

Social Networking as a Tool for Social Change

How Social Media Accelerated the Uprising in Egypt

<http://www.fastcompany.com/1722492/how-social-media-accelerated-the-uprising-in-egypt>

BY [E.B. Boyd](#) Mon Jan 31, 2011

Did Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube send people out into the streets? Of course not. Did they speed up the process of protest? Absolutely.

Organized before the Jan. 25 protest. People knew there were large numbers, so were more inclined to join.

“Shaping the Narrative” when it was reported that there was looting, protesters organized vigilante groups to protect people and property and reported to major news networks that the looters were actually carrying police ids.

“But the tweets belied that narrative. And indeed, on Saturday, a New York-based Egyptian blogger interviewed by CNN, suggested as much. She “appealed to the media to not fall for what she described as a Mubarak regime plot to make the protests in Egypt seem like dangerous anarchy,” according to the *New York Times*’ blog [The Lede](#). “I urge you to use the words ‘revolt’ and ‘uprising’ and ‘revolution’ and not ‘chaos’ and not ‘unrest,” she said. “We are talking about a historic moment.” The narrative was reset. Soon thereafter, CNN changed its on-screen headlines from “CHAOS IN EGYPT” to “UPRISING IN EGYPT.””

The flood of info coming out of Egypt influenced politicians to react as they did! Rather than try to maintain stability, they had to stand for freedom and democracy, etc.

Speech by Hillary Clinton re Egyptian protest: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-Vy8fFnz18>

SOME HISTORY

State Dep’t briefing on youth groups, November, 2008

<http://www.america.gov/st/texttransenglish/2008/November/20081124173327eaifas0.8017237.html>

UNDER SECRETARY GLASSMAN: About six weeks ago, I traveled to Colombia ... to meet with some young people who last year started a movement on Facebook. And it was actually started by a 33-year-old unemployed computer technician named Oscar Morales who was, just like so many other Colombians, fed up with what the FARC, the violent extremist organization that’s been around since 1964, was doing to his country. He had no help from the government or no knowledge by the Colombian Government that he was going to do this, certainly no

involvement by the U.S. Government either. He started a group on Facebook which mushroomed into a membership of over 400,000 people. And at the same time, some of the members suggested let's have a march, let's build a global movement, and that's what happened. In February, this movement, the No Mas FARC, No More FARC Movement, which transformed itself into the Million Voices Against the FARC movement, put a million people into the streets in Bogotá, another 11 million into the streets in 190 cities around the world.

So I wanted to talk to Oscar and really get an idea of how this happened and see whether there were applications in other parts of the world

... a conference is being held in New York City at the Columbia University Law School that will bring together 17 organizations around the world that currently have an online presence similar to the Million Voices Against the FARC Movement, but usually at a much lower level ... bringing them together with private sector partners, including Facebook, Google, MTV, AT&T, Howcast, Access 360 Media –share best practices, produce a manual that will be accessible online and in print to any group that wants to build a youth empowerment organization to push back against violence and oppression around the world.

Some of these groups are anti-violence, in the sense of anti-crime. Some of them have a more direct anti-violent extremist cast to what they do. They're from South Africa, from the UK, from the Middle East. We're also bringing in seven groups of observers from countries – organizations that do not have a major online presence, from Iraq, Afghanistan. There will be participation from Cuba by – not personal attendants, correct?

in cases like Burma or Sudan, Darfur, the LRA, you know, this is all great, well and good and for the FARC, too. But then you talk about groups that are in Egypt and Turkey who, presumably, those governments which are your allies – one of which is getting billions of dollars a year from the U.S. and Egypt and the other one is a member of NATO – these governments may not appreciate your involvement in inspiring or in helping to create this network of people that are – that they could – would see, and in the case of Egypt, they do see as a threat. Don't you run the risk of unleashing something here that is going to come back to bite you, especially with our allies?

UNDER SECRETARY GLASSMAN: We are very supportive of pro-democracy groups around the world. And sometimes, that puts us at odds with certain governments.

THE RESULT:

<http://www.movements.org/>

Read more about the conference here: "Alliance of Youth Movements"

http://www.blacklistednews.com/index.php?news_id=12676

Why facebook and twitter and not email, phone, website?

Facebook and twitter can reach more people faster and can be used with a computer or a smartphone

Twitter and facebook can be searched immediately by people who have not previously signed up for a mailing list. They can be restricted to a selected group or open to the public. Postings appear immediately, are short, and take no time to load. They can contain more information in the form of links, pictures, or videos. Twitter may be used as an aggregator by searching hashtags. Twitter users may follow whomever they want, they can re-post other's tweets onto their own page, and may reply to someone's tweet. Twitter and facebook are monitored for violent or unsuitable content.

Facebook and Twitter can be inconvenient because of the sheer volume of information or the number of "tweets" or facebook postings. Twitter is open to everyone to hashtag, including nitpickers with trivial comments, uninformed comments, misinformation, impersonators, advertisers, etc. First person reports may be more accurate, but they may also be influenced by individual bias/point of view or confusion.

Facebook and twitter are almost worldwide. Orkut by Google is used in Brazil. Twitter popular in Japan, but they have their own. Korea has local or regional networks. facebook and twitter may be banned in China?

Facebook: www.facebook.com www.facebook.com/stans

Facebook has a newsfeed where everything that is posted by "friends" appears in chronological order. A link to a website or another friend, a picture, or a video could be attached. There is an event planner that can be used to organize an event and allow invitations with responses and comments. Private messages may be sent with invitations or information.

Twitter: www.twitter.com

Individuals, organizations, newspapers, news organizations, television stations, stores, companies may have an account. They are able to post short comments known as tweets and may include a link to a website, an individual, a picture or a video. The tweet may be directed to an individual or a group, but is visible to everyone.

Example of website with twitter and fb incorporated <http://www.usuncut.org/>

Shabab 6 in Egypt was instrumental in the protest, but is written in Egyptian Arabic (I think)
“Shabab April 6 Movement” on fb: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/group.php?gid=9973986703>

Read more here:

Article explaining why the revolt in Egypt may not be duplicated elsewhere:
<http://www.thenation.com/article/158717/can-egypts-internet-movement-be-exported>

An analysis of what happened in Egypt here: <http://www.thenation.com/article/158581/architects-egyptian-revolution?rel=emailNation>

Protest after passage of WI law on Wed. March 9 e.g. MoveOn.org and others used fb and twitter

Scroll down to March 10 to see an example of a call to protest:

<http://twitter.com#!/MoveOn>

Read the news article about the resulting protest here:
here http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/article_260247e0-4ac4-11e0-bfa9-001cc4c03286.html

And here: “A crowd of about 15,000 surrounded the capital and chanted various slogans.”
<http://www.progressive.org/wx031011.html>

Download a manual on how to use twitter here:
<http://www.brentozar.com/archive/2008/08/twitter-101/>

Not related to twitter or facebook, but Google has a people finder to help find survivors after Japan’s earthquake and sunami:
<http://japan.person-finder.appspot.com/?lang=en>

An article in the Denver Post on how to make your facebook account more secure by using facebook’s technology (Thanks Alma!): [click on account>account settings>account security>use secure browsing (https) then save]
http://www.denverpost.com/business/ci_17313136