



WING 1 Focus

How to Hatch a Goal That Will Make an Impact

To change the world, you have to get your head together first.

—JIMI HENDRIX

In 2008, thirty-something Colombian engineer Oscar Morales logged on to Facebook to begin organizing a protest against the Revolutionary Armed Forces in his country. Within a week, he had mobilized more than a million people, generated publicity for the release of hundreds of hostages, and incited the largest mass demonstration in the country's history. On another continent, Areej Khan, a young Saudi woman studying art in New York, tapped YouTube, Flickr, and Facebook to spur the government to consider lifting a ban on women drivers in the kingdom. And, in the United States, in an effort in which you might have participated, Barack Obama, at the time a junior senator from Illinois, fueled an online grassroots campaign

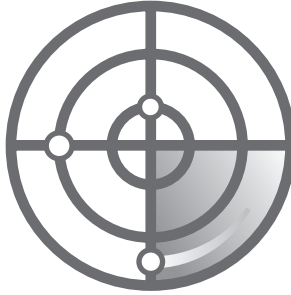
that led directly to his becoming the first African American president of the United States (and the most popular living figure on Facebook).

A decade ago, it would have been technically impossible for ordinary citizens to respond publicly to global events and share their opinions easily with such a wide audience. It would have been unreasonable to expect that their ideas could inspire that audience to take action and achieve results. Yet that's exactly what happened. We are living in a dramatically smaller and more interconnected world. Practically anyone, anywhere, can capitalize on incredible networking tools that are both free and easy to master.

Although social networking tools are widely used to incite action, the people who have used them most effectively have one thing in common: a laser-like focus. As big, daunting, and impressive as some of their movements seem—citizens rallying against guerrillas, a once-voiceless population protesting for women's rights—each started small, with a few people and a goal.

This chapter, Wing 1, will demonstrate the importance of setting a single focused goal to provide direction, motivation, and operational guidance. A focused goal comprises several elements, which we've broken down into five design principles that can be remembered by the mnemonic HATCH (Humanistic, Actionable, Testable, Clarity, Happiness). The first half of this chapter provides research and case studies that demonstrate how each principle plays a crucial role in successful goal setting. In the second half, we will show how they work together, through an in-depth case study of President Obama's use of social media in his campaign for the White House.

Design Principles to Think Focused



Design Principle 1: Humanistic

Staying focused on your audience may sound basic, but in practice, most of us are easily distracted. Business leaders, non-profit organization directors, and political officials usually draft a “plan of action” that is finalized before any action is taken, and it is typically viewed as the silver bullet for success. Getting everyone on board is paramount; deviation from the plan is discouraged. This type of strategy assumes an ability to predict and navigate all potential outcomes. The problem is, it rarely works. Some uncomfortable truths: you can only guess what will happen in the future; you cannot control outcomes. Those who are willing to test their hypotheses before committing to a detailed approach are more likely to succeed.

The concept of design thinking has become widespread. Businesses including General Electric and Procter & Gamble now strive to take an open-minded and holistic approach to product development that places more emphasis on understanding the needs of the end user. Nonprofits like Vision-Spring, which sells inexpensive reading glasses, are using the

Human Centered Design Toolkit by one of the leading design consultancies, IDEO.¹ Moving fluidly from observation to conceptualization to experimentation to experience (in the form of innovative solutions),² VisionSpring was able to make its vision tests more friendly to children—and ultimately reach more people. The Gates Foundation also worked with IDEO’s toolkit to help charities develop new programs in collaboration with their beneficiaries.³

Although design has historically been associated with creating aesthetically attractive products and technologies, leaders are increasingly applying design thinking at all phases of development as a means of gaining competitive advantage.⁴ As Steve Jobs says, “Design is not how things look; it’s how things work.”

One compelling example of humanistic design thinking in action is the Montana Meth Project, a nonprofit effort whose research-based marketing campaign significantly reduced methamphetamine use in Montana. The project was conceived and backed by software entrepreneur Thomas Siebel, a part-time resident of Montana. He first learned about the state’s drug problem from the local sheriff, who told him that nearly all of his

Embrace: How Design Thinking Works

Embrace, a nonprofit organization, was started by a group of Stanford students in the Entrepreneurial Design for Extreme Affordability class at the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (extreme.stanford.edu). The students were challenged to design a better incubator for the developing world. Each year, twenty million premature and low-birth-weight babies are born, and mortality for these infants is particularly high because most hospitals and

clinics in developing countries don't have enough incubators. New incubators cost more than \$20,000 each—and donated incubators are confusing to operate, maintain, and repair. Most groups previously aiming to tackle this problem have tried to lower the costs of the incubators, but the Stanford team took an entirely different approach.

