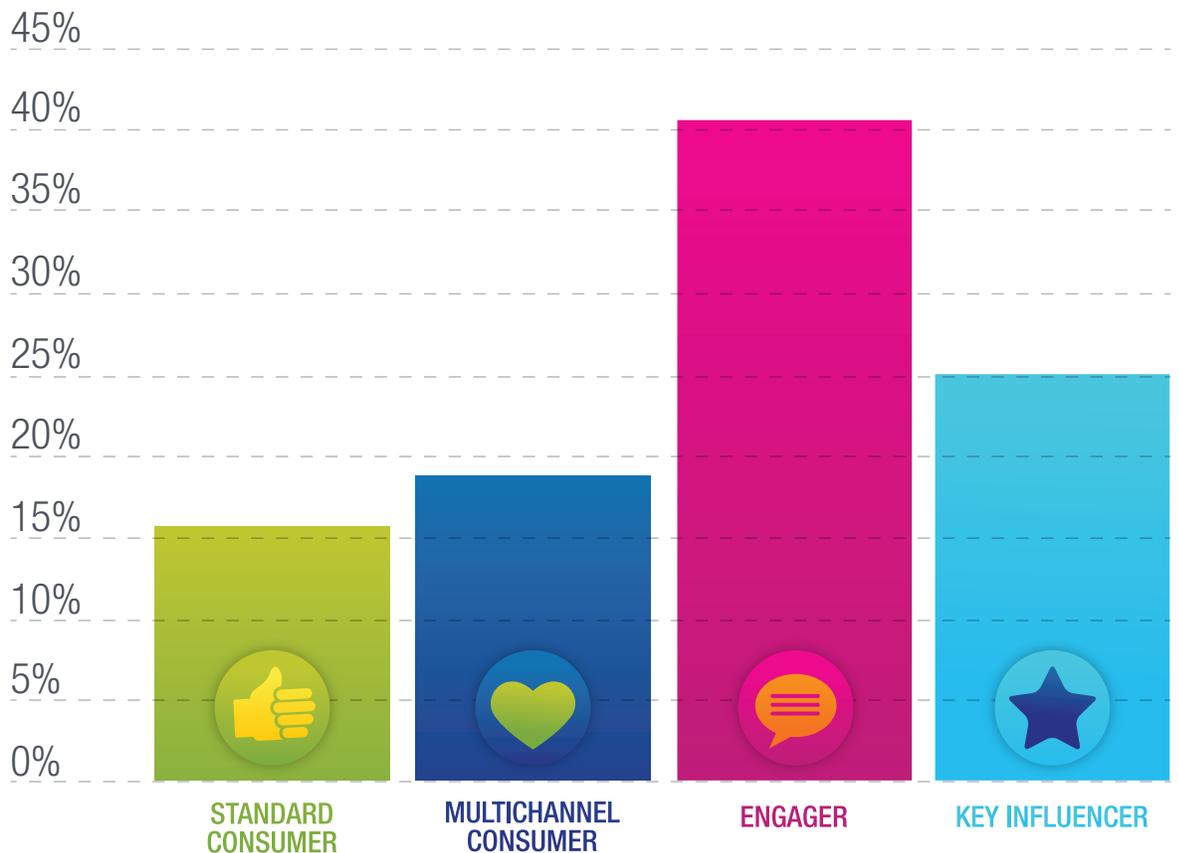
Standard Consumers are also influenced by their more active social media friends, and they may choose to donate or become involved with your organization based on recommendations by their family and friends. If so, it will often be in more traditional ways – by mail or in person.

Each of the four social media categories has unique characteristics and its members relate to each other and to your campaigns in different ways. And don't forget about your major gift donors and prospects – they're on social media, too! The below figure shows the expected breakdown across the four categories of a typical nonprofit organization's supporters who have more than \$1 million in total estate value.

If You Were a Millionaire, What Social Influencer Type Would You Be?

Individuals Above \$1 Million Total Estate Value and on Social Media

Expected breakdown of a typical nonprofit organization's base of supporters with more than \$1 million total estate value (charts from Small Act wealth profiles and social comparison for National Wildlife Federation, 2012)



USING SOCIAL SCORES TO INCREASE EVENT FUNDRAISING

Encouraging event participation and online fundraising are natural fits for your Key Influencers and Engagers, as research shows that those who score high on social media interactions are better people-to-people fundraisers than those who don't. A 2011 Blackbaud study also found that peer-to-peer fundraisers increased fundraising by 40 percent by using their social networks over years when they didn't use social media.⁴ Make sure you give them event information early

and encourage them to share it with their social networks. To forge a strong connection, you could invite them to a pre-event meeting, a webinar, or a conference call so they have unique information and content to discuss.

