TECH TOOLS TO ENGAGE CONSTITUENTS

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020
3:00 PM ET / 2:00 PM CT / 1 PM MT / NOON PT
The National Conference of State Legislatures is the country’s most trusted bipartisan organization serving legislators and staff. We promote policy innovation, create opportunities for lawmakers to share knowledge and ensure state legislatures have a strong, cohesive voice in the federal system. We do this because we believe in the importance of the legislative institution and know when states are strong, our nation is strong.
About Pennsylvania’s 28th Senatorial District

By the Numbers

- Number of Municipalities: 48
- Number of Constituents: 262,428
- Term Length: 4 years

Goal: Connect with as many constituents as possible in the most cost-effective way that respects the taxpayers who pay our bills.

@SenatorKristin
Why Digital Matters

• Connect with large population
• Low-to-no additional cost incurred by taxpayers
• Avoid high-cost, traditional ways to connect
  • Expensive events, newsletters
• Ability to make more frequent contacts with constituents
  • Create that conversation
• Ability to track/measure metrics
Digital Tech Tools – E-Newsletters

• E-Newsletters
  • Senate Republican Caucus uses internal email distribution system
  • At least once per week
  • During COVID-19 pandemic, sending 3 per week
  • Tracking open rates of email
    • Constituents have a thirst for information
    • Seeing upwards of 60 percent open rate on some email updates

See more @ SenatorKristin.com/enewsletters
Digital Tech Tools – Podcasts

- Podcasts hosted on SoundCloud
  - Fully plugs in on WordPress websites
  - Allows opportunity to discuss relevant topics, augment legislative efforts or challenging issues.
- Example: Constituents upset with various road construction projects. Interviewed PennDOT District Executive to review projects proposed in Senate districts. Would send link to podcast as response to constituents.

See more @ SenatorKristin.com/podcast
Digital Tech Tools – Zoom & Microsoft Teams

• Conducting regular meetings with key stakeholders in district, including:
  • Local business associations
  • School district superintendents
  • County & Local elected officials
  • State representatives

• Conducting frequent digital staff meetings, meetings with lobbyists and other senators
Digital Tech Tools – Surveys on Website

• Host survey on legislative website
• Captures quality data, including emails
• Gauges interest on important topics
• Creates conversation
• Connects with new constituents

**Survey**

#PABudget Hearing Questions

**Survey for the 28th Senatorial District Residents**

The Senate Appropriations Committee recently conducted three weeks of public hearings on the state budget where I was able to ask questions about how your tax dollars are spent.

You can watch all of my questions with the various heads of agencies and departments [here](#).

So now it’s your turn: Here are several questions I asked listeners during my recent telephone town hall event based on my discussion at the state budget hearings.

Results from March 2019 survey on Sunday hunting
Digital Tech Tools – Social Media Outlets

• Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube
  • Seeing exponential growth on social media platforms during COVID-19 pandemic
  • Ability to share up-to-date materials coming from executive branch, local entities
  • Similar to email updates, constituents want updates from local representatives

See more @ facebook.com/SenatorKristin | twitter.com/SenatorKristin
Digital Tech Tools – Capture and Analyze Data

• Measure everything you do
  • Monthly review of constituent casework and issues
  • Track website traffic, social media analytics
  • Track email open rates based on subject line, time sent
NATHAN TRAIL, DIRECTOR, TECHNOLOGY POLICY & STATE LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
Technology to Communicate with Constituents

Dr. Ximena Hartsock
Technology Entrepreneur | Co-founder Phone2Action
Doctor in Policy Studies
PHONE2ACTION: Pioneer and leader technology for public affairs and civic engagement
How is Phone2Action used?

- Citizen Participation
- Get Out The Vote
- Corporate Responsibility
• Organizations are embracing digital engagement during social distancing

• Providing members and supporters best practices on digital engagement

• They’re expecting legislators and their staff to be proactive and engaging through digital platforms
A New Constituent is Emerging.
The New Citizen

- Over Informed
- Digital
- Full of personal stories
- Anti establishment
- Brave
- Impulsive
- Connected more than collective
The New Citizen

Empowered by his/her stories and those of friends and family. The social network.

Empowered by the access to technology that helps him/her mobilize quickly and without anyone else’s permission.

Ignores the logic of collective action for connected action (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013).

One cause may spark the movement but people bring their own experiences and agendas to the table.
The Apps of Activism

Worldwide Monthly users (source Statista and Wired)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App</th>
<th>Users</th>
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<tr>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
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<td>Snapchat</td>
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<td>Line</td>
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<td>Telegram</td>
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The Tech Used in The U.S. Protests

**SIGNAL**
- Encrypted messaging app
- Sharing of encrypted stickers
- Usage has skyrocketed since protests began

**TWITTER**
- Premier destination for real-time news
- Hashtags galvanize movements
- Spreading of news has made Twitter a battleground of views

**VIDEO GAMES**
- In protests last year, young people organized via:
  - YouTube chats on Minecraft tutorials
  - Playstation chats
  - Pokemon Go