The Embrace team began in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal. After spending several days observing the neonatal unit of the Kathmandu hospital, the team asked to be taken outside the city to see how premature infants were cared for in rural areas. They learned that the majority of premature infants were born in these rural areas and that most of them would never make it to a hospital. They realized that to save the maximum number of lives, their design would have to function in a rural environment. It would have to work without electricity and be transportable, intuitive, sanitizable, culturally appropriate, and inexpensive.

The team created multiple prototypes that led to the Embrace "Infant Warmer" (embraceglobal.org). The design looks like a sleeping bag, and contains a pouch of phase-change material to keep a baby's body at the right temperature for up to four hours. It can be "recharged" in boiling water in a matter of minutes, which is also how it is sanitized. The Infant Warmer is far more intuitive to use than traditional incubators, and fits well into the culture's recommended practice of "kangaroo care," where a mother holds her baby against her skin. This invention is similar in theory to the pouches skiers use to keep their hands warm, but these portable and electricity-free incubators save infants' lives—and cost only \$25.

Embrace has the potential to save more than fifteen million babies in the next ten years. The nonprofit is now manufacturing infant warmers in India, where 40 percent of the world's low-birth-weight infants are born, and the group plans to take the idea worldwide. Embrace is utilizing social media, including online videos and social networks, to mobilize mothers in the developing world to help evangelize their mission.

department's time was spent busting meth labs. Between 1992 and 2002, meth-related hospital admissions rose 520 percent. By 2005, over half of the children in foster care were there because of meth, and half of inmates were incarcerated for meth.⁵

"It occurred to me that perhaps we could look at this as a consumer marketing problem," said Siebel. Meth may be an illegal substance, but like a consumer product, it is readily available, affordably priced, and efficiently distributed. Further, many of its effects, such as weight loss and energy boosting, are perceived as attractive. The Montana Meth Project took a new approach: It sought to publicize the dark side of this product and to "unsell" it.⁶

First, the project heavily researched meth's consumers, determining who they were, what they cared about, and how to reach them. The campaign team began with a baseline survey of more than a thousand respondents, who were twelve to twenty-four years old. A third of consumers had been offered meth within the past year, and almost a quarter saw little or no risk in trying it. The campaign team interviewed drug counselors, a recovering addict, and two teens with family members who were addicts, and conducted focus groups. Their research uncovered something critical: their anticipated target audience, eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds, were too old, as most teens were forming opinions about drugs around the age of thirteen.

The team developed a number of ads with different characters and messages and tested them with teens. It immediately became clear that the target audience didn't want to hear from adults sharing statistics or their stories. They wanted to hear from kids their own age, people who looked like their friends. The message "not even once" resonated most. The team focused its entire campaign on that slogan.

Some of the ads (see them on YouTube), so graphic they were only shown at night, succeeded in shocking their audience. According to a report by Mike McGrath, Montana's attorney general at the time, methamphetamine-related crime fell 53 percent during the project's first year. A statewide survey revealed that 96 percent of parents had discussed the drug with their children in the past year, up more than 13 percent since the ads began, and more than half said that the campaign had prompted those discussions. In just two years, teen meth use declined 63 percent.

Cultivating a Human-Centered Approach



Before you can involve your audience members, you need to understand them and connect with them as individuals. Start by answering the following questions:

What is she like? Listen, observe, ask questions. Empathize, understand, then keep the face of that individual in mind, using her as a filter for decision making.

What keeps her up at night? Everyone has a fear. What is hers? Can you address it?

What do you want her to do? State this clearly, and make sure the answer is something she cares about.

How might she resist? What will keep her from adopting your message and carrying out your call to action? Identify three bridges you can build:

- *Shared experiences:* What do you have in common: memories, historical events, interests?
 - *Shared values:* What do you value personally and collectively: beliefs, norms, and driving desires?
 - *Shared goals:* Where are you headed in the future? What outcomes are mutually desired?
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The Montana Meth Project succeeded in its goal to unsell meth, illustrating the importance of focusing on the needs of your audience to create broad change. Although the campaign was aimed at teenagers, it also reduced adult meth use by 72 percent and meth-related crime by 62 percent, and moved the state of Montana from the fifth-highest rate of meth abuse in the nation to the thirty-ninth. Arizona, California, Iowa, and other states have since launched their own Meth Projects with spots borrowed from Montana. And, through the Internet, the ads have been viewed by hundreds of thousands of people who have spread them virally, with no airtime costs.

Design Principle 2: Actionable

Striking the right balance between visionary and realistic goals is key to maintaining focus. Goals that are too easy to reach will not satisfy participants and will underdeliver for your cause. Goals that feel out of reach can discourage people, leading them to quit easily or not to try at all. To achieve balance, break the goal down into parts: a single long-term macro goal and a number of short-term process goals, or micro goals.

