Social Media for Social Change

Using the Internet to Tackle Intolerance

ACTION RESEARCH REPORT

Hannah Taylor

This report outlines the findings of an action research project carried out by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) and funded by the Open Society Foundations (OSF). It describes the results of a pilot social media campaign, which was delivered in partnership with ISD's Phoenix Group; draws conclusions about the influence of social media on attitudes; and makes recommendations for policy makers, politicians and civil society organisations on the ways in which these technologies can be used to tackle intolerance.

About the author

Hannah Taylor is a Projects Coordinator at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD). She leads ISD's work on social media and coordinates the Phoenix Group, which brings together activists, opinion formers and community leaders to sketch out an alternative narrative relating to diversity and social cohesion. She has experience working on equality and diversity issues within the public, voluntary and community sectors, and is currently a trustee at Consortium, a national membership organisation focusing on the development and support of LGB&T groups. Previously, she worked as Community Development Officer at Kirklees Faiths Forum, an organisation which works to build positive community relations in Kirklees, West Yorkshire. She has a BA (Hons) (International) in Philosophy and Religious Studies from Leeds University.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Social media now permeates almost every aspect of our lives, from how we manage relationships to the way we shop and work. It is not surprising, then, that the private sector has long recognised its potential as a route for influencing consumers. Campaigners, too, are beginning to recognise its power as an advocacy tool. Social media offers much more than traditional media; it is free, allows campaigners and marketers to reach far more people and gives a voice to those that otherwise might not have one. In addition, platforms such as Twitter enable direct engagement with individuals and groups who have the power to effect change.

Despite these advantages, the third sector has been slow to harness the full potential of social media. For many this is due to a lack of knowledge, perhaps even a fear, about social media tools. Furthermore, many small organisations simply haven't had the time or resources to develop these skills. In response to this reality, this report offers an account of social media and its potential use by campaigners: social media for social good. It contains the results of background research, findings from a series of expert workshops and the trial of an experimental social media campaign aimed at tackling homophobia, which acted as a piece of action research to establish the potential of social media and the most effective ways to put it to use to tackle intolerance.

Chapter One explains what social media is and catalogues the main websites, platforms and technologies that it encompasses. It examines barriers to use, the relationship between social media and personal identity and the potential application of social media in influencing attitudes, affecting behaviour and creating change.

Chapter Two outlines the process by which the action research social media campaign was chosen, including the results of an exercise which involved 'listening' to what people were saying online, how, where and when in relation to three topic areas. This generated information vital to shaping the campaign's strategy, including frequency, timing and volume of discussions; where discussions were taking place across the Internet and social media platforms; whether content was positive, negative or neutral; who the main influencers, content creators and contributors were; and which were the most mentioned key words and phrases.

Chapter Three outlines the strategy and tactics of the 'Nothing Holy About Hatred' campaign, covering five key elements: campaign planning; establishing an online presence; creating opportunities for online community engagement; proactively targeting key individuals and organisations; and offline activities.

Chapter Four outlines the results of the campaign, covering mentions by volume, content and author; Facebook, Twitter and blog analytics; and influence. Chapter Five describes the main lessons learned from running the Nothing Holy About Hatred social media campaign:

Campaign planning and management

- It is important to listen first to establish what is being said, where, how and by whom
- Detailed planning is essential in producing focused aims and clear messages
- It is vital to research and produce content and schedule regular updates.

Building an online presence

- It is crucial to establish a professional online presence, through which all social media platforms can connect
- In terms of choice of social media platforms, it is important to start where people already are, based on what is learned through the listening exercise. While it is necessary to prioritise the platforms that are most central in the chosen campaign area, it is valuable to work across a wide range, as this can impact positively on search engine rankings.

Engagement, content and tone of voice

- Social media needs to be treated as an interactive forum: engaging with followers generates visibility through their networks. This might include replying to follower comments, posing and answering questions and re-tweeting and posting followers' input

- Campaigns need to be flexible and ready to adapt, in part as a response to audience engagement. The best campaigns respond to events as they happen
- Activities are most effective when they are personal and give an opinion
- Different content works better on different platforms; for example, in this campaign, photos were more popular on Facebook, while quotes, facts and figures generated more response on Twitter
- Content is key; what is posted is more important than when it is posted.

Inspiring action

- Twitter offers invaluable opportunities to connect directly with key influencers around a campaign's focus, in a way that has never previously been possible
- Requests to followers need to be small enough to allow them to take part without a major effort. It can, however, then be difficult to translate small actions into more significant commitments.

CHAPTER ONE:
WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media has changed the Internet from a largely static space concerned with the transmission or broadcasting of information to one where **users can generate their own content**, from short films on YouTube and Facebook status updates to re-posting links on Twitter or signposting to content via tools like Digg. In short, social media is a group of Internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. It is a broad category that includes the following:

1. **Social networks** establish social ties online, often drawing on pre-existing offline relationships. Examples include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and MySpace.
2. **Content-sharing sites** allow users to share, rate and discuss professional and amateur content. Examples include YouTube and Flickr.
3. **Content-ranking tools** allow individuals to signpost content to other users of the platform. Examples include Digg, which creates profiles based on what an individual "Diggs", but also aggregates the data to create a sense of the web according to Digg users.
4. **Geo-location tools** give users the opportunity to share their physical location with other users, often with a view to potentially meeting up in person. Examples include Foursquare.

These four categories are not exhaustive, and new tools and platforms are being created that do not fit neatly within this schema. The existing tools are also adapting. For example, Facebook increasingly concentrates on making non-Facebook content easy to share within the platform, rather than requiring users to leave the site. Twitter may have been conceived as a conversation between people with relatively loose ties, but is now being increasingly used as a way for people to converse with friends. And even static news sites now incorporate functionality for readers to comment on their stories and add their photos. As the use of mobile Internet grows, more innovations are likely to follow.

Social networks: who uses what, and how?

Social media reaches more people than news media, and in the UK more people check their Facebook account in one day than the cumulative weekly readership of every national newspaper. It is more popular than email; among active Internet users, 65 per cent regularly manage at least one social media profile, and **38 per cent have joined an interest group or supported a cause online in the last 12 months**. People trust personal comments (such as those found on social networking sites) 38 per cent more than advertising.[1] Facebook is the

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1. Manifest Communications, *Social media vs. intolerance*. Presentation to the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 11 April 2012.

most popular social network site across most of Europe. Twitter varies in popularity across Europe, but usage continues to grow rapidly, including 151 per cent in Spain in 2011.[2] Like Facebook, it has become a popular tool for social networking and content sharing, and is used by people from a wide range of demographic and professional backgrounds. The site has also been highlighted for its role in various social movements, such as the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street and the clean-up after the riots in London in 2011.

Barriers to engagement with social media

Despite this growth and success, there are barriers to engagement with social media, which tend to be similar to obstacles to using the Internet more generally. Understanding and confidence in using technology, access to technology and attitudes to learning all have implications for the degree to which people use social media. In the UK, 19 million households had access to the Internet in 2011 – about 77 per cent of the population. Those that didn't have access cited a number of reasons, including the cost of equipment (19 per cent) and a lack of skills (21 per cent).[3] Language can also impact on Internet usage, but especially on the use of social media, where users are required to not just access information but add content themselves.

Social networking and identity

Given the opportunities created by social media to allow users to create a new persona, it is remarkable how little deception people attempt on social media platforms. Apart from a little embellishment on dating websites, most people are still relatively cautious about presenting a false image of themselves, and most use social media simply as an online extension of their offline selves.[4] In fact, social media offers a mechanism for consolidating different networks at a time when people's lives are becoming more fragmented, helping to maintain and re-establish connections between people from all stages of their lives. It also allows individuals to connect with a wider range of people, thus exposing them to a broader range of ideas and influences.

How does social media shape our attitudes?

There is a wealth of research about the ways in which print and broadcast media shape attitudes. Mass media can influence an individual's opinions about other groups, especially minorities and particularly where there is little or no offline contact between groups.[5] Comparisons between online and offline media have always been challenging, but are becoming more so with the advent of social media. While editors, journalists and television and radio commissioners decide what makes it into the public realm via traditional media, social media challenges these hierarchies, allowing ordinary citizens to create and post content. These platforms also tend to take a much more hands-off approach to regulation, with the exception of interventions in relation to criminal activity (e.g. phishing scams) or extreme cases of hate speech, bullying and impersonation. As a result, much of the theory about attitude formation and influence through mass media is of limited relevance to social media.

2. Edelman Digital/ComScore, *Twitter Growth Surge in EMEA* (edelmandigital.com, 2011) http://www.edelmandigital.com/2011/01/10/twitter-growth-surge-in-emea/

3. Office of National Statistics, *Internet Access – Households and Individuals*, 2011 (ONS, 2011)

4. Back, M. D., Stopfer, J. M., Vazire, S., Gaddis, S., Schmukle, S. C., Egloff, B., and Gosling, S. D. (2010). *Facebook profiles reflect actual personality, not self-idealization*, Psychological Science, 21, 372-374

5. Appelius, Stefanie. (2009) *Typically Turkish: A study of the current state of research into the media representation, use and perception of Turkish migrants in Germany* (Conference Papers: European Media and Cultural Studies, Potsdam, May 2009) and Cottle, Simon, *Ethnic Minorities and the Media: Changing Cultural Boundaries* (Open University Press, 2000)

There are some areas of overlap, however. The psychological research that underpins advertising and marketing offers insights into human behaviour online, as well as offline. Among the most powerful of these is **social proof: the idea that people are much more likely to take a course of action if others before them have done so**, even if those people are not known to them. Salespeople and marketers know that if many others have purchased a particular product, it will become more attractive to new customers. It is this pattern of behaviour which can make social media so influential. Amongst other things, **social networks such as Twitter and Facebook, as well as ranking sites like Digg, act as giant aggregators of social proof**: evidence of the choices that people that you know are making, about everything, all the time. The fact that the marketing world has embraced social media is proof of its potential; most companies now have a presence on a range of social media platforms, and many new organisations have sprung up to advise companies on how to take advantage of these opportunities.

It is not just the commercial realm that has benefitted from social media marketing. One of the best-known examples of the way in which social media can be used to influence attitudes and behaviour is provided by the 2008 US presidential election. The Obama campaign made skilful use of video content, email and social networking platforms and, in doing so, converted an "outsider" candidate into the President of the United States of America.

There is also evidence that **social media can help to establish ties between traditionally opposing groups**. For example, Facebook's 'Peace on Facebook' project[6] counts new friendships between people from groups with a history of conflict, such as Israelis and Palestinians, across religious divides or across opposing political movements. These connections are not in themselves proof of positive or meaningful relationships that will convert into real life, but they do hint at the way that social media can help to build and maintain relationships online that may prove difficult in person because of wider social censure or political and logistical constraints. Social media also helps individuals to maintain weaker ties – the old friend whose profile they rarely visit, or the former colleague they rarely see in person – which increases the likelihood of them coming into contact with people and views outside their normal frame of reference. These connections are potentially more likely to be a source of fresh ideas and alternative views than those individuals choose to surround themselves with in their offline lives.[7]

Using social media to create change

Social media can be used to effect change in a variety of different ways, from shifting consumer behaviour to increasing an individual's commitment to voting. Organisations such as Change.org, 38 Degrees and Avaaz,[8] which use the Internet to mobilise people on social justice causes, have integrated social media into their campaign strategies, and a growing number of civil society organisations are using social media to amplify their message. For example, Hope Not Hate[9] - an anti-racism group – has garnered over 50,000

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6. https://peace.facebook.com/

7. Manjoo, Farhad, *The End of the Echo Chamber* (Slate.com, accessed 17 January 2012)
http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/technology/2012/01/online_echo_chambers_a_study_of_250_million_facebook_users_reveals_the_web_isn_t_as_polarized_as_we_thought_.html

8. See www.change.org, www.38degrees.org.uk and www.avaaz.org for more information.

9. Hope Not Hate is a campaign which aims to mobilise those opposed to the **British National Party's (BNP) and English Defence League's (EDL)** politics of hate. It was formed in 2005 as a positive antidote to the BNP and has the support of the *Daily Mirror*, trade unions, celebrities and community groups across the UK. More information about the campaign can be found at www.hopenothate.org.uk

Facebook fans and has used its page to do everything from sharing music videos to offering live reports from far right demonstrations. In doing so, they have created an online community of supporters who regularly interact with, and promote, the campaign to others. They are also encouraged to become involved offline.

