

Social Media in NGOs: Experiences from Southern Africa

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Social Media spreads globally, also in developing countries. As particularly young people are attracted by Facebook, YouTube, blogs and more, communication targeting this audience can be simplified. This paper focuses on how the usage of Social Media can assist (non-governmental) organisations.

With Social Media information can be deployed at one – sometimes centralised – point and retrieved at distributed places. Social Media may additionally be used for archiving purposes and presentations on reverence portals. Thus Social Media enhances information flow. Additionally, via Social Media, especially through interacting with the target audiences, transparency can be raised.

Implementing Social Media should focus on the organisation’s needs and shouldn’t happen in a rush. This text presents critical, unpredictable and evident experiences to be considered when planning and implementing Social Media in any organisation – the experiences derive from working in an NGO in a developing southern African country. Here main limitation for the youth to access Social Media are financial or connectivity bottlenecks.

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Why Usage of Social Media?

Typical Social Media applications¹ that were found to be relevant for the organisation in this case are: one or two way, synchronous and asynchronous communication tools (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, WordPress, RSS), archiving (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Picasa, Flickr, WordPress) as well as reverencing (e.g. Wikipedia).²

Archiving

Media-files like photos, pdf-files, video-files, audio-files can be stored with minimum costs (actually, there are costs like the up- and download stream) at a centralized space per media category. From there the files can be shared all of them publicly or – depending on the platform – individually or password protected. Thus these media can be used for embedding in different platforms like social networks, websites, blogs, which are merely targeting external audiences.

Internally, if there is a clear organisation-wide commitment for centralised (Social Media) spaces for storing and archiving, search-costs can be reduced, costs for hosting internal servers can be minimized.

Different scales of ‘publicity’ for different files would also allow to keep files internal for decision makers, thus supporting a simplified kind of work-flow management.

External Communication and Interactivity

Due to digitalisation huge parts of information – by far not all of it, but that’s another issue – can easily be transmitted to different organisations and individuals. Internet and eMail and social networks allow to share these information with target audiences, that would hardly have been assessable in former years.

Social Media thus is another, to be accurate, several, channels that can be used to lift publicity. Interactivity, ongoing content updates and maintenance is a way to support customer relationship management.

Selected Social Media

a) Wikipedia

Quick description: To create a new article within Wikipedia you firstly sign off for free. Main limitation for additional articles is relevance: the topic that is written about needs to be of interest for many people. One sign of relevance within Wikipedia is the amount of links going from the article as well as the resources that are used to quote the article’s topic.

Updating and newly deploying an article takes place online in real time.

Costs: No costs to deploy or change an article in Wikipedia.

Sustainability: After deployment of the article the Wikipedia community will work on keeping the article updated – you will be part of this updating community.

¹ All Social Media can hardly ever be summarized for this field has been changing rapidly, see an overview (2011) here: <http://theterryfitzpatrick.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/The-Conversation-Prism-590x551.jpg>

To see the raise in usage of Social networks see: http://blog.comscore.com/2011/06/facebook_linkedin_twitter_tumblr.html

² Another nice tool for internal communication could be online Collaboration Tools like Wiki or googleDocs, which are of no relevance in the organisation under consideration.

b) Blog System

Quick description: Today, NGOs or CBOs often feel the need to have their own website, their own blog. This would be a channel to keep interested persons, donors, the press, the world updated online and in real-time. The updates could be activities from the organisation, could be upcoming events, could be news on the organisations topic (e.g. latest scientific research on HIV). A blog system (mostly) automatically incorporates the possibility that people can have an subscription on any changes/news in the blog via RSS-feed, which means the readers' do not have to visit the site for news, they can be informed by the blog when there is an update – something more or less equivalent to an email notification. Blogs often are more usable to be deployed than whole Content Management Systems or handmade web sites. Exemplary free blog-systems would be wordpress.com, blogger or tumblr. Blogs nowadays also have feature which allows users to see the blog nicely with a mobile phone.

Costs: most blog systems are fully free of charge, special features might be paid for, however you will happily survive without these special features.

Sustainability: After setting up a blog is alive, it only needs content update from time to time. Re-design can be executed easily whenever necessary

c) Online video-channel

Quick description: For a long-term deployment of video-files, including the possibility to view online, there are video portals such as YouTube. Main alternative platforms would be vimeo or blip.tv. Those suppliers make it easy to embed or link any video from any online site, may it be e.g. a blog or Facebook.

Costs: the basic functionality, the hosting of the video on a suitable streaming server, is free of charge. Some platforms offer special features for (reasonable) costs, some platforms have limitations – which would not disturb when using normally.