At the beginning, don't focus on that long-term macro goal. Instead, focus on your tactical micro goals so that you will have a clear sense of progress. Imagining the *process* of reaching a goal (for example, studying hard for an exam) is more effective than envisioning the outcome (getting an A).⁷ Pursuing actionable micro goals reduces a complex problem into something that is manageable.⁸ In other words: small micro goals not only mark progress but also keep you sane and reduce stress.



Understanding Macro Goals and Tactical Micro Goals

Macro goal: a long-term goal that identifies the problem, the “gap” you intend to close. A macro goal carries belief and feeling. Things to consider: it should define the brand behind the project, and what types of connections the team is seeking to create (social, potential consumer segments, seeking funds, creating awareness).

Tactical micro goal: a short-term goal that is small, actionable, and measurable. It can be an approximation or first step for achieving your larger goal.⁹ Things to consider: developing the brand, defining specific audience segments, creating a dialogue with end users.

In their book *Nudge*, Richard Thaler and Cass Sustein argue that although one might think that high stakes attached to a goal would make people pay more attention, they actually just make people tense.¹⁰ High stakes attached to big goals often induce people to feel stress, and in turn they do nothing to achieve the goal (and hence seemingly abandon their rationality). Consider, for example, how one might handle the goal “to become healthy.” Where to start? Abandon late-night snacking? Start hitting the gym? Choose salad over pizza for lunch? Chasing all these solutions quickly becomes overwhelming. Too big a gap between the current state and the desired state (being unhealthy versus becoming healthy) often leads to discouragement and goal abandonment.¹¹

If a micro goal is set—for example, to run thirty minutes a day around the lake—it’s more achievable, and the person who pursues it will be working toward the macro goal of becoming healthier. The positive feedback he receives will encourage him to take the next step. Narrow, proximal (short-term) goals lead

to better performance because they can promote our feelings of competence¹² and increase the chance that we will enjoy tasks.¹³

There is another benefit to honing your larger single goal into smaller micro goals. A growing amount of research shows that, more generally, small is not inconsequential. For example, psychological studies have shown that first impressions based on micro amounts of information are surprisingly accurate. In one study, teachers' effectiveness was accurately predicted based solely on six-second clips.¹⁴

The principle of micro changes also guides decision making. For example, the order in which food items are listed on a menu affects customers' decisions. In one experiment, simply rearranging the order of a dish on a menu yielded a change in the consumption of some items by as much as 25 percent.¹⁵ In another example, *how* companies present savings plan options to employees affects employees' decisions. Automatic enrollment in 401(k) savings plans leads to significantly higher participation, which is surprisingly low in the absence of automatic enrollment, despite considerable benefits.¹⁶

Noting that people often make suboptimal decisions in reality, behavioral economists have pointed to the role of *choice architecture*, or how you set up a choice, to affect which decisions are made.¹⁷ With the right approach, we each have the power to help people make better decisions—and effect big changes one small step at a time.

Design Principle 3: Testable

Be sure your goal is testable. There's no easy way to measure something as complex as a cure for cancer or the achievement of world peace, but you can measure the number of people who register to donate bone marrow, or the number of people who show up to

a protest and the number of press articles it receives, or the number of votes in an election. Establish metrics to ensure progress. Combining goal setting and feedback is more effective than goal setting alone.¹⁸

Use Metrics to Test the Validity of a Goal



As Chris Anderson advises in *The Long Tail*, don't predict—measure and respond. Although your goal should be specific and concrete, you need to be able to tweak it as necessary along the way, based on what you learn as you monitor your progress.

Making Data-Driven Decisions: How to Test the Success of Your Site

By **Avinash Kaushik**, author of *Web Analytics 2.0*

- **Don't get enamored by shininess.** Instead, think about measures such as bounce rate (the percentage of visitors who “bounce” away from your site after arriving at the landing page), then use analytics and data to strip features away to make bad sites better.
- **Clearly define quantifiable success metrics.** Learn to focus on micro conversions that add up in the long term to help you achieve your macro goal. Think about how to have your message amplified—your strategy should be to share, not shout.
- **Listen.** Your goal is to understand your audience and identify “segments of discontent.” Surveys are a great tool. The best surveys ask three simple questions:
 - Why are you here?
 - Were you able to complete your task?
 - If not, why?

