Evolving the Utility and Potential of Social Media in Social Impact Assessment

International Association of Impact Assessment
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Non Government/community

Developer/proponent
Social media users up 9% year-on-year worldwide

Internet usage up 9.1% year-on-year worldwide
The Use of Social Media in SIA

• E-participation
• Microblogs
• Online social networks
• Predominantly information sharing
• Public relations/branding
Benefits of Social Media Usage

• Rapid dissemination of information
• Cheap/low cost
• 24/7 access
• User friendly
• Develop relationships
• Easy to target and maintain connections and networks
• Up-to-date/real time
• Inform, educate, engage, assess and monitor
• Mobilise community– develop social capital
Potential Utility in SIA

- Data collection
- Public awareness
- Communication of updates
- Gathering of ideas/problem solving
- Stakeholder interaction/engagement
- Facilitation of dialogue
- Consultation/engaged decision making
- Community support (SLO)
- Assessing and monitoring public opinion
- Feedback
Challenges of Social Media Usage

• Technology reliant
• User demographic/geographic bias and barriers
• Accessibility – language and literacy
• Objectivity
• Information fabrication/legalities
• Insight dissention/mobilise conflict
• Human resource/time intensive
• Control/management
• Organisational culture
## Strategies and tactics for social media use in SIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Information dissemination</th>
<th>Data monitoring &amp; analysis</th>
<th>Dialogue &amp; coordinated action</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency/assessor/consultant</strong></td>
<td>disseminate information using a number of message types</td>
<td>Agency/assessor/consultant collect, monitor and analyse data to accrue situational awareness</td>
<td>Agency/assessor/consultant engage others in conversations and coordinate collective actions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Activities/information products</strong></td>
<td>Branding/public relations</td>
<td>Scoping – scale, stakeholders, history, experience, values, potential impacts</td>
<td>One-to-one conversations</td>
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<td>Inform/awareness/education</td>
<td>Baseline data collection – community profile – sense of place</td>
<td>Facilitation of dialogue/participation</td>
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<td>Communicate updates</td>
<td>Data validation</td>
<td>Group targeting/inclusion</td>
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<td>Administrative news</td>
<td>Gauging and monitoring accounts – issues and public opinions</td>
<td>Message adjustment</td>
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<td>Opinion related messages</td>
<td>Software analysis of big data</td>
<td>Rumour management</td>
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<td>Crowdsourcing – citizen co-production</td>
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<td>Community engagement in decision making/intervention</td>
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<td>Mobilise support</td>
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<td>Promote consensus/social cohesion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Direction of information | One way: from agent (ie developer/proponent, planner, government, NGO) to public/community | One way: from public/community to agent/assessor/consultant | Two-way of multiway: from agency to another agency/individuals/stakeholder groups/community or between multiple stakeholder groups |

**Description**

Agency/assessor/consultant disseminate information using a number of message types. Agency/assessor/consultant collect, monitor and analyse data to accrue situational awareness. Agency/assessor/consultant engage others in conversations and coordinate collective actions.

**Activities/information products**

- Branding/public relations
- Inform/awareness/education
- Communicate updates
- Administrative news
- Opinion related messages
- Direction of information

**Direction of information**

- One way: from agent (ie developer/proponent, planner, government, NGO) to public/community
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Revolution

- Valuing SIA as an iterative process
- Understanding effective social media communication
- Assess existing capacity
- Develop and provide sufficient resources
- Maintain relevant training, support and skills
- Commitment
Questions?......

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