The American Cancer Society is planning to put this concept to the test by using social scores to target recipients of their half-marathon, marathon, and triathlon direct marketing appeals. By analyzing email

addresses, they have been able to identify constituents who are interested in running, have high interaction ratings on social media sites, and have made a donation to the organization in the past 24 months—now *that* is a target audience! Ensuring these runners have information about the events that is engaging and easy to distribute to their social networks will be key to their success.



USING SOCIAL SCORES TO TARGET SOCIAL SUPPORTERS

The National Wildlife Federation, a nonprofit that works to inspire Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future, has recently studied the social media behaviors of its members and donors through database analysis, social scoring, and publicly available social media information. Their goal is to acquire a more complete picture of constituent interactions with the organization so they can make strategic decisions about where to allocate outreach resources.

First, they used publically available social media information and mixed it with past constituent interactions from various platforms, allowing them to get a clearer picture of their supporters than they had ever had before. Then, by analyzing how they interact with these constituents on social media platforms, they are able to see their supporters as individuals rather than as simply names or addresses and work with them to leverage their social influence.

One way the National Wildlife Federation uses social scoring to reach out to a wider audience is to connect with people who have participated in past events and who could be doing more to spread the organization's message on social media. For example, in looking at the data, staff discovered that people who participate in the organization's annual Great American Backyard Campout have higher than average social scores. This is an important piece of information, and staff has decided that strategic outreach to this group will make a difference in realizing its mission of connecting children with nature—believing that social people share more and influence others.

The Federation also finds great value in having access to social history as well as participant data, because it allows them to spend less time researching and more time connecting with constituents in the ways they communicate. By targeting a specific region and people

in that region who score at the Engager level or higher, they plan to test how well targeted outreach increases event participation and results in social supporters spreading the organization's message.

Like many nonprofits, the National Wildlife Federation does not have a lot of time or money to spend on outreach, which is why it is so

important for them to know their supporters' social strengths and how they can empower them to spread the word on important issues. Supporters who authentically spread your message over social media channels can influence many others.

CONCLUSION

Social media offers a wealth of publically available information to help you better understand your constituents. By segmenting them through social scores, you are able to identify those highly connected individuals who encourage and influence others with content, product and service reviews, and endorsements. With this information, you can get to know those individuals, collaborate with them, and use their social skills to advocate for your organization. A clear view of your social media constituents is critical as people increasingly rely on each other to endorse, defend, and decry products and causes.

NONPROFITS WHO UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS



DetermiNation™

The American Cancer Society wants to expand its new series of DetermiNation athletic endurance fundraising events by getting its direct marketing pieces to the right audience. Targeting walkers, runners, and cyclists in general is not cost effective—up to 90 percent of a direct mailing to these groups can be ineffective, because endurance events call for endurance athletes. And to slice it a bit thinner, the nonprofit wants to target endurance athletes who are well connected and who can raise money.

Before social scoring and social media research, this would have been a mighty challenge. But today, the organization is able to target Engagers and Key Influencers among their constituents who participate in marathons and other endurance events, and reach out to them with information they can use to distribute to their social networks.

Now, *that* is combination that can produce results.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

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With social data there is much more power to target effectively, to measure the results, to make improvements, and then to measure again and so on. It allows you to continue advancing the results and efficacy of what you do in ways that before were either not possible or were very difficult and expensive to do.

— Guy Fischer,
National Chief Development Officer,
American Cancer Society



AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

Every year, the American Diabetes Association holds popular fundraising walks and every year, marketing is a challenge – because every year, they see a huge loss of participants. The

problem is a turnover in team captains: If a captain leaves, his or her whole team leaves.

To address the problem, the Association is turning to social media research, using social scores to identify key participants and to provide special cultivation opportunities to those team members who would make good team captains. And once they know who the potential captains are, they can reach out to them in pre-, during-, and post-event activities, aligning them to the cause and cultivating them to be team captains.

We are interested in using social data to better engage our constituents across multiple facets of our organization: major gifts, advocacy, special events, and direct response. We believe this added intelligence would allow us to better steward our donors and our participants in a more thoughtful way, lending to increased retention and acquisition.

– Kate Giblin Rooper,
Vice President, Campaign Development



AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Connecting with mid-level to major donors in a meaningful way is a challenge of its own; tapping into their networks might be insurmountable if it were not for social media research and scoring.