CHAPTER TWO:
CHOOSING THE CAMPAIGN

This project aimed to understand whether and how social media could be used for social good to influence attitudes, inspire action and create change, whether through promoting positive messages or taking on negative ones, and specifically in tackling different forms of intolerance. Given that this field of work is in its infancy and the technology is changing constantly, there is a lack of expert knowledge about how social media works and, by extension, how it could be used by campaigners. Where this knowledge is advancing, it is mostly held within the private sector or special interest groups, and academic research is lacking and woefully out of date. As a result, the project adopted an action research methodology, learning through the running of a social media campaign.

'Listening exercise' to determine the focus of the social media campaign

In the first instance, ISD commissioned a 'listening exercise'[10] over an eight-day period around three potential areas of focus: homophobia and faith, Islamophobia and the English Defence League (EDL), and intergenerational and class issues. This shortlist of issues was prepared in consultation with the Phoenix Group,[11] based on an assessment of

interest areas, timeliness and opportunities for public intervention. The exercise used a bespoke application that browses the Internet and social media platforms to collect online mentions in websites, news articles, blogs, tweets or other publicly-available online content within parameters set by the user. It uses sentiment analysis to categorise meaning as positive, negative or neutral and collates a range of statistics that inform campaign choice and strategy:

- Frequency, timing and volume of discussions
- Where discussions are taking place across the Internet and social media platforms
- Whether content is positive, negative or neutral
- Who are the main influencers, content creators and contributors
- Which are the most mentioned key words and phrases.

On the basis of the results of the listening exercise, further consultation with Phoenix Group members, and an assessment of the UK political context, it was decided to focus the social media campaign on tackling homophobia. This listening exercise focused on conversations about the UK government's consultation on extending civil marriage laws to include same-sex couples[12] (referred to as 'equal

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10. The listening exercise was conducted with media monitoring tool The Loop, from Manifest London. More information can be found at http://manifestlondon.co.uk/news/2011/03/manifest-launches-the-loop

11. Phoenix brings together bloggers, activists, opinion formers and community leaders to sketch out an alternative narrative relating to diversity, social cohesion, and values and norms, and to challenge those polarising narratives prevalent within public discourse today. The group works together to achieve these aims. Through this new conversation the group is starting to seed collective social action initiatives and develop alternative policy approaches. More information can be found at www.strategicdialogue.org/programmes/diversity-and-integration/phoenix/

12. This consultation took place from 15 March-14 June 2012, and set out the government's proposals to enable same-sex couples to have a civil marriage. More information can be found at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/equal-civil-marriage/

marriage'), searching specifically for the reference terms Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist. It was conducted using the following Boolean search:

("gay marriage" OR "same sex marriage" OR "same-sex marriage" OR "homosexual marriage") AND (faith OR religion OR Christian OR Catholic OR religious OR Muslim OR Islam OR Islamic OR Jew OR Jewish OR Judaism OR Hindu OR Hinduism OR Buddhism OR Buddhist OR Sikh OR Sikhism) AND location: UK

Results of the listening campaign on homophobia and faith

Of the three themes monitored, homophobia and faith received the most mentions, with 763 online mentions over the eight days (see Figure 1, below). Most conversations took place during the week, with over 100 mentions per day from Tuesday to Friday, dropping to about half this amount over the weekend. This contrasted with conversations around the EDL and Islamophobia, where peaks occurred during the weekend and around key events, such as street marches and rallies. This implied that faith and gay rights was a consistently popular issue online,

especially among those who use social media perhaps through or while at work. This suggested that our campaign should share its content during the week, but be ready to compete with a high level of 'noise'.

Faith communities were particularly vocal in the blogosphere (see Figure 2), with almost two-thirds of the mentions occurring on blogs, suggesting a willingness and desire to engage in lengthier debate. The key blogs used included mainstream sites like the Student Room and TES for teachers, and faith-based blogs, such as Anglican Mainstream, Premiere Community (Christian radio) and Atheist Forums (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: Media by volume, illustrating the categories of Internet sites on which online mentions of the search topic were more or less common during the listening exercise
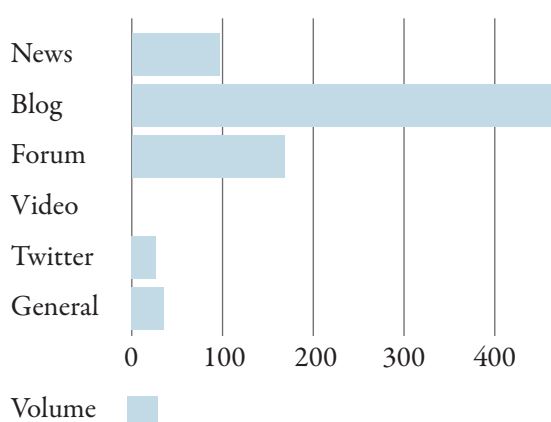

Figure 1: Volume of online mentions of the homophobia and faith related search during the eight-day listening exercise, analysed over time
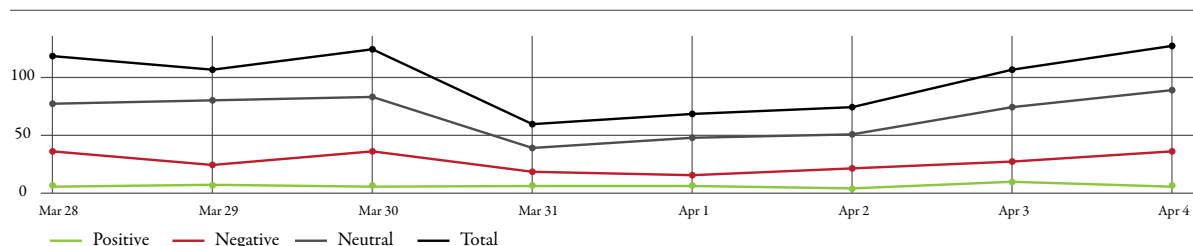
Figure 3: Top sites showing the websites with the largest volume of mentions during the listening exercise

twitter.com 18%

www.testudentroom.co.uk 16%

www.anglican-mainstream.net 13%

www.pinknews.co.uk 11%

patrickarrard.blogspot.co.uk 9%

community.tes.co.uk 8%

uncyclopedia.wikia.com 7%

www.premiercommunity.org.uk 7%

polforumblogroll.blogspot.co.uk 6%
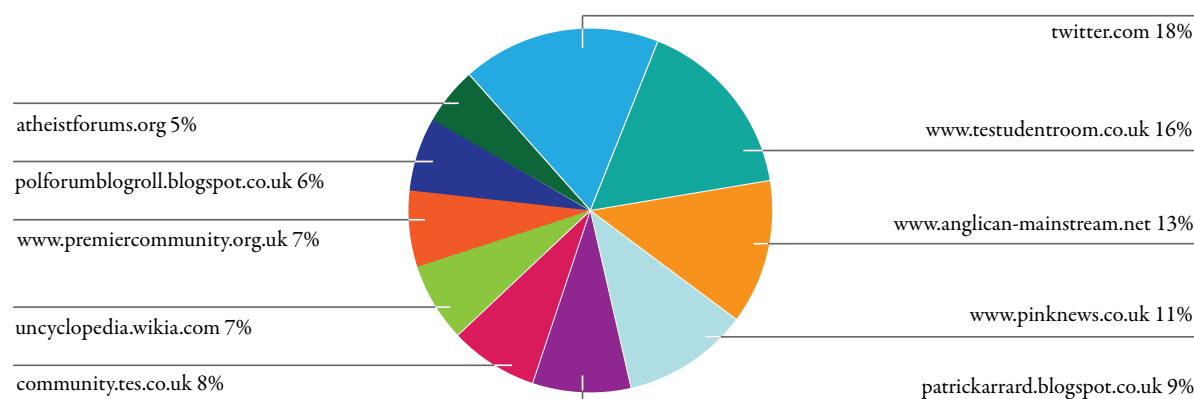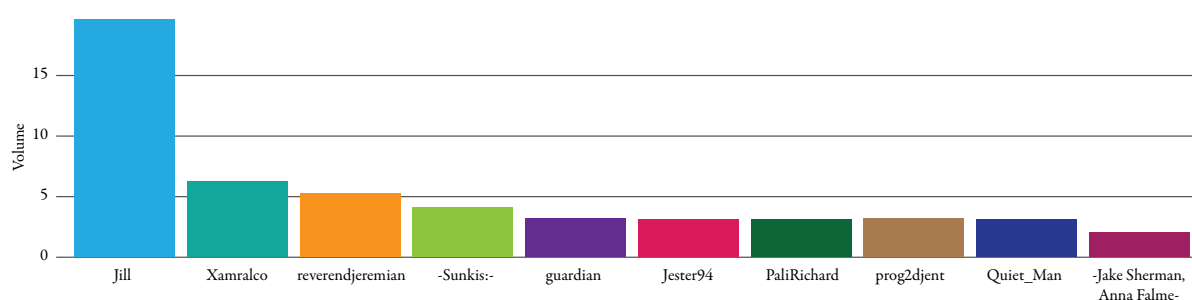
atheistforums.org 5%

Figure 4: Top authors by number of posts per individual relating to the search topic during the listening exercise

The exercise also highlighted a number of authors who were particularly vocal in this debate, and who were therefore potential starting points for engagement on the campaign (Figure 4).

There was a significant amount of news content concerning the government's consultation (nearly 100 mentions), including some criticism of religious responses to it within gay press sites such as Pink News. There were only a small number of mentions found on Twitter, suggesting a similar amount on Facebook,[13] and there was no new video content on YouTube. This suggested that **blog activity should be central to the campaign**, that there was the potential to build new audiences through social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, and that the campaign should **seek out a small number of key influencers**.

Each online mention was analysed – first by software and then manually – according to its sentiment; i.e. whether it was expressed in a positive (friendly, agreeable or happy), negative (hateful, aggressive or angry), or neutral (informative or factual) tone. The

13. Facebook profiles tend to be private, making them harder to research. But it is widely considered that Twitter content is indicative of Facebook content, so can often be used as a proxy.

sentiment of conversations on homophobia and faith was mostly neutral (Figure 5), which reflected the fact that a large proportion of mentions were on news or blog sites, where comment tends to be more measured and nuanced (Figure 6).

In contrast, Twitter tends to produce personal opinions using emotive language, something that was evident in the listening exercise on Islamophobia, where most conversation took place on Twitter. Interestingly, faith-based blogs presented their anti-equal marriage arguments in a neutral tone of voice, whereas gay-rights campaigners in support of equal marriage were often more combative towards the attitudes of the faith communities with

which they disagreed. Only a small number of mentions demonstrated a positive middle ground on the subject of faith and sexual orientation. There was a polarised debate, with most religious commentary being anti-equal marriage, and most equal marriage supporters being critical of religious responses. **This suggested that the campaign should create and disseminate a middle-ground narrative promoting positive messages on reconciling the issues around faith and sexual orientation**. There was also very little content from or about any religions other than Christianity, which suggested that the campaign should seek to **provide an opportunity for other faiths to share their views on gay rights**.