Sustainability: Additional video files can be uploaded whenever necessary. If having an own (cost free) video channel you should consider uploading on a regular basis to keep excitement with the viewers.

d) Audio-Podcasts

Quick description: If self-produced audio files are available, new ones even on a regular bases, this is a perfect opportunity to go for podcasting. This could allow people worldwide to get the latest audio files, e.g. through a podcast-portal like iTunes. At this point in time (2010/2011) there is no such big hosting-platform for audio files as for video files. However, research showed that the German Platform podhost.de has most advantages. This supplier has reasonable monthly space (30 MB), an audio-blog for each user and thus an automatic rss-feed for free. This rss-feed can be used for making the audio files available in podcast-portals, such as iTunes.

Costs: Different smaller platforms mostly have absolute upload limits, some that low that you would need a 'premium' version to work with reasonably. Some platforms display advertisements. Podhost.de only has a monthly limit that allows reasonable working. Podcaster.de is more or less identical for the price (2011) of one Euro per month.

Sustainability: Additional audio files may be uploaded when available/necessary. The connected RSS feed needs to be submitted to a podcast portal only once. Uploading an additional audio file/episode will update the RSS feed automatically and thus inform subscribers nearly in real time.

e) Social community network

Quick description: At moment Facebook is globally the biggest social community network. In southern Africa there is a serious competitor: MixIT³, in Brazil/Latin America there is Orkut⁴, some other countries also have serious competitors⁵. Google+ is just (July 2011) about to show whether it can or will compete or not. Social networks for internal usage could be e.g. groupspace.com or Yammer. Next to asynchronous communication social community networks often provide additional services like (internal) photo and video archive or real time communication via chat.

Costs: usual users/organisations won't pay for social networks, social networks for internal usage might have limitations which need payment to be overcome.

Sustainability: To keep organisational pages in social networks interesting, regular updates need to be institutionalised. The 'normal' usage of social networks is learned very quickly and pretty intuitively.

f) Online magazine

Quick description: Documents and presentations in pdf format can be embedded in any normal website for viewing and reading, alike e.g. videos from YouTube. Different platforms (e.g. Issuu, Scribd, Calameo, even SlideShare which additionally allows uploading powerpoint files and allows merging with audio-files) offer different advantages: some obviously provide a better haptic reading experience on the screen as others, some offer password-protection or a customizable 'magazine-channel'.

Costs: the basic functionality, the hosting of the pdf file, is free of charge. Some platforms have limitations in the 'normal' version and offer special features for (reasonable) costs, some have adverts on the magazine channel.

Sustainability: Additional files can be uploaded when necessary, no maintenance needs for the old uploaded files that can be used also as an archive.

g) Online photo hosting

Quick description: Online photo archives allow to sort, categorise, share, and have usable URLs for each picture. Thus a picture can be embedded in any usual webpage. At the moment main platforms are Picasa and Flickr.

Costs: the basic functionality, the hosting of the picture-file, is free of charge. Most platforms have some limitations in the 'normal' version and offer special features for (reasonable) costs.

Sustainability: Additional files can be uploaded when necessary, no maintenance needs for the old uploaded files that can be used also as an archive. Easy uploading possibility available by special – for free –uploading software.

h) Additional

Micro-blogging like Twitter, chat systems like Skype, gTalk or iChat, mobile text-messages-bundle sending, social networks for professionals like linkedIn or Xing, using Wiki-Software for collaboration, all this could also make perfect sense to use in special circumstances or for

³ For MixIT, a merely mobile social network, see: Sarrazin, Tom (2011): Texting, tweeting, mobile internet : new platforms for democratic debate in Africa, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Ed.), <http://www.fes.de/cgi-bin/gbv.cgi?id=08343&ty=pdf>

⁴ See:

http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2010/10/Orkut_Continues_to_Lead_Brazil_s_Social_Networking_Market_Facebook_Audience_Grows_Fivefold

⁵ For an overview see: <http://techcrunch.com/2010/12/10/world-map-of-social-networks-shows-facebooks-ever-increasing-dominance/>

different (parts of) organizations. Entries in maps can also be regarded as Social Media. This paper's focus is the platforms mentioned above (Points a-g).

Processing the Implementation of Social Media

Target of the usage of Social Media shouldn't be „taking part wherever possible“ but “choosing those platforms that make best sense and offer most surplus for the organisation”. Some decisions on which Social Media to use might be more of an ‘ad hoc’ style, some might be ending point of an evaluation process. Some decisions might come along with suddenly appearing, unpredicted needs, some might be accompanied or triggered externally or by the implementation of other systems.

For example, the implementation and usage of Social Media can be triggered by

- Implementation of a browser-based Intranet that is to incorporate photos and videos, which could easily be embedded directly from Social Media platforms
- Need to supplement new or ongoing campaigns, Social Media might push attention and link to these campaigns
- New staff that is particularly interested in and pushes useful usage of Social Media.