Set specific deadlines. People perform best when working toward a deadline.¹⁹ Having milestone points along the way enables regimented tracking of progress, which both increases the chance that you can overcome obstacles and allows for course correction.²⁰ Just as important, having a benchmark maintains optimism, which you'll need in order to stay on course.²¹

Testable goals provide milestones and opportunities to mark your achievements. Psychologists have shown that this approach is most aligned with human preferences for learning, motivation, and perception.²² Achieving more, smaller successes (as opposed to fewer, larger successes) works as positive reinforcement and sustains momentum. We all think we want a big win, but the reality is that big wins can have unexpected negative consequences. Looking over the top of the mountain can create uncertainty about what comes next and nostalgia for the journey that's now in the past. You see this when a person retires, or when a start-up is acquired and the original team gets lost in the new organization. Further, big wins bring higher expectations and countermeasures, both of which render the next win more difficult to achieve.

Design Principle 4: Clarity

Few pursuits come with built-in finish lines, so you need to construct them yourself. A key design criterion is clarity. Indeed, a clear goal may have multiple dimensions, but pursuing multiple goals is counterproductive, as it causes people to lose focus.²³ Research shows that the reason why many don't achieve their goals is not that they don't try hard enough or think strategically enough, but simply because they embarked on too many goals or set conflicting goals.²⁴

Consider this: a Stanford study found that heavy multitaskers actually underperform in mental tasks as compared to light multitaskers.²⁵ When we are bombarded with multiple sources of information, it's impossible to filter out what's irrelevant. As Tad Williams once said, "A well-aimed spear is worth three."

Highly specific goals promote better performance than general, do-your-best goals. They beget greater satisfaction and, ultimately, a stronger commitment.²⁶ Why? Nonspecific goals overtax the prefrontal cortex, the brain area largely responsible for willpower. When the prefrontal cortex—which is also responsible for solving abstract problems, keeping us focused, and handling short-term memory—becomes overly occupied, willpower weakens.²⁷

ClimateChangeUS offers a good example of how a single clear goal increases an organization's chances of bringing about large-scale change. With the goal to become a trust agent for scientific information on climate change, the group started a Twitter account to raise awareness about the release of the Global Climate Impacts in the United States report in June 2009. It gained traction, and after a few weeks expanded its goal to share the latest peer-reviewed climate science. In just a few weeks, ClimateChangeUS succeeded at its original goal—and established itself as something bigger: a trusted resource for journalists, educators, and citizens. Note that expertise is often transitive; once you establish credibility in one domain and are recognized, people assume you can apply your expertise to other challenges.²⁸

Design Principle 5: Happiness

The goal you choose needs to be personally meaningful. The mere thought of achieving it should, at some level, make you

happy. If you aren't motivated by something fundamental, others are not going to be, either.

Too often in business the goal is to increase sales or maximize profit, which may be clear but is hardly motivating. Those firms that can get beyond financials to more meaningful goals are more likely to excite employees. Kaiser Health is about helping members thrive; Whole Foods is about making healthy eating pleasurable, and P&G's Pampers is about providing the best care for babies—all meaningful goals with the potential to inspire. If people really care about your goal, they will be more willing to work longer and harder.

Ask yourself whether your goal is personally meaningful. Do you have a compelling backstory? People are unlikely to help unless they know *why* you're doing what you're doing. People who set goals based on personal interests and values achieve those goals more often because they're continually

Five Design Principles to Focus



HATCH

Humanistic. Focus on understanding your audience rather than making assumptions about quick solutions.

Actionable. Use short-term tactical micro goals to achieve long-term macro goals.

Testable. Before you launch, identify metrics that will help evaluate your progress and inform your actions. Establish deadlines and celebrate small wins along the way.

Clarity. Keep your goal clear to increase your odds of success and generate momentum.

Happiness. Ensure that your goals are meaningful to you and your audience.

energized and thus stay more focused.²⁹ If you were to achieve your goal, how would you feel? If you were to fail in achieving it, how would you feel? The answers to these questions should be motivating in their own right.

HATCHed Goals in Action

You will need all five HATCH components to focus your campaign. If one or more is missing or deficient, your task will be that much harder. How will you HATCH your goal? Fill in the chart here and refer to the Help Vinay and Sameer column for examples.

	Help Vinay and Sameer	Your Campaign _____
Humanistic	Focus on Vinay and Sameer as people who have interests, similarities, and lives that the audience can relate to.	
Actionable	Process goals include getting others to host their own donor drives through empowerment marketing.	
Testable	Number of registrants toward a specific number (20,000) within 6–12 weeks.	
Clarity	Get 20,000 South Asians into the bone marrow registry. (Goal is not clouded with aims to cure cancer or create a registry in India.)	
Happiness	Volunteers and audience are motivated by Sameer's and Vinay's personal stories—and their relevance. Doing something meaningful makes them feel good.	