A word cloud (Figure 7) was generated to depict the most common topics and phrases used, with the size of the word representing the frequency of mentions. Certain terms and themes dominated:

- *Barack Obama, Supreme Court* and *Rick Santorum*: although the search was limited to the UK, it generated references to the US linked to the 2012 presidential race. This highlighted that **events outside the UK would be of interest to the campaign's audience**

Figure 5: Sentiment by volume for all mentions of the topic over the course of the listening exercise

Neutral 69%

Positive 4%

Negative 26%

Figure 6: Sentiment by media type, indicating amount of positive, negative and neutral mentions found on various categories of website

Positive   Neutral   Negative
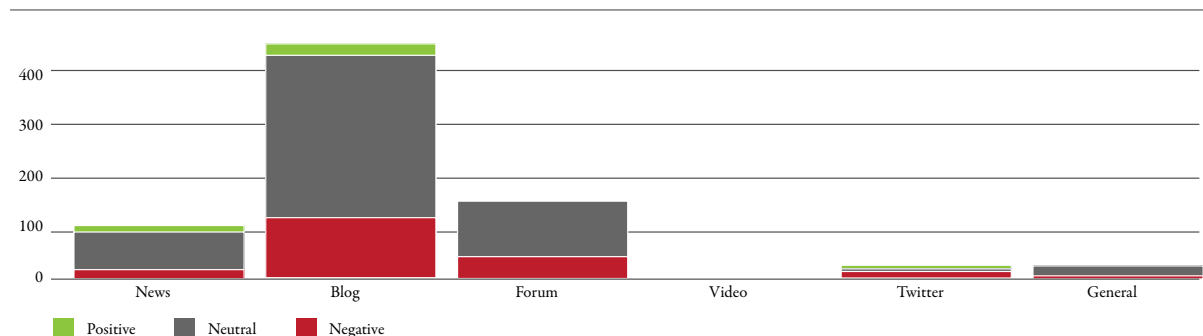
- *Christian values* and *religious liberty, pushing gay marriage* and *force churches*: there were recurring concerns about civil marriage for same-sex couples being in opposition to Christianity, and the worry that churches would be forced to conduct such marriages. This suggested that the **campaign should highlight the fact that faith communities can support gay rights without endangering religious liberty**

- *Gays and blacks, human rights* and *civil rights*: the arguments for equal marriage centred on equal civil and human rights, which suggested that the **campaign should take a human and civil rights focused approach.**

Figure 7: Word cloud showing topics by frequency

Christian Church   supports gay marriage

limit the impact   wedge between gays   Anglican communion

Supreme Court   Rick Santorum   hate gay marriage

David Cameron   religious liberty

Downing Street

pushing gay marriage   same-sex couples   gays and blacks

civil partnership   human rights   civil partnerships

Catholic bishops   civil rights   Barack Obama

support gay marriage   gay couples   force churches

National Organization   Christian values   marriage and abortion

definition of marriage   anti-gay marriage

Senate inquiry

pro-gay marriage   appeals court

CHAPTER THREE:
THE 'NOTHING HOLY ABOUT HATRED' (NHAH) CAMPAIGN

In order to test a range of social media platforms and online campaign tactics, and learn about what works when using social media to tackle intolerance, ISD worked with the Phoenix Group to run a campaign to bring together people of all faiths, denominations and non-religious beliefs to speak out against homophobia. This chapter explains how the campaign was devised, structured and delivered between May and August 2012, through five core areas of activity:

- Campaign planning
- Establishing an online presence
- Creating opportunities for online community engagement
- Proactive targeting of key individuals and organisations
- Offline activities.

Campaign planning

The campaign's aims and objectives were developed in close consultation with the Phoenix Group and a number of other key stakeholders. The campaign's purpose was to engage as broad a range as possible of people of faith, including more conservative elements, and provide them with a platform to speak out against homophobia. By highlighting the harm caused by homophobia (bullying and violence against LGBT people, increased mental health issues, discrimination, etc.) and the duty of care and compassion which is important within all faith communities, the campaign aimed to provide a space where all people of faith could engage, share their thoughts and speak out against homophobia. It was hoped this would inspire a broader conversation about positive actions to tackle homophobia within supporters' own communities. The campaign's aims were to:

- Form a coalition of members from many different faiths, denominations and non-religious beliefs, along with LGBT groups and other allies, who would all support the campaign's message against homophobia
- Highlight the very real and painful consequences of homophobia, and promote the idea that faith communities and leaders have a duty of care towards those affected by it, and a wider pastoral role to fulfil to LGBT members of their communities and their families
- Raise the profile of the issue and provide a platform for members of different communities and faith leaders to show opposition to violence and hate crime and other consequences of hatred and homophobia
- Promote an alternative 'middle ground' narrative to the wider community regarding the issue of faith and sexual orientation.

The campaign action plan (Figure 8) was constructed in consultation with Phoenix Group members before the campaign went live, allowing a risk assessment to be conducted and draft responses put in place. As the

Figure 8: Campaign action plan

	May	June	July	August
Activity 1	Key stakeholders to agree campaign aims and objectives. Decide on campaign name.	Launch campaign online! Prioritise building followers on Facebook and Twitter through already established networks via ISD, Phoenix and others Keep Twitter and Facebook feeds updated with relevant news and by sharing other multimedia content	Continue to keep Facebook and Twitter updated with relevant news and information, and to reach out for new followers	Continue to keep Facebook and Twitter updated with relevant news and information, and to reach out for new followers
Activity 2	Create content for online sites: draft about us, biography, aims and objectives, mission statement, logo for website and press release. Signed off by key stakeholders.	Sub campaign activity: ask supporters to contribute logo designs; contact design agencies and universities through Twitter. Run a competition if possible	Publish blog posts by Phoenix members and supporters: one a week to be pushed out via social media sites. Ask campaign supporters to join in by submitting their own stories	Publish blog posts by partners, members and supporters: one a week to be pushed out via social media sites
Activity 3	Set up search terms on the Loop and set up other free internet monitoring	Engage with key influencers: reach out to key influencers in faith and LGBT sectors for support via Twitter	Sub campaign idea: ask people to write 'Nothing Holy About Hatred' in unusual places, photograph it and send it to us; share via Facebook and Twitter	Sub campaign idea: produce videos of personal testimonies, messages of support from faith leaders. Push out via Twitter and Facebook
Activity 4	Draft a list of key influencers to engage with both on and offline about the campaign, as established through listening exercises	Conduct polls through questions function on Facebook to encourage engagement and increase reach	Sub campaign idea: Virtual Pride marches - ask followers to add a Twibbon and tweet #PrideNotPrejudice on Pride days	Virtual Prides to continue
Activity 5	Sign up to key sites and platforms, as established through listening exercise. Such as Gmail, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wordpress	Line up number of blog posts ready to send out over following two months	Weekly Facebook questions to continue	Weekly Facebook questions to continue
External relevant events	● Campaign planning meetings ● Key stakeholders to sign off on campaign plans	● Diamond Jubilee on 5 June ● 15-24 June campaign manager on holiday ● Equal marriage consultation ends 14 June ● Various Pride events	● Campaign steering group meeting 11 July ● Olympics starts 27 July ● Ramadan starts 20 July ● Various Pride events	● Campaign ends 31 Aug ● Olympics ends 12 Aug ● Ramadan ends 18 Aug ● Various Pride events

campaign progressed, techniques were adapted based on what had worked or failed, and planned activities were dropped where it was deemed they would not be successful. Planning ahead proved useful, but it was vital to maintain the flexibility to adapt as the situation developed. Social media allows followers to comment on, influence and even hijack campaigns. As such, followers did not always do what they were asked to do; they sometimes misinterpreted comments or diverted messages to their own causes. The best campaigns respond to events as they happen.

Establishing an online presence

The listening exercise demonstrated that conversations about homophobia and faith were common on blogs, so a wordpress.com blog was established (Figure 9). This was the most technically challenging element of the campaign, and took time to populate with content, but it proved to be an essential campaigning tool. The strength of the online campaign presence was increased by buying the domain name (thus becoming *nothingholyabouthatred.org* rather than *nothingholy*

abouthatred.wordpress.com), which gave the blog a professional feel. As its online presence grew, the NHAH site moved up the Google search rankings. The campaign also established a presence on most of the main social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+, Digg, Reddit and Storify. Early on, the campaign published 'community guidelines' on the website to deal with negative or abusive comments, although, as it happened, the campaign received very few. A good deal of time was spent populating the blog with content before the campaign went live, so that new followers would have something to engage with from day one.

## Creating opportunities for online community engagement

The NHAH campaign started to build its audience through engaging friends, family and members of the

Phoenix Group. They were asked to promote it within their networks, principally by re-tweeting campaign messages or sharing them on Facebook (Figure 10). This activity continued throughout the course of the campaign, but over time the campaign attracted new supporters who came through other routes.

Engagement is core to campaigning via social media, because it not only encourages followers to move from support to action, but an individual's involvement is visible on their social network profiles and on the feeds of their connections, which enhances the reach of the campaign. The campaign tested a number of activities and tactics to promote engagement.

Sharing content: The campaign asked followers to share relevant information, news stories, images, videos and links to websites. It created and launched a "Twibbon" that appears on a Twitter profile photo

Figure 9: Campaign blog at wordpress.com
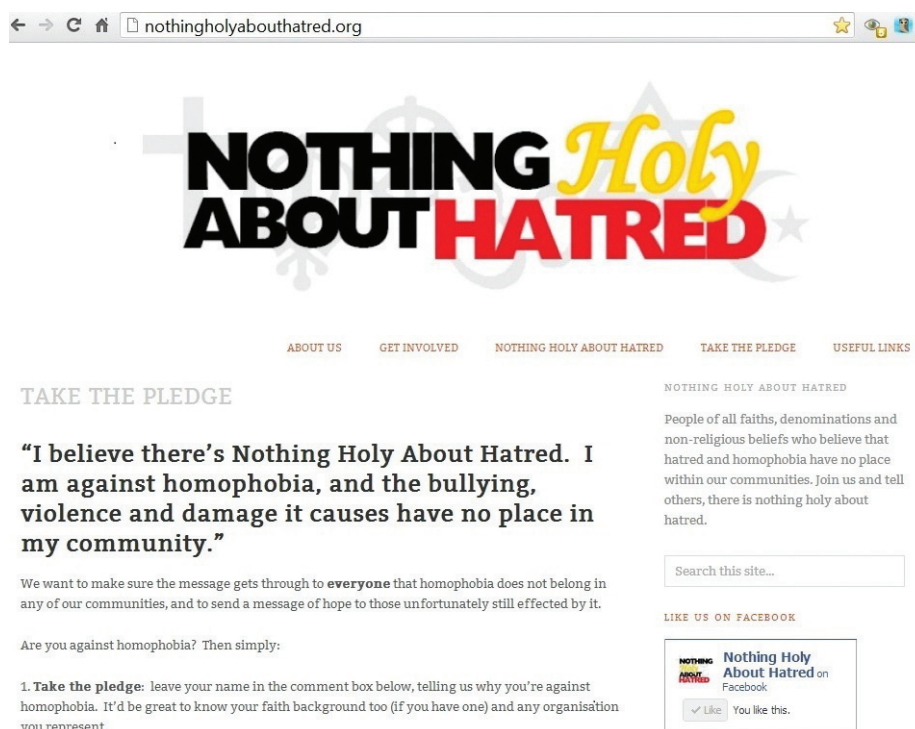
to illustrate a commitment to the campaign.[14] On Facebook, the greatest success came when images were used. Followers were invited to share an image on their timeline that would point an arrow at their profile picture with the message that "this person believes there's Nothing Holy About Hatred" (Figure 11). This image generated a high number of shares, thus increasing the campaign's overall reach (Figure 12), which encouraged large numbers of new Facebook 'likes' and drove traffic to the blog (Figure 13).