Interconnected with the triggering of Social Media usage is the question on who is taking the lead or ownership to implement Social Media properly. It could be an assigned person, could be a ‘Task Force Social Media’, could be an interested department or person.

A pre-implementation plan could be broken down into phases like suggested below. Those phases will always be interconnected, implementation might be working through phases iteratively or another way round; e.g. starting point could also be step 3. The presented phasing thus merely serves as structuring means, not as a formal agenda.

Of mayor importance for the overall process will be that the decisive people listen to the Social Media ideas, become sustainably excited and thus corporate to integrate their content and resources into the implementation and into maintaining Social Media.

Step 1: Baseline Study / Inventory of Social Media / Possible Content

To fill an organisational Social Media inventory following questions should be answered by a baseline study.

- What usage of Social Media does already take place for the organisation?
- What usage of Social Media does already take place by individuals in the organisation?
- What organisational content could make sense to be used by Social Media?
- What usage of Social Media can be expected from the target audiences?

Content could be e.g. events, pictures, press-releases, audio-files, videos, presentations. Identification of the persons that are responsible for the content is of mayor importance. Having an overview of (human) resources within the organisation – or even surrounding the organisation like in cooperating organisations – that could support the implementation or the maintenance of Social Media would be one outcome of a base line study.

Step 2: Collecting Wishes

As Social Media may assist external and internal communication, one main player will be the communications department. This department should promote the organisations communication-targets. Having those, next step would be to investigate into how Social Media might support achieving these targets. Additional important departments might be Media, HR, IT, and others.

Examples: making available videos from teaching session for internal schooling, embedding videos in the web page, connecting with youth leaders by showing presence in Social Media networks or having a Wikipedia article about the organisation. Allowing young people to

speak for themselves and thus offering a centralised web page/blog. Creating a world-wide accessible archive for media files.

To articulate wishes needs an understanding of what is possible – exaggerated wishes evolve by not knowing the limitations. Thus it makes perfectly sense to look at step 2 and step 3 simultaneously.

Step 3: Could Haves‘

Collecting the info about what might be available within the organisation (step 1), locating the target audience(s) with the help of the communication targets e.g. youth, press, internal, and collecting what is wished for (step 2) should end up in being able to present different alternatives to have Social Media supporting the organisation.

Already at this point feasibility of alternatives can vaguely be estimated, taking into account the available budget, the time pressure to realize the alternative, the need for sustainability of the alternative, the human resources available, and more. Remember, the budget even could be advocating criteria, as Social Media can save money, e.g. you can dispense buying an expensive streaming hosting server and instead use e.g. YouTube.

Step 4: A Dummy as First Exemplarily Application

Testing purposes, to play around and check the proper settings (e.g. blogs’ widgets and design, Facebook group or Facebook fanpage, sharing settings with pdf-sharing), as well as internal marketing issues to demonstrate how it could work make the implementation of dummies essential.

Decision makers will best understand what Social Media is all about when they can see how each alternative would look like. The closer the dummy comes to the end product, the less room for misunderstanding. Thus sometimes it can make sense to invest already big efforts into the building of a dummy and not to go the ‘quick and dirty’ road.

Step 5: Prioritisation and Feasibility

People in charge should more and more be able to prioritise different alternatives, maybe having the categories: must-have, nice-to-have, not-needed. The work should start focussing on must-haves’. Here the dummies would more and more reach the point of going public. While continuing to work on the dummies, still in an internal implementation phase, new bottlenecks or weaknesses of these alternatives might suggest to unprioritise or change plans. Sudden high-prioritisation could emerge from ‘normal’ work, when there suddenly arises a need to e.g. embed a video on a web page.

Step 6: Going Public

A proper design of the organisations display within the Social Media and the launch-content should derive from the dummy which now goes live.

If there is a ‘once and for all’ implementation – like e.g. a Wikipedia article – the implementation can finish with the launch. Remember, articles in Wikipedia can be changed by anyone who feels the need to do so, thus at least there should be someone looking at the content once in a while. (see step 8)

If a Social Media platform should be nothing but an archive to collect nothing but old files, the activities after implementation could also be minimal.

Step 7: Regular Updates and Responsibilities

If the plan is to update content on a regular basis, e.g. to deepen a customer relationship, the department that will deliver content in future should at least at this point be incorporated – before, e.g. a ‘Task-Force Social Media’, might have taken the lead.

The ownership for the platform needs to be clear, a possible ‘Task Force Social Media’ should step back to be nothing but advisor. To enable the new (or, in best case, if integrated from the beginning: old) content-provider she or he needs to have the know-how to handle the Social Media. Training sessions and self-interest by the responsible persons are good foundations for a sustainable usage of Social Media.