**TIKTOK**
- Video-sharing app, immensely popular w/ youth
- #1 downloaded app in the U.S.
- Hashtags, filters, easy process to create/share videos
- Younger generations filling TikTok feeds w/ political content

**CITIZEN**
- Community safety app
- Instant access to verified 911 info in your area
- Now in the top 5 most downloaded apps

**IMAGE SCRUBBER**
- Website used to blur protestor’s faces in photos
- Removes identifying metadata, covers faces and other ID info

**FACEBOOK**
- Instrumental medium to engage personal networks in advocacy
- Video of George Floyd’s death shared on Facebook first, then went viral on Twitter/Instagram
Tech Lawmakers Can Use to Connect w/ Constituents

**SMS KEYWORDS**
- Example: Text Johnson to 52886
- People text the keyword & receive a link w/ lawmaker info or initiates a chat
- The constituent number is automatically enrolled in list

**MOBILE MESSAGING**
- 90% of people read texts within first 3 minutes
- Can send text as well as images or short videos
- Useful in events w/ flyers and reminders, & GOTV
Messenger Apps

**Facebook Messenger**

- Lawmakers offices could use NEW feature by Facebook Messenger to toggle back and forth between personal messages and Lawmaker’s page messages
- Messenger Rooms up to 50 people (like Zoom but no need to call in, just launch it and people who sees it may join

**Messenger Bots/Virtual Assistants**

- Can engage with your page visitors in real time.
- Automated responses can help you engage constituents at all times
Bot on webpage of American Heart Association

Our mission is to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.
WhatsApp

- Group video calls perfect for small meetings (no need to dial in)
- Free messaging app w/ end-to-end encryption
- Number 1 app with US Hispanics
- Worldwide free calling
- Allows you to create a group and invite constituents to it. Can use ONLY to post to moderate interaction
- Open rate 80%
- Leading mobile messenger in the world

Source: Landbotio
WhatsApp

- Officials can create a group and invite constituents to it. This is the DC Mayor’s Office for Latino Affairs.
- This group messages are moderated by official. NO CHAT ROOMS.
- More for information sharing. You can post daily or as often as you want.
- You can launch Messenger rooms from WhatsApp.
- Share on WhatsApp (use the icon)
Tech for TownHalls & Webinars

FOR LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS
- Webex, Zoom, Microsoft Teams “Room Breakouts” work well for legislative visits
- Staff can “move” the lawmaker to different rooms when time is up.
- Allows for specific times allowance without running over time

FOR TOWN HALLS
- Video conferencing software and Facebook Live work well for TH
- Consumer Reports had successful webinar w/ >700 attendees staying until end.
  - Had 2 staffers manage chat to answer questions in real time.

FACEBOOK LIVE
- Virtual town halls
- No RSVP or middle steps required
- People may join at any time
- "Live With" allows to invite someone else to join at anytime
- Can add “DONATE”
Know your constituents and get creative

Different tech for different purposes
THANK YOU!
@ximenahartsock
Member of CTA
AT&T Collaboration and Conferencing

AT&T Conferencing with Zoom:
A cloud-based video communications service that brings high-quality video, data sharing, and carrier-grade audio to collaborators all over the world.

AT&T Office@Hand:
A flexible cloud-based solution that provides voice, fax, text messaging, and audio and video conferencing so workers can be more productive in the office or on the go.

Webex Meetings with AT&T:
A global, cloud-based, highly secure web, audio, and video conferencing solution with content sharing so you can have more productive meetings.

For more information visit: www.business.att.com/portfolios/collaboration
Safety Net Agencies Face Unprecedented Demand
Surge in Current & Ongoing Volume

Volume
42.6M citizens applied for Unemployment - overwhelming websites and call centers

Continued Reliance on Safety Net Programs
As communities reopen citizens will still need social safety net programs moving forward

Reduction in State Revenue
The drastic reduction in state revenue will require agencies to leverage technology to serve citizens with their limited or reduced resources

Source: https://tradingeconomics.com/united-states/jobless-claims

Google Cloud
Both Constituents and State Employees are Struggling

**Constituents**
- Experienced job loss and/or illness
- Need access to support services quickly
- Cannot get access to portals/call centers
- Many have never applied for services before
- May not have the equipment to engage digitally or to support their children learning from home

**State Employees**
- Staff are overworked, can’t keep up with the volume
- Need to be trained on new policies & programs
- Need to adapt processes rapidly to support new legislation
- Employees never worked from home before
- Don’t have equipment & systems to work from home
- Dealing with inflexible legacy system

Google Cloud
Enabling Citizens to Access Critical Services

- **Virtual Waiting Room**
  - Throttles web traffic
  - Calms and informs citizens
  - Reduces multiple attempts to engage

- **Contact Center AI (CCAI)**
  - Installed on portal & call center
  - Answers questions & executes routine tasks, reducing call volume
  - Serves citizens 24/7

- **Document AI/ML**
  - Automates the digitization, data extraction, matching of verification & application documents
  - Deploys staff to high-value tasks

- **Rapid Application Development**
  - Develop modules to collect data & determine eligibility for new programs (i.e., PUA)
  - Plug into existing systems

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Questions?

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