Nothing Holy About Hatred Pledge: Campaign supporters and prominent figures within faith communities were invited to take a pledge against homophobia, and to ask their own networks to do the same (Figure 14). Both Facebook and Twitter

Figure 10: Phoenix supporters, colleagues and friends asked their networks to support the campaign

Figure 11: Campaign image shared on Facebook that generated 69 shares in under a week

14. A Twibbon is like a bumper plate sticker for a Twitter avatar. It is used to promote a cause on Twitter by overlaying an image on a profile picture to show allegiance to a Twibbon cause. (http://twibbon.com/faqs)

Figure 12: An increase in engagement and reach on Facebook followed the posting of this image on 8 August

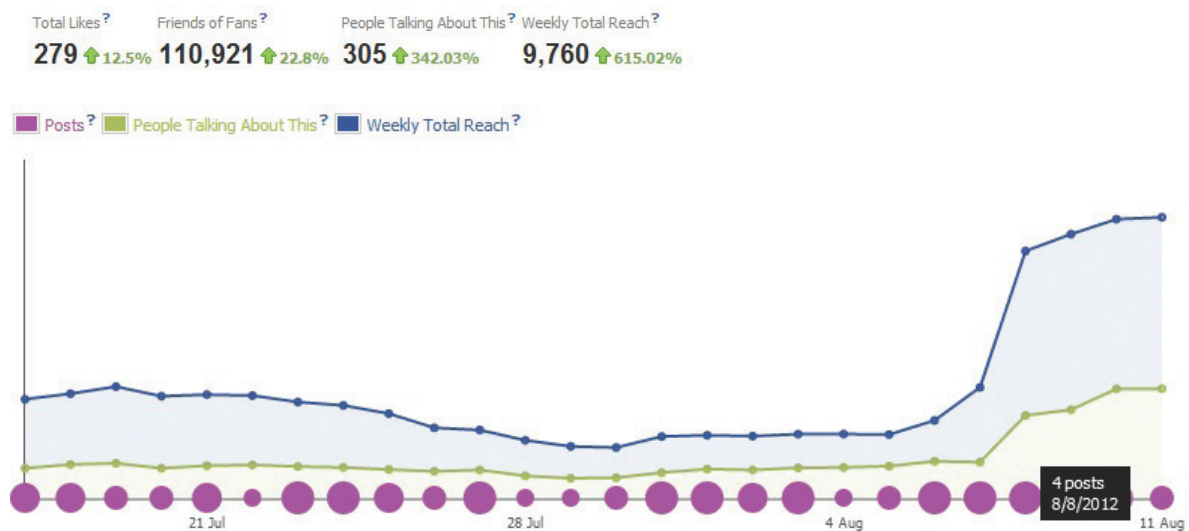**Figure 13:** Number of referrals to the campaign blog from Facebook and Twitter during the week the campaign image was posted

Figure 14: 'Take the Pledge' page on the NHAH campaign blog

TAKE THE PLEDGE

"I believe there's Nothing Holy About Hatred. I am against homophobia, and the bullying, violence and damage it causes have no place in my community."

We want to make sure the message gets through to **everyone** that homophobia does not belong in any of our communities, and to send a message of hope to those unfortunately still effected by it.

Are you against homophobia? Then simply:

1. **Take the pledge:** leave your name in the comment box below, telling us why you're against homophobia. It'd be great to know your faith background too (if you have one) and any organisation you represent.

2. **Share the love:** Use email, Twitter and Facebook to share the pledge with others you think should sign up.

3. **Show your support:** you can print off this sign and hang it in pride of place in your home, place of worship, office or school so that all your visitors know that homophobia isn't welcome there. Check it out in the NHAH campaign office!

were successful forums in inspiring supporters to take the pledge. The pledge activity, launched halfway through the campaign, gave followers a call to action, built a sense of community and helped simplify and illustrate the aim of the campaign. Posting quotes from the pledges on Twitter enabled quick dissemination of the core ideas of the campaign, as well as demonstrating the wide range of support the campaign had won across different interest groups.

Online Pride marches: Followers were invited to join 'virtual Pride parades' coinciding with real world marches by tweeting with the hashtag #PrideNotPrejudice. This was tweeted to @PrideLondon and others active on this topic (Figure 15), exposing a new audience to the campaign's message. It also generated attention in the traditional press when the campaign was contacted by a Manchester-based online newspaper in the lead-up to Manchester Pride.

Use of the Facebook 'Questions' feature: Facebook reposts questions to a user's friends' newsfeed when they answer a poll. Although the questions were not particularly popular, their viral reach was disproportionately large (Figure 16).

Figure 15: #PrideNotPrejudice tweet

Proactive audience targeting

Social media platforms allow campaigners to proactively target individuals and organisations they want to reach in a more direct and accessible way than is normally possible through traditional media. The campaign achieved this through a number of methods.

Contacting campaign organisations and prominent individuals: The NHAH campaign contacted organisations and individuals working in relevant fields. Simply following users on Twitter alerted them to the campaign's existence and generated follow-backs, while prominent gay rights campaigners and faith leaders were tweeted with a request to follow the campaign and 'retweet' to

Figure 16: Reach of a 'question' post on Facebook

**Figure 17:** Using Twitter to contact potential supporters

extend the message to their own networks (Figure 17). Combined with offline engagement, this sort of activity generated spikes in new campaign supporters; for example, a phone call to a prominent LGBT organisation in

Manchester followed by a tweet by the organisation gave NHAH ten new Twitter followers in half an hour.

Mentioning people or thanking them for their support: Reach can be extended by strategically mentioning people whose networks a campaign wishes to reach. Each time an article or blog entry was shared, the author's Twitter handle was included, which often led to them re-tweeting the item to their followers. Similarly, including the usernames of those who signed the campaign pledge encouraged them to re-tweet. Thanking people for their support via Facebook and Twitter also encouraged re-tweets, 'likes', 'shares' and click-throughs from other supporters (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Sharing pledges from supporters via social media encouraged interaction on both Facebook and Twitter, and promoted the pledge and the campaign in general
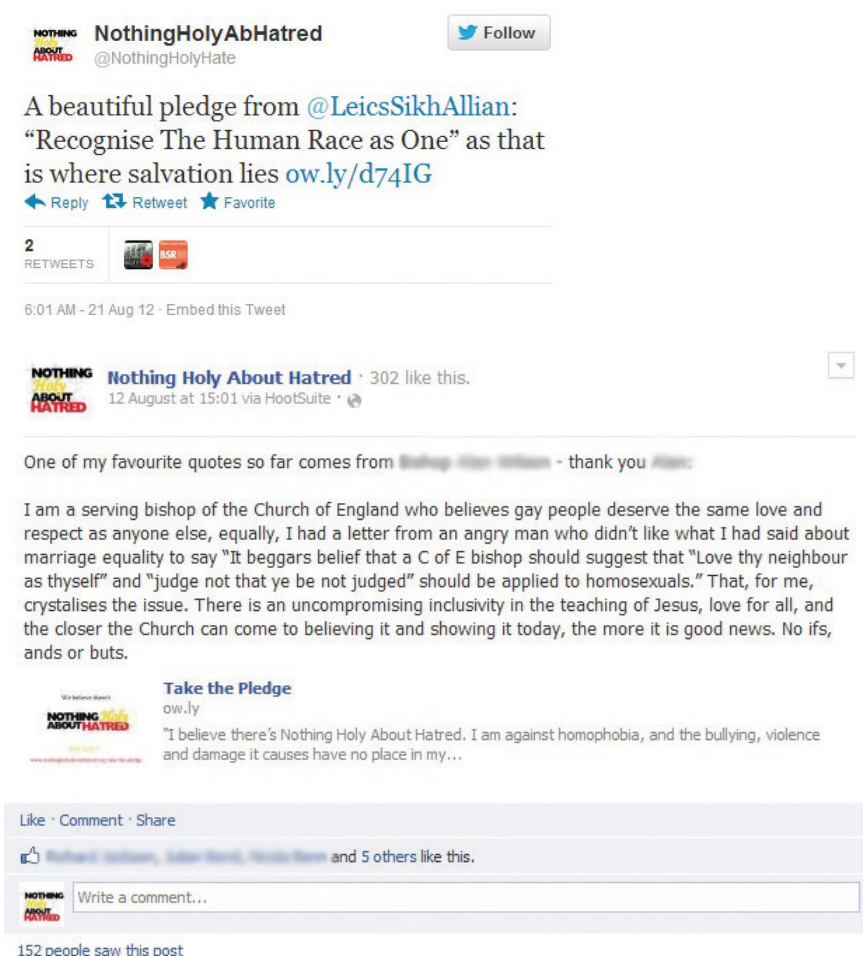
Asking bloggers to write about the campaign:
Getting bloggers and the traditional press to write about the campaign proved to be useful. A popular and well-read blog, Liberal Conspiracy, wrote an article about the campaign[15] as the result of a press release being tweeted to them, which took the message to an entirely new audience, as did a piece about the campaign in a local paper in Manchester[16] in connection with the #PrideNotPrejudice hashtag.

Offline activities

The campaign was launched with an assumption that online activities would need to be linked to offline events, and our experience proved this to be true. For example, a campaign meeting in July caused a brief spike in social media activity, as attendees were galvanised by what was discussed. There was also increased traffic to the campaign's platforms after the issuing of a press release. Real world events also impacted on interest in the campaign; for example, when restaurant chain Chick Fil-A caused a stir in the US over its comments against equal marriage,[17] the campaign saw a growth in interest from US supporters. On the other hand, engagement dipped as the world focused on the London 2012 Olympic Games.

15. Newswire, *Anti-homophobia campaign goes to faith leaders* (LiberalConspiracy.org, accessed 13 November 2012) http://liberalconspiracy.org/2012/08/09/anti-homophobia-campaign-goes-to-faith-leaders/

16. Parry, Olivia, *'Nothing Holy About Hatred' campaign against homophobia gets support in Manchester Pride's Big Weekend* (MancunianMatters.co.uk, accessed 13 November 2012) http://mancunianmatters.co.uk/content/22085029-nothing-holy-about-hatred-campaign-against-homophobia-gets-support-manchester-pride

17. More information can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chick-fil-A_same-sex_marriage_controversy

CHAPTER FOUR:
CAMPAIGN RESULTS

The Nothing Holy About Hatred campaign ran from 1 June to 31 August 2012. A number of measurement and analytic tools were used to both chart the progress of the campaign overall and capture insights into the effectiveness of individual campaign tactics.

Web mentions of the campaign

Who's talking?

The author chart (Figure 19) documents the commentators most frequently involved in the campaign:

- The campaign itself was (unsurprisingly) the most vocal commenter, sending a total of 632 tweets. Other authors include those involved in the campaign itself, and a number of campaign supporters
- The data shows a steady increase in the volume of tweets sent by the campaign per month as it grew. In June the campaign sent 108 tweets, which increased to 226 in July, and to 285 in August

- Author @KeshetUK, a Jewish LGBT forum, showed tremendous support with interaction and retweets mentioning the campaign a total of 30 times to its 135 followers
- The Three Faiths Forum (@threefaiths) has 1,566 followers on Twitter and also showed support with 18 mentions of the campaign.

Where are they talking?

The predominant means of communication was Twitter and Facebook, which proved very effective in not only disseminating information about the campaign, but also in finding like-minded institutions and individuals (Figure 20).

The peaks in late July/early August correlate with the introduction of the NHAH anti-homophobia pledge. A peak of 220 mentions in the week of 3 August fell a little the next week with 186 mentions in the week of 10 August, and then to 160 the following week.