Yes We Can! How Obama Won with Social Media

Barack Obama's 2008 run for the White House is perhaps the broadest campaign to successfully use social media for social change.³⁰ Obama's team effectively utilized new social media tools—and according to some experts, this bold move secured him the presidency. Analysts at Edelman Research say that Obama won by “converting everyday people into engaged and empowered volunteers, donors, and advocates through social networks, email advocacy, text messaging, and online video.”³¹

Although Obama's grassroots effort was savvy at using a wide variety of existing social media and technology tools, its key channel was MyBarackObama.com (nicknamed MyBO). In many ways this easy-to-use networking website was like a more focused version of Facebook. It allowed Obama supporters to create a profile, build groups, connect and chat with other registered users, find or plan offline events, and raise funds. MyBO also housed such user-generated content as videos, speeches, photos, and how-to guides that allowed people to create their own content—similar to a digital toolbox.³² The mission, design, and execution of the site echoed the single goal of the grassroots effort: to provide a variety of ways for people to connect and become deeply involved.

The Obama team, which created the most robust set of online tools ever used in a political campaign, did so in less than ten days, timing the site to launch around Obama's presidential campaign announcement. Keeping focused on one clear mission (“involvement through empowerment”) helped them not only execute fast but also execute right. In terms of core functionality, MyBO was the same on launch day as it was on Election Day.

It was no coincidence that MyBO shared similarities with Facebook; the Obama campaign had familiarized itself with Facebook early on, first using it before the midterm elections. At that time, Facebook had just started to allow political candidates to build profile pages, and even though Obama wasn't a midterm candidate, he still wanted to harness online momentum. The campaign also hired Facebook cofounder Chris Hughes to help it develop and execute its social media strategy.

Facebook Boot Camp

Lady Gaga, with more than 13 million friends, is the most popular living person on Facebook. Facebook isn't just for people, though; Starbucks, with more than 11 million fans, is a highly networked company. Starbucks uses the site to engage with customers, build excitement for new products, educate fans about such social-good initiatives as buying fair trade coffee, and raise awareness for its Pledge 5 volunteer campaign. How can you leverage this phenomenon?

1. Start with a Facebook page, not just a Facebook group. The differences are subtle, but Facebook pages have different features, such as targeted updates, custom applications, and usage metrics.
2. There's no limit of people who can join your Facebook page, so ask team members as well as friends and family to sign on as early fans. When they do, it will show up in their news feed and help fuel word of mouth.
3. Register for a "vanity URL." You'll need a particular size of fan base to register. Facebook does this to prevent "squatters" taking up every conceivable simple URL.
4. Post videos and pictures from events on the page and tag people in them. Viewers will viscerally engage in a way that is difficult to replicate as quickly with the written word.
5. Be yourself and use your voice. Authenticity is essential to genuinely engage with your community.

Hughes's revolutionary contribution to MyBO was using social media not just to capture people's attention but to enable them to become activists (without a single field staffer telling them how).³³ These activists became a team—initially gathering online and then coordinating offline events to evangelize their cause.

MyBO integrated behavioral truths (involvement leads to commitment; opportunity leads to empowerment) and social media tools to inspire people to participate in ways that they found meaningful and rewarding. MyBarackObama.com was not merely a website; it was a movement that made politics accessible through social media that people were already using every day. It changed the face of political campaigns forever; but, more important, it made getting involved as easy as opening up an Internet browser and creating an online profile. Although Obama's social media team may have achieved the most ambitious and most successful social networking movement to date, its efforts also provide keen insights and simple lessons that can be applied to any campaign, including yours. The following rules are the first steps to executing your focused goal—and maximizing your impact.

Exploit Existing Tools

The Obama campaign not only excelled at creating its own site but also mastered using the free tools that were already available. This is an idea that every effort can borrow.

Instead of focusing on Obama's numbers (which are impressive but intimidating), focus on the power of having these social media imprints out there. Obama's universal social media presence demonstrates that even in the most traditional endeavors, new media matter. His campaign was able to garner

5 million supporters on fifteen different social networks. By November 2008, Obama had approximately 2.5 million (some sources say as many as 3.2 million) Facebook supporters, outperforming Republican opponent John McCain by nearly four times.³⁴ On Twitter, Obama had more than 115,000 followers, more than twenty-three times more than John McCain. People spent 14 million hours watching campaign-related Obama videos on YouTube, with 50 million viewers total. That was four times the number of McCain's YouTube viewers.³⁵ "No other candidate has ever integrated the full picture the way [Obama] has, that's what's really new about his campaign,"³⁶ said Michael Malbin, executive director of the Campaign Finance Institute.

Just creating a profile or fan page isn't enough. It's how you use these tools. One effort in particular, the Dinner with Barack fundraising event, stands out because it tapped many different technologies to achieve its goal—making people feel involved and empowered. Traditional fundraising dinners allow big donors to buy access to candidates. That didn't resonate with the Obama campaign, which instead looked for a way to acknowledge that everyone is an important participant in creating change.