American Heart Association's goal: Find the top one percent of their donors who are Key Influencers in social media and empower them to

be advocates and evangelists for upcoming campaigns. Once identified, the organization is able to create high-touch ways to engage them—including education and special events that invite them to invite others.

It is one positive success factor for a researcher and analyst to see the value of abstract social media data. It is completely another success factor to translate those data points into convincing and actionable information for our fundraisers.

– Lindsey Beam,
Senior Prospect Research Consultant,
American Heart Association

Footnotes –

1. Nielsen, "Global Consumers' Trust in 'Earned' Advertising Grows in Importance", April 10, 2012.
2. Neilson and NM Incite, "State of the Media: The Social Media Report, Q3 2011".
3. Madden, Mary and Zickuhr, "65% of Online Adults Use Social Networking Sites", Pew Internet & American Life Project, August 26, 2011. Accessed on March 23, 2012, <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Social-Networking-Sites/Overview.aspx>.
4. Wilkins, Donna and Mark Davis, "Making Even Participants More Successful with Social Media Tools", Blackbaud, June 2011.



Danielle Brigida

Danielle Brigida is a self-proclaimed wildlife geek and works as the manager of social media for the National Wildlife Federation. She actively engages a wide range of constituents using a mixture of online tools and social networking sites. An early adopter of social media with creative, engaging campaigns, Danielle has been recognized as one of 10 Green Women We Love by Greenopia, one of the 75 Environmentalists to Follow by Mashable, one of Top 50 Green People to Follow on Twitter by Greenopolis, a featured changemaker by Change.org, and a measurement maven of the month by Katie Paine. By tracking emerging trends and measuring impact, she consistently finds the most effective ways to drive traffic and engagement for NWF's campaigns.

Danielle is a sought-after speaker, having presented at South by Southwest (SXSW), PR News Digital Media Summit, Blog World, Nonprofit Technology Conference, and Netroots Nation, as well as several webinars. Danielle graduated from Christopher Newport University with a B.A. in Technical Writing with minors in Biology and Communications.



Mark Davis

Mark Davis is the director of technical solutions at Blackbaud, with a focus on event fundraising, online advocacy, and national organizations. He has worked directly with many of the largest nonprofits in the industry, such as American Heart Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, and Arthritis Foundation, helping to deploy online fundraising solutions. As one of the original architects of Friends Asking Friends® peer-to-peer fundraising technology, he has actively participated in the development of the Blackbaud Sphere™ eMarketing and online fundraising product. He received a bachelor's degree in engineering from Duke University and a master's degree in engineering from Stanford University.



Casey Golden

A lifetime entrepreneur, Casey Golden started his first business at the age of 11 and has since founded several successful companies. The most recent, Parature, a customer relationship management (CRM) software company, has grown to over 120 employees. His current venture, Small Act, helps nonprofits and associations nurture key relationships online with its social media software tools, Thrive and Profile Builder.

A frequent speaker at national events who also donates his time to serve on several nonprofit advisory boards, Casey contributed a chapter to the book *Do Your Giving While You Are Living: Inspiration Lessons on What You Can Do Today to Make a Difference Tomorrow*. He recently made the Bisnow "Top 35 Entrepreneurs Under 35 in the Washington, D.C. area" list and was honored as a leader for social change as part of the Class of 2009 of Greater D.C. Cares. Casey lives in Northern Virginia with his wife, Beverley, and five-year-old twins, Tristan and Lilyrose.

About Small Act

Small Act empowers organizations to take social media to the next level, enhancing their fundraising, major gift prospecting, event planning, and advocacy efforts. With their Social Data, Key Donor Intelligence, and Social CRM solutions, Small Act proudly serves hundreds of clients, including The Nature Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, and American Heart Association. www.smallact.com

About Blackbaud

Serving the nonprofit and education sectors for 30 years, Blackbaud (NASDAQ: BLKB) combines technology and expertise to help organizations achieve their missions. Blackbaud works with more than 27,000 customers in more than 60 countries that support higher education, healthcare, human services, arts and culture, faith, the environment, independent education, animal welfare, and other charitable causes. The company offers a full spectrum of cloud-based and on-premise software solutions, and related services for organizations of all sizes including: fundraising, eMarketing, social media, advocacy, constituent relationship management (CRM), analytics, financial management, and vertical-specific solutions. Using Blackbaud technology, these organizations raise more than \$100 billion each year. Recognized as a top company by Forbes, InformationWeek, and Software Magazine and honored by Best Places to Work, Blackbaud is headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina and has employees throughout the US, and in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Mexico, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

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