Figure 19: Author chart by number of contributions per author to the NHAH campaign
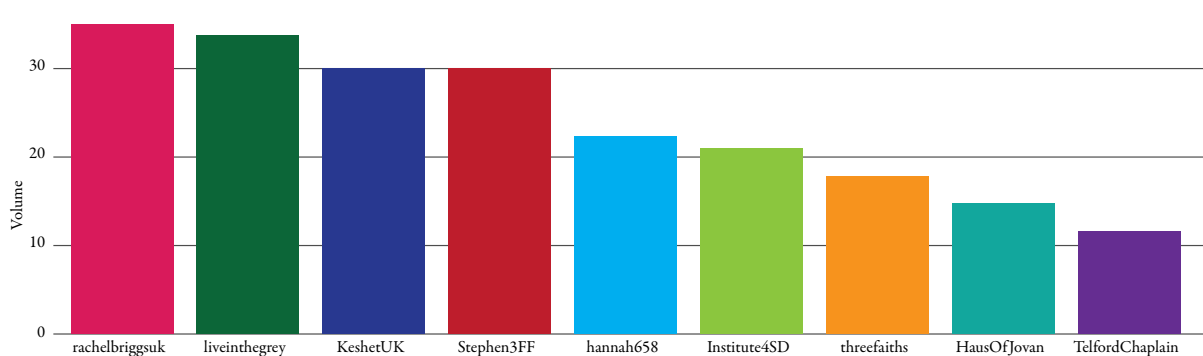
Figure 20: Page type by week by volume of mentions found on various categories of website over the course of the campaign

Legend: Twitter, General, Blog, Forum, Video, News
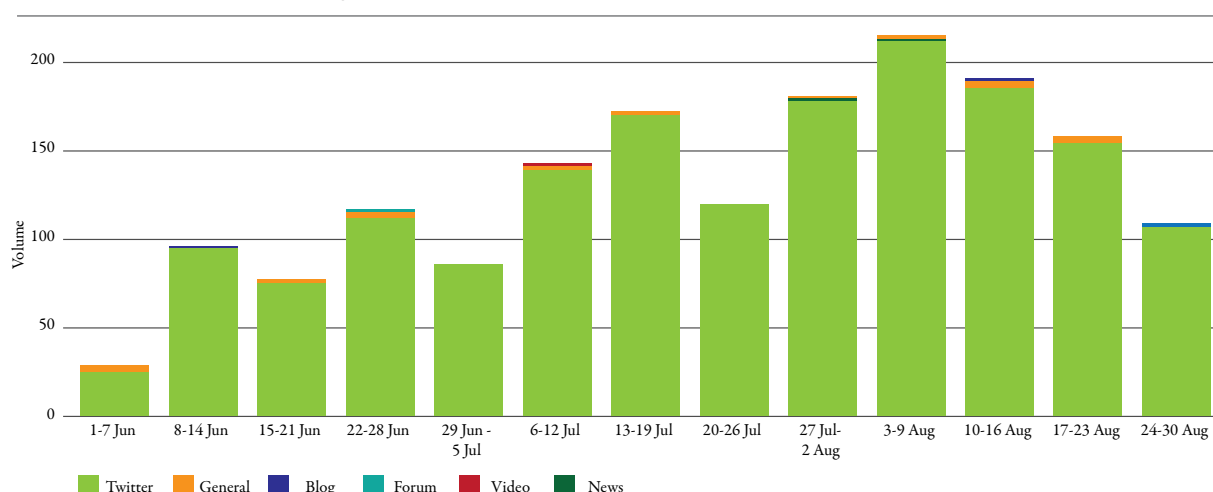
Figure 21: Sentiment over time showing the amount of positive, negative and neutral commentary about the NHAH campaign from June-August

Legend: Positive, Neutral, Negative
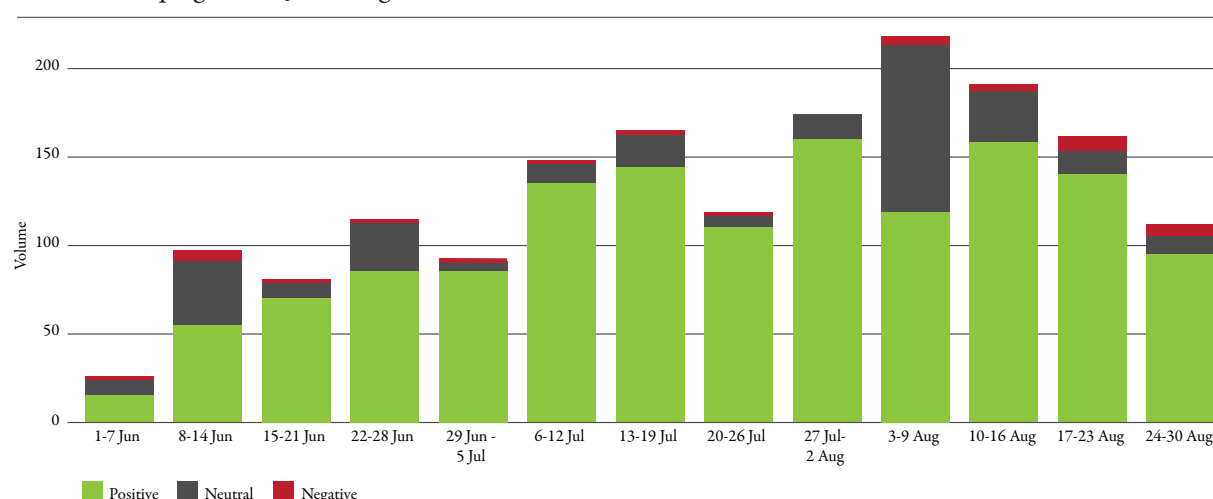
What are they saying?

Figure 21 demonstrates that most conversation around the NHAH campaign was positive. All supportive mentions of the campaign were tagged as positive, and one can see an increase in positive mentions of the campaign as it progressed. The volume of conversations around NHAH also increased gradually over the course of the campaign. The increasing volume of positive sentiment reflects an increase in the volume of support and positivity generated by the campaign's own content.

The word cloud (Figure 22) illustrates that a vast majority of online conversation mentioning the phrase 'nothing holy about hatred' was related directly to the campaign. In fact, of the 31 most popular topics and phrases mentioned, only *HausOfJovan* and *HausOfHoudini* are unrelated to the campaign (they are related to Lady Gaga who tweeted the phrase 'there is nothing holy about hatred' previously), which is an excellent result.

Figure 22: Word cloud showing most-mentioned topics

stonewalluk SchoolReport

HausOfHoudini

faith leaders   LeedsPride

hatred and homophobia   Institute4SD

RabbiDavidM   young people

NothingHolyAboutHatred   gay people

LGBT people   KeshetUK   NHAH   HausOfJovan

Stephen3FF   Great article

gay people   Check

LeicsSikhAllian   London   press release

Rabbi   PrideNotPrejudice

TalfordChaplain   faithMattersUK

KeshetGLBTJews

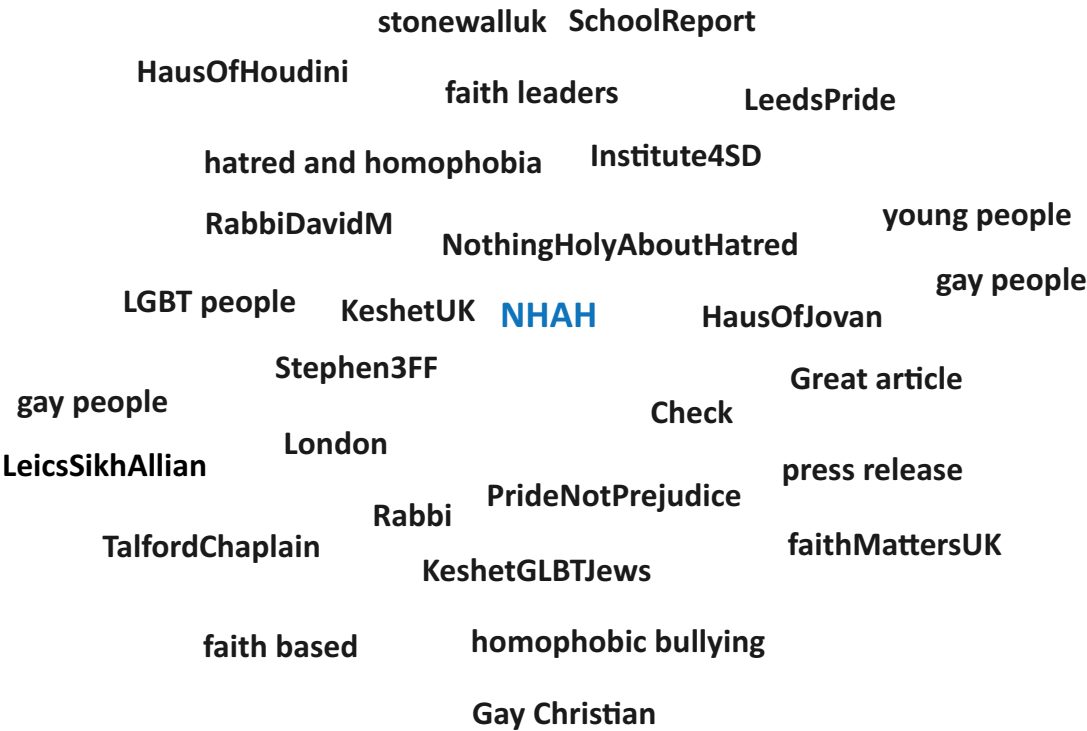faith based   homophobic bullying

Gay Christian

Figure 23: Mentions over time for all online content relating to the NHAH campaign from June-August
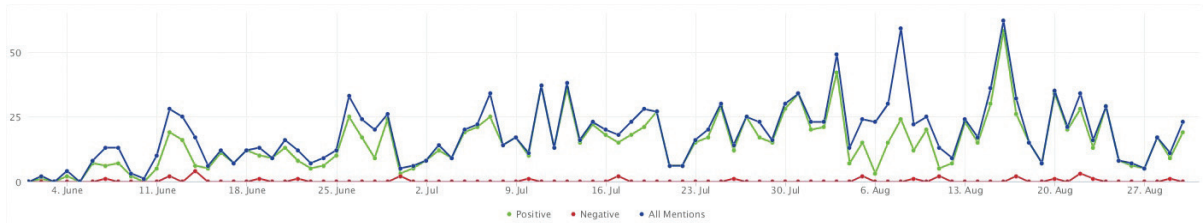

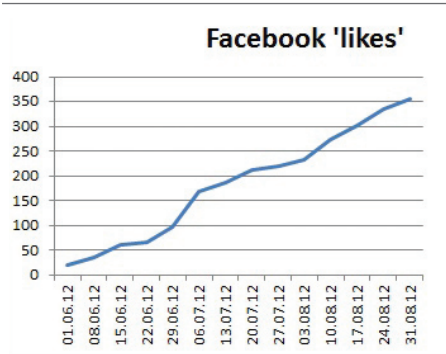**Figure 24:** Facebook 'likes' over time

Figure 25: Facebook 'likes' and 'unlikes' per day

The most common terms and themes mirror the content of the campaign, including faith related terms (*faith based, faith leaders, Rabbi* and others) and homophobia or LGBT related themes (*LGBT, gay people, homophobic bullying* and others.)

Total volume of conversation

Figure 23 demonstrates the gradual rise in the volume of conversation throughout the course of the campaign. Most conversation took place during the working week, with spikes on Thursdays and Fridays. The peaks in conversation correlate to increased specialised campaign activity. For example, the peaks in early August correlate to the launch of the NHAH pledge. On Friday 3 August a peak in mentions occurred when a 'Twibbon' was released and the campaign was pushing for followers to add it to their Twitter pictures. The peak recorded in the next week correlates with the publication of a press release and the ensuing Twitter push for coverage.

Facebook 'likes' (the people who clicked to 'like' the campaign Facebook page, or 'fans')

The number of 'likes' for the page rose steadily throughout the campaign, reaching a total of 355 'fans' by the end of the three-month period (see Figure 24). There were peaks in new page 'likes' on certain days (see Figure 25), usually thanks to key influencers sharing the page within their own networks, or due to engaging campaign content such as a shared image.