The team selected four donors who had given *any* amount and who had shared their stories about why they were motivated to donate. It promoted the unusual effort on MyBO: "While a typical political dinner these days consists of officials being wined and dined by Washington lobbyists and bigwigs from special interest PACs, Barack will be sitting down with four regular people from across the country, who will share their stories and discuss the issues that matter most to them."³⁷

Over the course of the campaign, the team hosted two Dinner with Barack events, broadcasting the events on YouTube

and on the campaign's website. Those videos went viral when viewers reposted them on their blogs.

Most important: the tactic inspired others. "The stories put a human face on our donors," says new media director Joe Rospars. They also raised a significant amount of money. "People appreciated that we were doing things in a different way because small donors, especially early ones, sometimes think that the closer you get to the political process, the ickier it gets. But on our organizing mission, we were able to get twenty-five thousand new people to give \$5, for example, and . . . provide a huge new list . . . of people who've made some level of commitment to the campaign."

When it comes to philanthropic activities on social media, social networks foster—through greater transparency—closer relationships between donors and causes. For example, on Facebook Causes, Facebook's platform to support activism and fundraising, you can see in detail how money is dispersed. Furthermore, by adding fun, personal, and accessible elements that reduce the distance between the individual and the cause, you can create powerful connections that serve as engines for action and change.

Make the Moments Count

Obama's team celebrated milestones, and basked in the wins along the way. One great example involves their use of email and texts. The campaign was an email production machine, sending out a total of one billion emails. There were more than 8,000 unique e-mail messages targeted to specific segments of its 13-million-member email list, with subjects ranging from state and residence to social issues to donation history. The team



Go Where Your People Are

The Obama campaign invested in social networks, putting profiles for Obama on My Space, Facebook, LinkedIn, Black Planet, Eons, AsianAve, Flickr, Digg, Eventful, FaithBase, GLEE, MiGente, My Batanga, and DNC PartyBuilder, as well as driving traffic to video on the campaign's YouTube channel.

It seems the campaign was everywhere; however, in an effort to remain focused, the campaign limited itself to fifteen external social networks. "These social networks are shopping malls that have millions of people already hanging out in them," says Scott Goodstein, the campaign's external online director. So the question becomes, how to find the people that are going to be your advocates and have them talk about your message? It's no different than basic organizing and going door-to-door anywhere in the country."

Go to the audience you have. The Obama campaign sought out the disabled American community social network, Disaboom. "It was a great way to reach out to the disabled American community and have a real conversation about their issues and questions and point people in the right direction towards our policy papers," says Goodstein.

Go to the audience you want. Obama was also active on the business social network LinkedIn. "This isn't exactly the most progressive of the social networks, mostly comprised of CEOs and large businesses. Statistics showed that it was more Republican, but we went on the site," explains Goodstein. "We asked a question on the site, 'What are your suggestions for helping small business?' And we were actually able to hear from people that ran their own small business about what their real problems are. Then we had President Obama address a couple of the really thought-out suggestions and just engaged in a conversation and dialogue with people that he wouldn't have necessarily met any other way."

Keep the dialogue going. Capitalizing on the novelty of being able to connect with a candidate, Goodstein's team maintained Obama's presence by responding to questions on the sites. Links to the various social networks were posted on MyBO.

created content for the emails and tested it by segmenting email lists, monitoring responses, and adapting their messages on the basis of that feedback. They learned to engage their audience via email and text message, which paid off when they needed to communicate with supporters at the most pivotal moments. On August 23, 2008, Obama's team sent out a text to its one million subscribers announcing that Senator Joe Biden would be Obama's running mate. Nielsen Mobile called it the largest mobile marketing event in the United States to date.³⁸

Ultimately, the campaign garnered 3 million mobile and SMS subscribers. On Election Day, supporters received three texts. The final one said, "All of this happened because of you. Thanks, Barack."

The Power of One

When you think about what you'd like to achieve in your project, always think in terms of one person and stay focused on that individual. The Obama campaign stayed focused on Obama. This idea came directly from the way people on the campaign personally connected to Obama. "I connected to Barack as an individual first. It just so happened that he was in politics," Chris Hughes said in an interview with *Fast Company*.

Obama brought that connection to the social Web, which is what was so effective about his campaign, says Randi Zuckerberg, who leads marketing, political, and social change initiatives on Facebook. "One thing that really strikes me about Obama's Facebook page is how authentic he is. He has his favorite music up there, as well as his interests, including basketball and spending time with kids. *Godfather I* and *II* are his favorite movies. His staffers were constantly updating their profiles, telling

people they were on the campaign trail, or eating pizza, or stuck in traffic. It was this kind of voice that made everyone feel like they were in one conversation together.”