Figure 26 shows that NHAH supporters were mainly UK-based, as expected, with many located in London, the campaign's headquarters. Thanks to the power of social media alone, however, there was also a strong US contingent of supporters. The campaign was supported by a slight majority of females, with ages from teen to 65+, although the most represented demographic was within the 25-34 age group.

Figure 26: Facebook's 'People who like your page' (demographics and location)

People Who Like Your Page (Demographics and Location)   See Likes

Gender and age

	13-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Female 57.1%	1.7%	10.7%	21.3%	8.1%	9.5%	4.3%	1.4%
Male 41.2%	0.6%	5.8%	12.4%	9.5%	6.3%	4%	2.6%

Countries		Towns/cities		Languages	
183	United Kingdom	84	London, England	182	English (US)
118	United States of America	9	Leeds, England	157	English (UK)
8	Australia	9	Manchester, England	2	German
5	Sweden	6	Huddersfield, England	1	Hebrew
3	France	4	Chicago, Illinois	1	Danish
2	India	4	Oxford, England	1	English (India)
2	Kuwait	4	Melbourne, Victoria	1	Polish

Figure 27: Facebook reach (demographics and location)

Who You Reached (Demographics and Location)

Gender and age?

	13-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Female 54.5%	1.4%	10.1%	17.3%	11%	8.7%	4.4%	1.6%
Male 43.7%	1.6%	8.1%	13.6%	9.1%	6.5%	3.2%	1.6%

Countries?

1,017 United States of America
622 United Kingdom
38 Australia
30 New Zealand
17 India
15 Canada
13 Germany

Towns/cities?

233 London, England
39 Manchester, England
36 Greensboro, North Carolina
31 Telford, England
30 Asheville, North Carolina
24 Sioux Falls, South Dakota
22 Leeds, England

Languages?

1,301 English (US)
558 English (UK)
12 German
9 French (France)
7 Danish
7 Spanish
5 Spanish (Spain)

Reach (the people who have been exposed to the campaign's content)

The 'reach' of the campaign Facebook page refers to those who have been exposed to the campaign messages and content, including through the activity of the campaign's fans. Interestingly, Figure 27 shows that the majority of those reached by the campaign were actually in the US, which implies that the campaign's US fans shared content more than those in the UK. The demographics of those reached (gender and age) were similar to those who like the campaign's page, with slightly more females than males and a wide age range. Figure 28 demonstrates that the large reach of the campaign was achieved through 'viral' content; posts, photos, videos and links that are shared by those who like the page, thus exposing it to their wider networks.

Figure 28: Facebook reach by organic, viral and total reach. Most reach was achieved virally, as campaign supporters engaged with and shared Facebook content with their extended networks

How You Reached People (Reach and Frequency)

All Page Content ▼

Reach?

☑ Organic? ☐ Paid? ☑ Viral? ☑ Total?

Engagement ('liking' or commenting on the campaign's content)

The demographics of those engaging with the page reflected those who 'liked' and were reached by the campaign. Figure 29 shows how, over the course of the campaign, the engagement and reach of the campaign on Facebook moved in peaks and troughs. One can see that as the page gained more followers, the general level of engagement grew, and with it the size of its reach. At its peak, the campaign had a weekly reach of nearly 10,000 people, but sustaining this level of reach relies more on regularly posting engaging content, rather than building the number of page 'likes'.

Figure 29: Facebook page total engagement and reach over time for the duration of the campaign from June-August
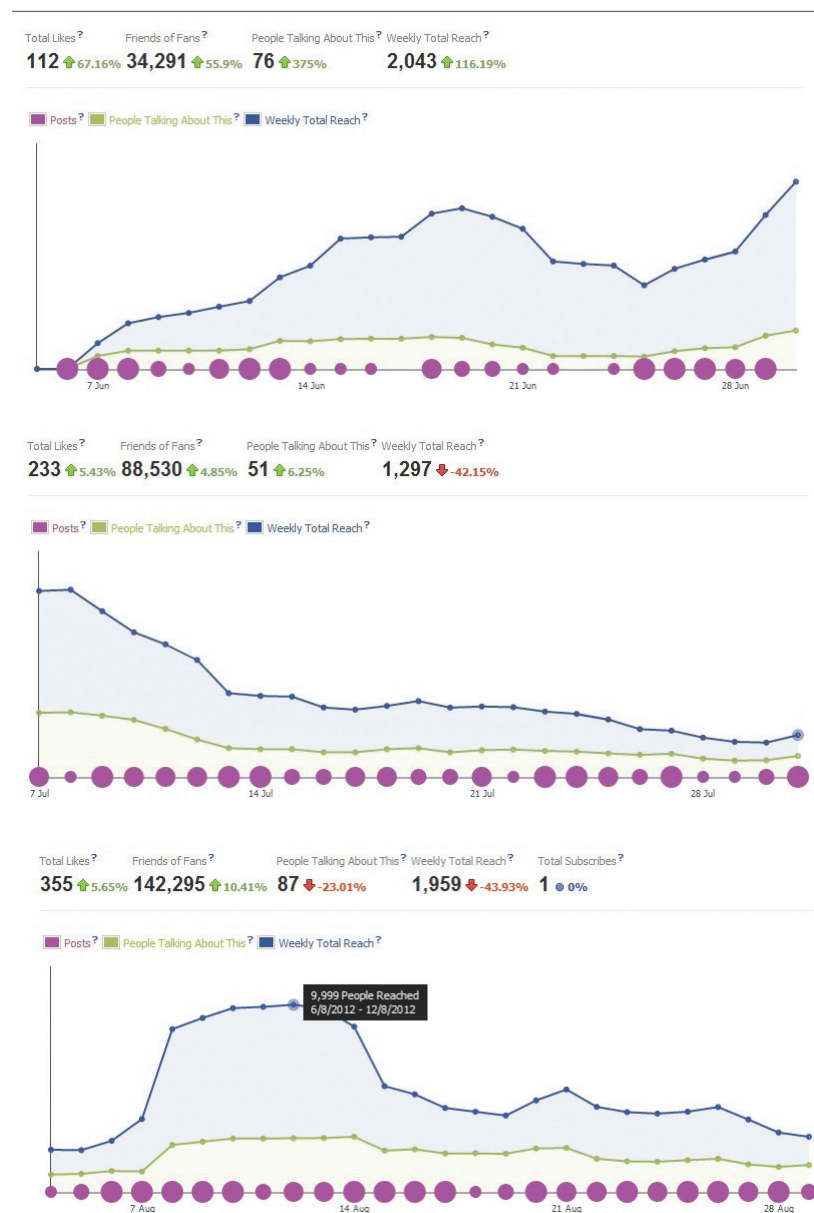
Twitter

Followers

Figure 30 from TwitterCounter[18] shows how the number of campaign followers grew steadily over the course of the campaign to a total of 264.

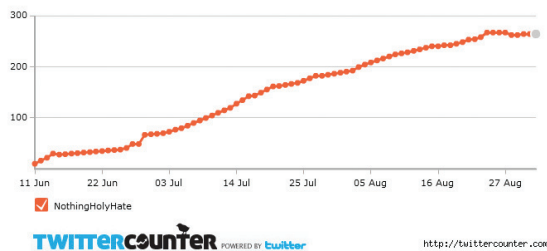**Figure 30:** Twitter followers over time

Figure 31 uses Tweetmap[19] to show the location of these followers; the majority of the campaign followers were based in the UK (mostly in London). The campaign was also successful in gaining support in the US, Canada, Australia and across Europe.

Twitter engagement

Hootsuite's[20] link shortening service allowed for the analysis of the click-rate on the articles and webpages linked to by the campaign's Twitter account. Figure 32 shows a general increase in the number of click-throughs on the links posted on the campaign's Twitter feed, which shows that the campaign's audience was growing and becoming more engaged

Figure 31: Twitter followers by location

18. http://twittercounter.com/
19. http://tweepsmap.com/
20. http://hootsuite.com/
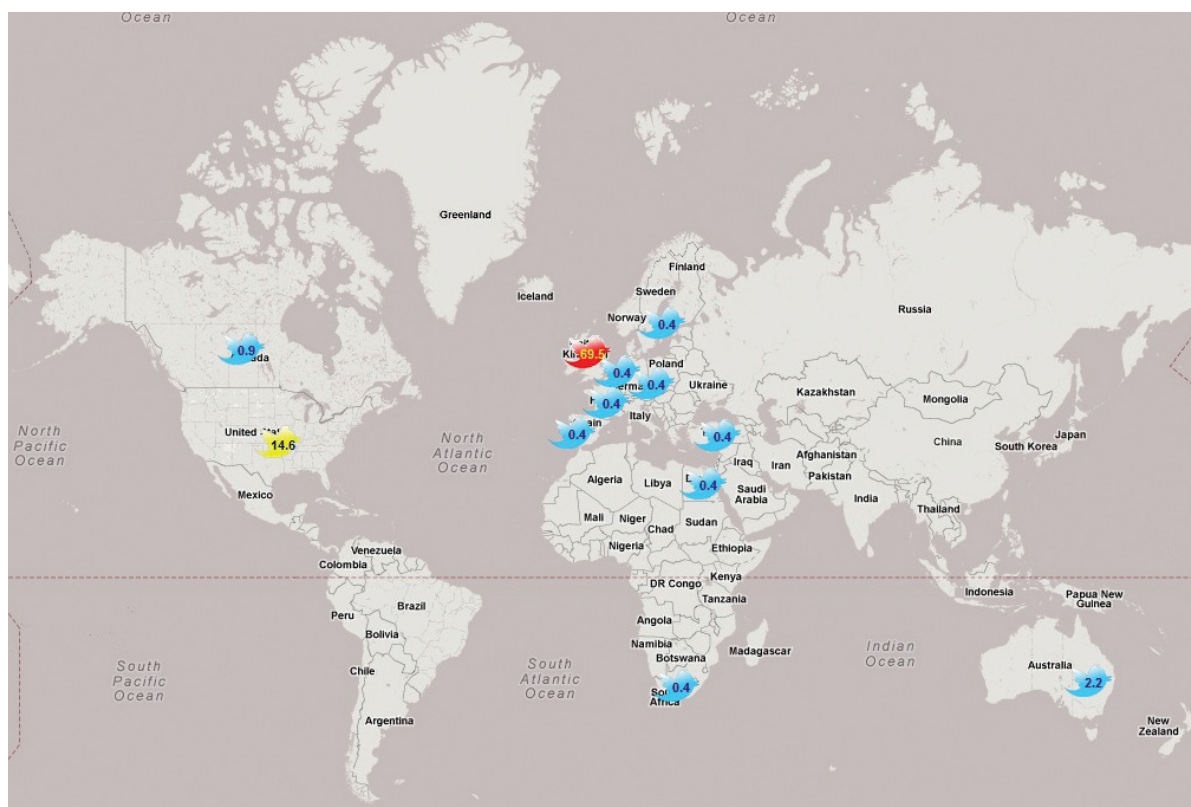
Figure 32: Number of clicks per day on links shared on Twitter via Hootsuite by the NHAH campaign
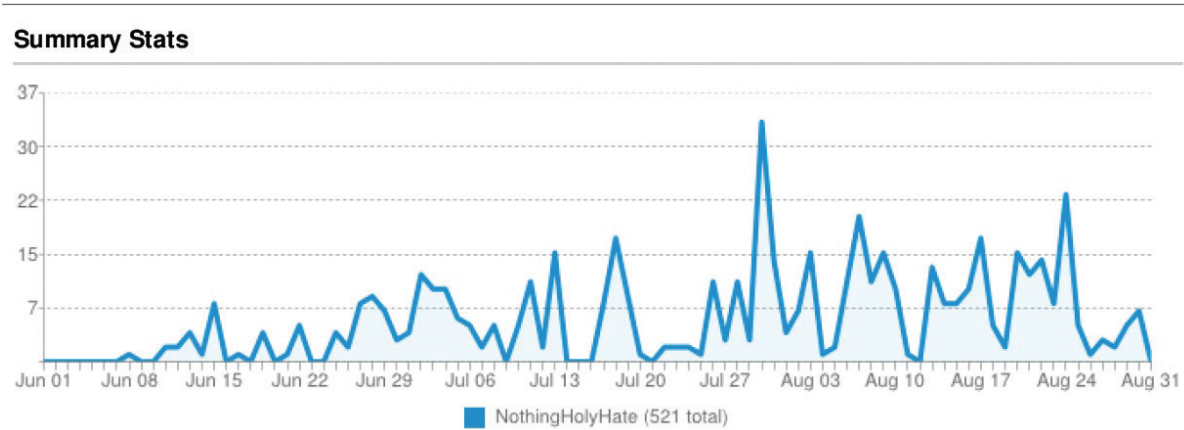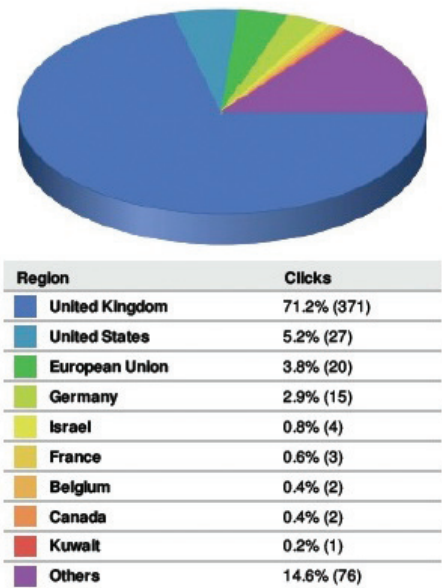

Figure 33: Locations of engaged users measured by the location of those clicking on links tweeted by the NHAH campaign via Hootsuite.

Clicks by Region

Region	Clicks
United Kingdom	71.2% (371)
United States	5.2% (27)
European Union	3.8% (20)
Germany	2.9% (15)
Israel	0.8% (4)
France	0.6% (3)
Belgium	0.4% (2)
Canada	0.4% (2)
Kuwait	0.2% (1)
Others	14.6% (76)

as the campaign progressed. In Figure 33, again, one can see that the campaign's audience was largely UK-based, with readers also in the UK and Europe.

Using Twitonomy[21] to analyse the campaign's Twitter account, Figure 34 demonstrates a general increase in the number of mentions of the campaign, meaning more people were including the campaign handle username (@NothingHolyHate) in their tweets, either to engage directly with the campaign, or to publicise it to their own networks.

Finally, Crowdbooster[22] allowed campaign organisers to gain an overall understanding of how engaging and far-reaching the campaign's tweets were, by analysing them in terms of impressions (how many people saw the tweet, including through the feed or via retweets) and the number of retweets. Figure 35 shows that most of the campaign's tweets were retweeted one to three times, and reached up to 3,000-4,000 people, but that the most popular tweets received six retweets and made nearly 8,000 impressions.

21. http://twitonomy.com/
22. http://crowdbooster.com/

Figure 34: Mentions of @NothingHoly Hate per day on Twitter

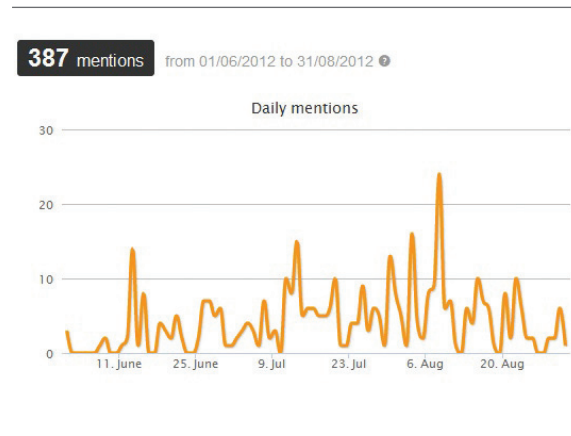**387 mentions** from 01/06/2012 to 31/08/2012

Daily mentions

Figure 35: Individual tweet analysis via Crowdbooster, showing the number of retweets achieved, and the total reach of tweets posted by the NHAH campaign
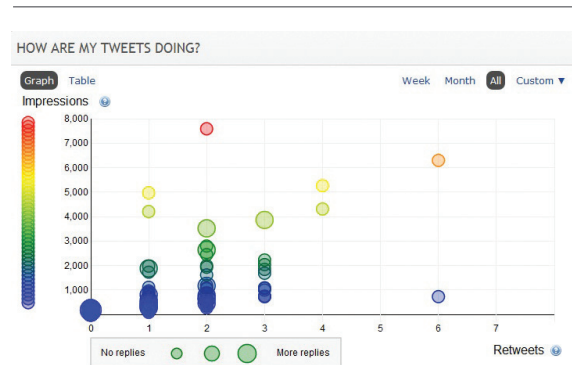

HOW ARE MY TWEETS DOING?

Figure 36: Tweetreach report on 31 August 2012 showing the reach and number of impressions made by the most recent 50 tweets to date sent by @NothingHolyHate

reach

45,276

accounts reached

exposure

49,003 impressions

42,773

2,388   97   18

1 tweet   2-4 tweets   5-7 tweets   8+ tweets

Each bar shows how many accounts received how many tweets

Figure 37: Blog views per month

2,622
views all-time

24
views today

297
views on your busiest day, August 8, 2012

Summary Tables
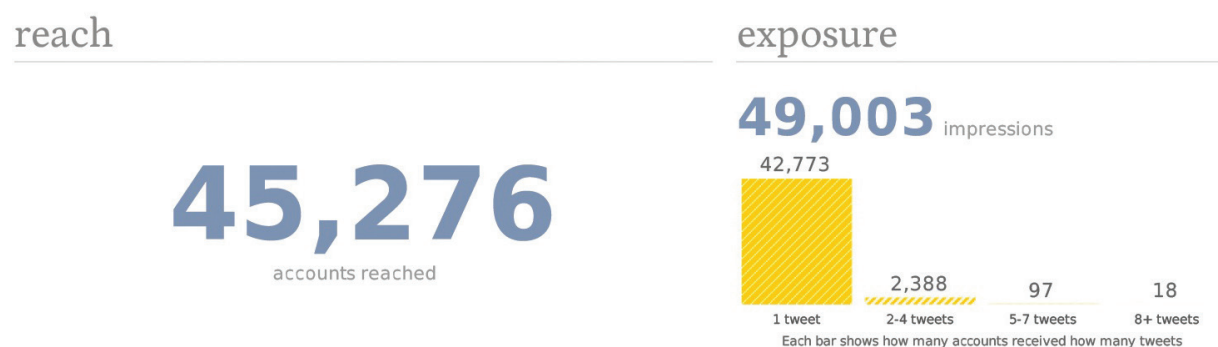
TweetReach[23] then allows the measurement of the cumulative reach of the most recent 50 tweets sent by the campaign at any one time. The NHAH Twitter campaign regularly reached between 20,000-45,000 accounts, with many accounts receiving more than one tweet, making the total number of impressions up to and in excess of 30,000-49,000 (Figure 36).

Wordpress.com blog

Site visits

There was a steady increase in visits to the campaign blog as the campaign grew; of a total of 2,622 views, over 1,500 were in August (Figure 37).
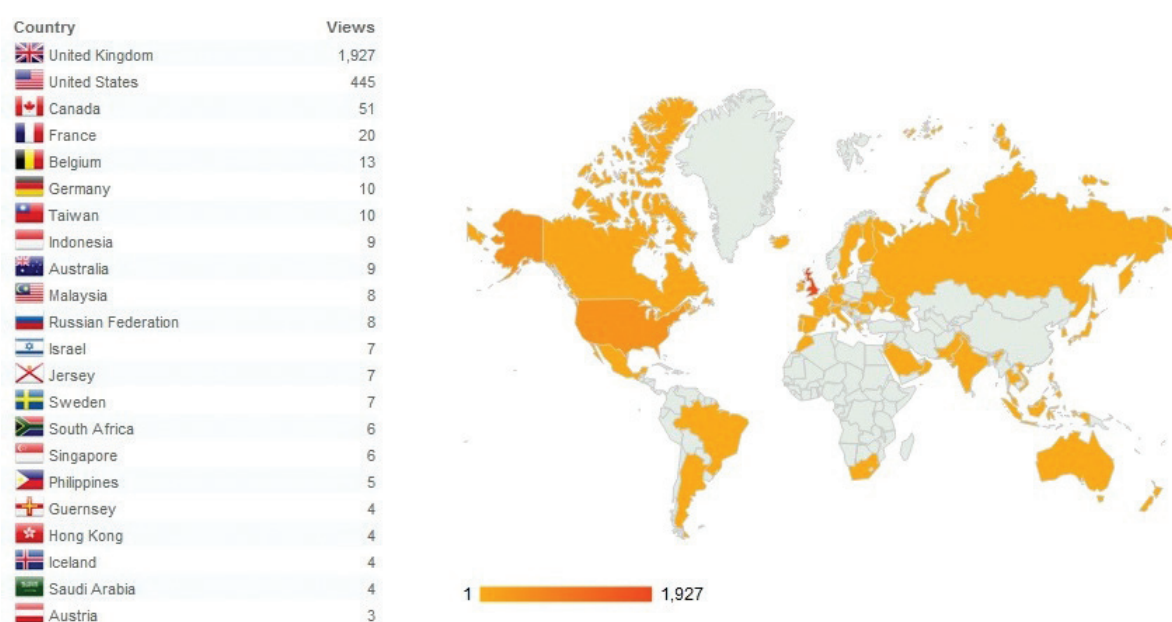
After three months, the campaign was being followed by 12 other Wordpress users and there were 62 comments on the blog's pages and posts (Figure 38).

Figure 38: Blog followers and comments as of 31 August

Figure 39 shows that the campaign blog's audience was largely UK-based, with a smaller number of people based in the US and other countries visiting the site. This, unsurprisingly, mirrors the demographics of the campaign's other social media platforms.

Figure 39: Total blog views per country, 1 June-31 August

Country	Views
United Kingdom	1,927
United States	445
Canada	51
France	20
Belgium	13
Germany	10
Taiwan	10
Indonesia	9
Australia	9
Malaysia	8
Russian Federation	8
Israel	7
Jersey	7
Sweden	7
South Africa	6
Singapore	6
Philippines	5
Guernsey	4
Hong Kong	4
Iceland	4
Saudi Arabia	4
Austria	3

23. http://tweetreach.com/

Figure 40: Most viewed blog posts showing total views per post 1 June-31 August

Title		Views
Take the Pledge		906
Nothing Holy About Hatred		579
Alison's blog		223
Get involved		194
Who's joined our campaign so far?		136
About Us		119
This I Believe, by guest blogger Sarah		91
Press Release 7 August 2012		81
Useful Links		74
Graphic design genius? Nothing Holy About Hatred needs your help!		57
David believes there's Nothing Holy About Hatred		39
The story of Nothing Holy About Hatred		37

Figure 41: Top referrers to the blog, showing the total number of visits through links on external websites

Referrer	Views
Facebook	590
Twitter	269
∨ Search Engines	126
liberalconspiracy.org/2012/08/09/anti-homophobia-campaign-goes-to-faith-leaders/	34
∨ strategicdialogue.org	29
∨ Reddit	15
thealisonandbeckystory.tumblr.com	9
∨ theloop.manifestcomms.co.uk	7
newstatesman.com/blogs/religion/2012/07/what-does-it-mean-be-lgbt-and-muslim-uk	7
hootsuite.com/dashboard	7

The most popular pages on the blog were those most shared via Facebook and Twitter, and those pushed out by other bloggers; the pledge site and guest blog posts were the most viewed (Figure 40).