The campaign took similar advantage of YouTube, using the site to introduce its audience to Barack Obama the person. Particularly popular videos include Obama’s appearance on *Ellen* (8 million views), his speech on a more perfect union (6 million views), and his “Yes We Can” speech (3 million views). YouTube also afforded the campaign a significant amount of free advertising. Political consultant Joe Trippi told the *New York Times* that the YouTube videos were more effective than television ads because viewers chose to watch them or received them from a friend instead of having their television shows interrupted for something they had no say in. According to Trippi, the 14.5 million hours that viewers spent watching clips on YouTube would have cost \$47 million had the content been delivered via broadcast TV.³⁹

Using the media to allow people to get to know Obama in this personal way made him more accessible—and that made all the difference for his campaign. This is a lesson that can easily be replicated. Steve Grove, the head of news and politics at YouTube, explains: “There’s a tendency to think of new media as a secret sauce that suddenly unlocks this viral potential, and there’s truth to that. But there’s no such thing as some view-count fairy dust that the Obama campaign had that somehow made their YouTube videos climb that chart. They had a very talented candidate who was a great communicator and they had a campaign philosophy that matched and mirrored very well with the Internet—openness, inclusiveness, self-organizing, grassroots. If they didn’t have that campaign philosophy, they wouldn’t have gone anywhere.”

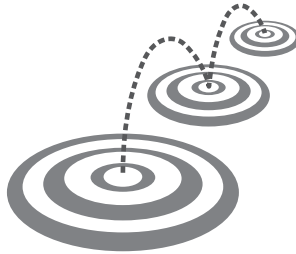
The strategy to be more personal has been adopted by other politicians all over the world. Take, for example, French president Nicholas Sarkozy, who is known to spend time tending to his image on his Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/nicolassarkozy>). Not shy about sharing personal details offline, he brought this attitude online, with impressive results. When Sarkozy switched his profile picture from a buttoned-up official image to one that featured him wearing an open shirt with no tie, for example, he landed significantly more fans. Sarkozy further capitalized on the power of getting more personal by adding videos to his Facebook page that depict his more domestic side. One shows him bursting into a room to kiss his wife, Carla Bruni. The supermodel touches his hand, wipes his brow, and calls after him, “Good luck, *mon chouchou*” (my sweet).⁴⁰ One of his Facebook photo albums documents a visit with Woody Allen. It has received thousands of “likes” and hundreds of comments. We’ll talk more about the influence of celebrities later. For now, the take-away is: focus on one individual and add elements that make him or her accessible—and fun.

And, some final advice: personality is a powerful asset to work with, but approach it with caution. (There’s always a risk of revealing too much, which hazards landing you on one of the Internet’s many walls of shame, such as regretsy.com). Think carefully about who you are and the ideas and messages you would like to convey.

Small Acts Contribute to Big Changes

We’ve already introduced the idea that small changes can have ripple effects, creating larger, more profound changes. Identified

by management theorist Jacon Kounin in 1970, the ripple effect means that you never know when some small thing you do today could have an impact many years from now.



Three Tips for Facebook Presence

By **Randi Zuckerberg**, *creative & buzz marketing, politics, and social change at Facebook*

- **Virality.** Virality on Facebook is driven by tagging. Tagged friends and fan pages on shared content appear in users' news feeds, which allows other network members to see and subsequently share it. Lenny Kravitz hires photographers to photograph fans at his concerts, posts the images on his Web site, and allows fans to easily tag themselves—driving traffic to his page.
- **Video.** Make sure you upload the video into Facebook (not just link to YouTube) to keep people on your page and prevent them from going off-site—and getting lost. The live stream of Obama's inauguration within Facebook allowed friends to simultaneously watch the speech and discuss it with their friends.
- **Insights.** With fan page metrics, such as number of hits by region, Facebook allows organizations to understand who and where their constituents are, what they care about, and how to reach them. The result: customer targeting and segmentation like never before.

You might worry that the single focused goal you have in mind, even if you achieve it, is so narrow that it doesn't matter in the grand scheme of things. Think again, because if successful, your goal has ripple potential that could bring about powerful social changes . . . just as the focused goal of Team Sameer to save one life has saved hundreds of lives. Just as precise research for the Montana Meth Project cascaded to other states and reduced teen and adult meth abuse and meth-related crime. Just as the clearly targeted effort of the Obama team has rewritten political history.