Of particular relevance are the top referrers to the blog; one can see that Facebook drove the most traffic to the site, followed by Twitter (Figure 41). This demonstrates the importance of social media in promoting a campaign website or blog, and encouraging people to visit and explore its messages.

Influence

Klout[24] awards a score to a campaign in terms of its reputation and its ability to influence others. The success of the NHAH campaign is demonstrated through its Klout score:

- Klout score increased to 49 (Figure 42) by the end of the three-month campaign. Measured out of a maximum score of 100, this reflects that while this was a relatively young and small campaign, the campaign was successful in using social media platforms to engage with and influence people.

- The number of people influenced by the campaign increased from 74 in its first month to almost 500 others by the third month.

- The topics which the campaign was influential about were found to be religion, homophobia and bullying, which proves that the campaign was engaging with these topics effectively.

- The 'style' of the campaign developed from 'conversationalist', to 'socialiser', to 'specialist', indicating that the campaign became more focused and consistent in its choice of content, and acted as an authority on these subjects for others.

By the end of the three-month case study, Nothing Holy About Hatred had an active and growing online community with a wide reach, and it was attracting media attention. A weekly increase in Facebook 'likes' led to a total of 355 'fans' for the Facebook page, which was reaching an audience of up to 10,000 people a week. On Twitter, there were 264 followers, with the account regularly achieving a cumulative reach of around 20,000 people per 50 tweets. The campaign blog received over 1,500 views in the third month alone. Based on these figures and assuming the campaign continued to grow at the same rate, it could hope to achieve at least 1,500 Facebook fans and over 1,000 Twitter followers within a year, and reach an international audience of many thousands. Over 60 people took the anti-homophobia pledge, including key faith leaders from a variety of faith backgrounds who were contacted via the campaign's social media tools, and including leading figures in the Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh communities. The campaign achieved media attention in blogs and local press. Figures 43 and 44 summarise the campaign's growth.
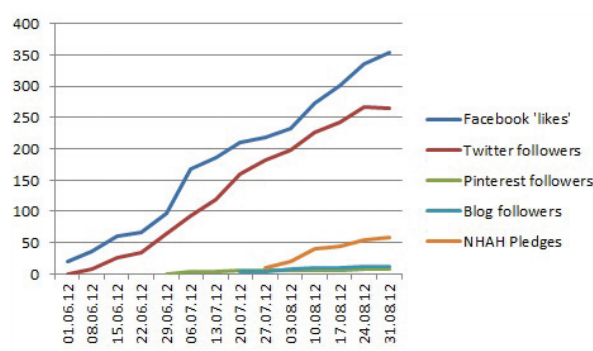
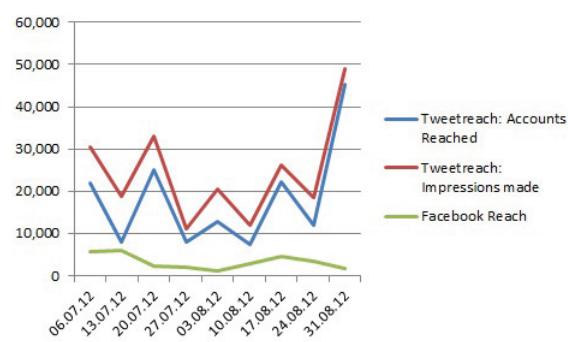**Figure 43:** Campaign support over time

Figure 44: Cumulative reach of the campaign over time

CHAPTER FIVE:
LESSONS LEARNED

A number of lessons can be learned from the experience of running the Nothing Holy About Hatred social media campaign.

Campaign planning and management

Social media allows civil society organisations to project their voice more effectively than through offline work alone, but using social media requires detailed planning to produce focused aims and clear messages that will reach the target audience without being lost in online 'noise'. It is therefore essential to listen first to establish what is being said, where, how and by whom.

Managing an effective social media campaign takes time. It is vital to research and produce content, schedule updates and respond to comments from supporters and followers in order to create a conversation rather than simply broadcast information. This process can be streamlined by using tools such as Hootsuite that allow updates to be scheduled in advance.

Building an online presence

It is important for campaigns to establish a professional online presence before they go public. A professional-looking website or blog provides a single 'go-to' point of reference for followers, and lends credibility to campaign messages. Its content can then be mirrored on other social media sites for consistency. While it can feel demoralising to post content before anyone will read it, it means that early campaign followers have a critical mass of information to engage with from day one.

In terms of deciding which social media sites and platforms to use, it helps to start where people already are. With Facebook and Twitter leading the way in social networking, it makes sense to focus attention on creating an engaging Facebook page and an active presence on Twitter. Experiments with other social media platforms, such as Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, Reddit, Digg, and Storify found limited success, but, because of the viral nature of social media, even a small amount of interest on other sites can help to draw more people to a campaign. What's more, working across different platforms can impact positively on search engine rankings, so they should be integrated but perhaps not prioritised.

Engagement and tone of voice

Social media is most effective when it is treated as an interactive forum; not only does this allow supporters to become involved and heighten their commitment, but, whenever they comment, the campaign message gains visibility within their own networks. Replying to follower comments, posing and answering questions and re-tweeting/posting their input all help to extend the reach and amplify the voice of a campaign. As a result of this real-time engagement, campaigns need to be flexible and ready to adapt, because it is impossible to predict everything that will happen. The best campaigns respond to events as they happen, although within the parameters agreed at the outset to ensure there is no substantive deviation from the core aims.

The activities were most effective when they were personal, giving an opinion on an article rather than a neutral description, for example. Followers need to care about the issue in hand, and this is more likely when the campaign itself shows its passion and commitment. It can also often help to use humour.

On Facebook, images were particularly effective at eliciting a response, but, perhaps due to its less visual on-screen appearance, this was not the case on Twitter, where quotes, facts and figures were much more popular. On both platforms, giving an opinion and inciting an emotional response increased online engagement.

Content is key

The campaign was launched with an assumption that timing would be important. However, it became clear that what was posted was more important than when it was posted. Analytical tools, such as Crowdbooster and Hootsuite, were used, but they offered little more than what had already been assumed about the audience's online habits based on their locations (time zones) and predicted Internet habits (such as posting at commuting hours, break times and evenings.)

Inspiring action

Offline, access to key influencers is not always possible, but Twitter enables people to interact directly with anyone who has a Twitter account, and to do so publicly can add to the effectiveness of this. Campaign supporters can add pressure by retweeting the campaign's requests, and this can successfully lead organisations to visit the campaign site and sign up. Social media allows campaigns to contact and influence both large numbers of people and key influencers, as well as generally increasing the reach and impact of the campaign.

It is important to ensure that requests made of followers are small enough to allow them to take part without a major effort. For this reason, the campaign pledge was successful; it made it easy to participate, but gave signatories a sense that they were making a difference. It can, however, be difficult to translate small actions like this into more significant commitments.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Social media offers considerable new opportunities for third sector organisations and campaigners, but few are currently realising this potential due to scepticism, nervousness, low skills bases or a simple lack of awareness. Through background research, consultation, and an experimental social media campaign, this project has explored the ways in which social media technologies can be harnessed by those advocating tackling intolerance: social media for social good.

Within a three-month period, the campaign was able to achieve much more than would have been possible with offline activity alone. It created a community of more than 300 people, which was more international than would likely have been the case through offline campaigning tactics, with support in the UK, US, Europe and beyond, and comprised of a diverse audience. It was possible to quantify the online achievements of the campaign via social media analysis tools, and the whole initiative was achieved with almost no monetary budget: the only investment was time.

Social media does not change the rules of campaigning; nor does its existence negate the need for offline work. The research above suggests that the short-term social media campaign increased awareness and created a community around an issue, but it was only possible to inspire relatively low levels of engagement; 'likes' rather than meaningful dialogue, online pledges rather than offline action. Indeed, there is still much to learn about the link between online and offline campaigning.

The Nothing Holy About Hatred campaign generated a number of strategic and tactical lessons:

Campaign planning and management

- It is important to listen first to establish what is being said, where, how and by whom
- Detailed planning is essential in producing focused aims and clear messages
- It is vital to research and produce content and schedule regular updates.

Building an online presence

- It is crucial to establish a professional online presence, through which all social media platforms can connect
- In terms of choice of social media platforms, it is important to start where people already are, based on what is learned through the listening exercise. While it is necessary to prioritise the platforms that are most central in the chosen campaign area, it is valuable to work across a wide range, as this can impact positively on search engine rankings.

Engagement, content and tone of voice

- Social media needs to be treated as an interactive forum: engaging with followers generates visibility through their networks. This might include

replying to follower comments, posing and answering questions and re-tweeting and posting followers' input

- Campaigns need to be flexible and ready to adapt, in part as a response to audience engagement. The best campaigns respond to events as they happen
- Activities are most effective when they are personal and give an opinion
- Different content works better on different platforms; for example, in this campaign, photos were more popular on Facebook, while quotes, facts and figures generated more response on Twitter
- Content is key; what is posted is more important than when it is posted.

Inspiring action

- Twitter offers invaluable opportunities to connect directly with key influencers around a campaign's focus, in a way that has never previously been possible
- Requests to followers need to be small enough to allow them to take part without a major effort. It can, however, then be difficult to translate small actions into more significant commitments.

Limitations of social media as a tool for social change

Social media is not a magic wand, and it is not without its challenges and limitations:

- As the results of the campaign showed, online activity needs to be paired with offline action. Social media is an addition, rather than a replacement, for traditional campaigning methods
- It can be difficult to move followers from small scale actions to something more substantive. Few followers contributed content and it was clear that

offline engagement, such as face-to-face meetings, community dialogue opportunities or marches, need to complement the online aspect of any campaign

- It can be difficult to sustain interest and engagement levels; success comes in peaks and troughs. Social media campaigns require ongoing commitment from the project manager, and it is important to maintain variety in content and approaches. It can also be difficult to generate real debate and dialogue via social media
- While all online activity can be monitored, measured and recorded for its reach, engagement and online impact, it is difficult to measure offline impact and to know what online activity might have inspired more widely in terms of longer-term social change.

Recommendations

Social media offers a range of new possibilities for individuals and organisations working for social good. But to realise this potential, they must bear in mind a number of factors:

- Civil society organisations need to invest in social media training, and this is an area where governments and foundations could offer support and funding. The knowledge baseline is currently low in many cases, so even a small investment would make a big difference
- Social media must be fully integrated into an organisation's operations, rather than being an add-on or after-thought. It should be integrated into projects at all stages and at all levels of the organisation in order to maximise its benefits
- Social media is a tool, not an end in itself, which

means that organisations need to be clear about what they hope to achieve. They need to research and listen before launching campaigns, establish clear aims and objectives and regularly reassess the techniques and tools they use

- Organisations also need to master some simple social media analysis tools to help them understand the impact they are having

- Social media can also be an effective tool for political parties. Research by Tweetminster mapped political campaigns during the 2010 UK general election.[25] It was able to capture trends in public opinion on the major parties and analyse networks of supporters, and found a strong national correlation between the 'buzz' on Twitter and national electoral results

- Individual politicians can use social media platforms to engage with their local constituents, communicate information and gather community feedback. Only around half of UK MPs are currently on Twitter,[26] and not all of these are maximising its potential

- Policy makers and public sector bodies could make more use of data and customer feedback that can be gathered via social media to inform their decisions. Social media can also offer possibilities for internal communication within these kinds of structures.

25. Kiss, Jemina, *Twitter election predictions more accurate than YouGov* (Guardian.co.uk, accessed 13 November 2012) http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/pda/2010/may/13/twitter-tweetminster-election
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Institute for Strategic Dialogue
48 Charles Street, London W1J 5EN
T: +44 (0)20 7 493 9333
info@strategicdialogue.org

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