The Obama campaign offers a particularly compelling case study in how its focus on inspiring mass involvement or winning people's time (over money and votes) resulted in winning time, money, *and* votes. The secret to this seemingly impossible equation was in staying true to the initial goal as the team evolved its program. The team knew involvement would lead to further commitment, which could create a movement. "When we did our first set of fundraising, our goal was the number of people we wanted giving, not the dollar amount," says Rospars.

Obama raised \$639 million from three million donors. Although his campaign did raise some money from well-connected fundraisers, the majority of the \$639 million was raised through the Internet.⁴¹ Volunteers on MyBO generated \$30 million through their 70,000 personal fundraising pages.⁴²



The Obama campaign illustrated the massive, meaningful impact that social media can have on getting young people engaged and involved. How exactly did the organizers use technology to

Jenni Ware and the Power of the Ripple Effect

Jenni Ware was at the grocery checkout when she discovered she had lost her wallet. Carolee Hazard, a complete stranger in line behind her, paid her \$207 bill. When Ware paid her back, the check included an extra \$93 as thanks.

Hazard posted on Facebook about what had happened and asked friends what they'd do with the extra money. "Give it to charity!" was the response. Touched by Ware's honesty, Hazard matched the \$93 and again queried her Facebook friends where to donate the \$186.

Soon, friends began donating \$93 of their own, and the total quickly grew. This random act of kindness, spread through social networks, turned \$93 into more than \$30,000 to benefit the Second Harvest Food Bank of Silicon Valley. The amount, which has been given in donations from \$.93 to \$93, is still growing; Hazard's goal is to raise \$93,000.

change the face of campaigning? The campaign didn't simply create a Facebook fan page and a YouTube account and expect things to take off: the team created an energy of involvement, of participation, and a sense of purpose in its supporters, each of which was *funneled* through social networking technologies. The medium wasn't the message, so to speak; it was the vehicle. It connected real people, with real enthusiasm, in real time, and gave them an easy and accessible way to show their support for change. Obama's ever-present campaign slogan was "Change we can believe in." In retrospect, the slogan could have been "Change we can be a part of."

We're just a few short years into a Web 2.0 world, and we've already seen how it's rewritten the rules of the offline

world. The first “Internet president” changed the way elections will be run in the future. The Obama campaign team showed us that technology was not just a “tool in the arsenal, but a transformative force,” says Jascha Franklin-Hodge, cofounder of Blue State Digital, the new media firm that powered many of the tools behind Obama’s site. “The campaign understood the power of the Internet to get people engaged in the process on a scale never done before.”⁴³ And, many agree, the Internet landed Obama the presidency. “Were it not for the Internet, Barack Obama would not be president. Were it not for the Internet, Barack Obama would not have been the [Democratic] nominee,” Arianna Huffington, editor-in-chief of the *Huffington Post*, said in the *New York Times*.⁴⁴

Lessons from Obama’s Campaign

Present a focused message and vision. Obama focused on three key words: *hope, change, action*.

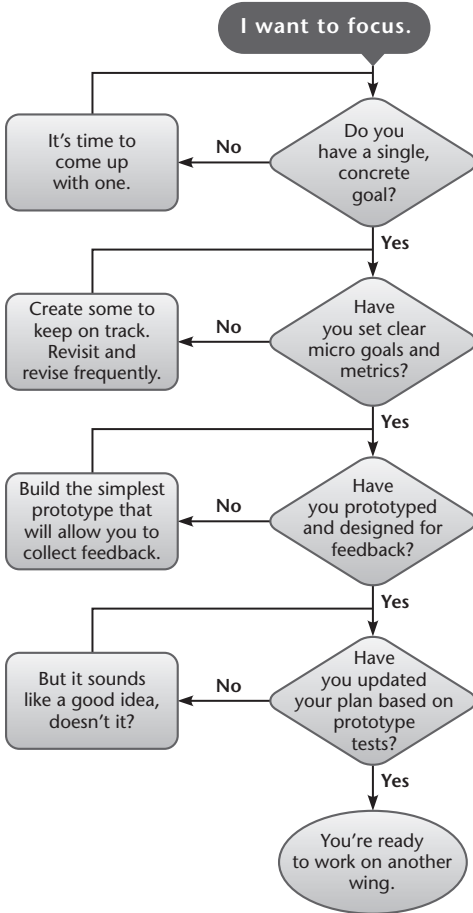
Map out your digital landscape. Know social influencers, the top bloggers, the top social networks, and the central communications hubs.

Build relationships. Listen, be authentic, and ask questions.

Have a clear call to action. Every action in the Obama campaign was geared toward getting people to vote. The purpose of online activity was to create offline activity.

Empower brand ambassadors. Embrace cocreation; let the brand evolve without you directing all of the evolution.⁴⁵

Getting Started with Focus



Focus keeps you working on what's important + helps you adapt to change without losing momentum.