Step 8: Evaluation

The effort to put content into Social Media platforms (even if the effort is not too laborious) should result in successes like having a better customer relation, having an archive people use. This will not happen immediately, but after a while a check-up on the statistics of usage will make sense. Not regularly used or updated Social Media – like a Wikipedia article or a video archive – need to be visited once in a while to check if everything is going smoothly.

Experiences: Successes, Challenges, Flops

Flops and successes lie very close – and sometimes even an implementation moves from one to another and back within a short while. Find beneath conspicuous experiences sorted by Social Media platforms.

a) Wikipedia

The communication department was very keen on placing their organisation in the Wikipedia directory. Thus they provided an article which as is was placed into Wikipedia. Two weeks later this very article was deleted by Wikipedia managers. Reasons: too much marketing language and – this must have been the mayor reason – an identical copy of the very article was found on another page on the internet. By deleting the article Wikipedia must have been trying to avoid legal/copyright issues. As result the wording of the original article was revised by a organisation’s member, marketing speech was avoided, a lot of sources and links were added, then re-uploaded. This second version is now online and fine.

b) Blog System

After the communications department highly prioritised the need for a blog-system two dummies were developed on free hosted blog-systems, the first using wordpress.com, the second using blogger. Thus differences in usability and design-varieties could be identified. Design played an important role as the blog should be integrated into the ‘normal’ web site, allowing only non-striking differences between the two.

To deal with design a web agency should become involved, however, after some weeks no budget was allocated for that and also the ones that should be producing content for the blog did not show up as expected. Priority for implementing a blog system went down dramatically, even if the idea still shows up from time to time.

c) Online Public and Private Video-Archive

The need to have a two hours training-video online – but password protected – triggered the quick creation of a Vimeo account. Thus the video could be embedded into the intranet and anyone from staff who was interested could watch this video.

Small video clips were produced for special campaigns like World AIDS Day or Valentines Day. Via Vimeo those videos could be hosted and embedded on different websites and Social Media networks.

When the organisation produced a 13 episode series to be broadcasted in the national TV, Vimeo was used to have teasers and background info as videos. The in-time – best would have been one week before broadcast – deployment of the videos in the Vimeo channel was a challenge as the many players involved did not have a real process for PR. The teasers for

the episodes came late, the background info-clips sometimes did not come at all, one teaser only showed black after 20 seconds, the uploading was not done by the responsible persons.

Old videos were uploaded as soon as they ‘appeared’ out of old cupboards, descriptions to the old videos were added by one member of the communications department.

Additional lessons learnt: Which video platform to be used depends on the functionality that is found on the platform. Some limitations can be: password protection, video length, video seize. To use different platforms parallel can be time consuming, maybe one could find a way to separate e.g.: internal videos only in platform A, movies for an external target group only in platform B.

d) Audio-Podcasts

Vox-Pops, those are a collage of statements by people on the street, are produced by the radio department in a rather regular basis. Additionally, there are Public Service Announcements (PSAs, coming close to audio-adverts). All those could be used for online archiving and for an organisation’s podcast channel. People from the radio department always state that they would happily be having a podcast.

In reality some bottlenecks emerged: there hardly is a common understanding of “What is an audio podcast”, thus people – also from radio department – hardly take ownership on participating. The audio-files were not made available. Also, the target audience in Africa would hardly be familiar with the podcast technology as well; e.g. the usual iTunes store in South Africa does not include podcasts.

Due to personal interest and connection of a ‘Task Force’ member to the in house radio producer the audio podcast project moved on. After some research and testing the decision was to go with podhost.de for free hosting of the audio files. To enable the in house producer to upload the files a “how-to-document” was prepared for podhost.de – including how to prepare the file with album art, meta-tags, correct file seize, and how to easily make public in the connected rss-feed. (Hosting alternatives all proofed to have too limited space free of charge, using googleDocs would have been way to complicated.) The new podcast channel was listed in the podcast *portal* iTunes.

Theoretically, now all newly created audio-files can be distributed to listeners worldwide, even to radio-stations or press or internally to the communications department for further usage e.g. with Facebook. Practically the producer has not really taken ownership and the uploading only takes place with long delays, with incorrect naming and meta tags – if at all. The radio department is not taking responsibility to enhance this process. When a group of US students visited the organisation the radio department was proudly claiming to have a podcast – but they did not know the rss’-address.

After 6 months the single episodes are clicked between 15 and 90 times.

Additional lessons learnt: Only those audio-files are to be made public which do not contain any material that is legally protected, which mostly means that was created by other persons/organisations, music groups. When it comes to having whole radio shows online the music needs to be cut out.

e) Social Network/ Facebook

Social networks seem to be of interest only if the user finds info that is relevant for him/her, let it be entertaining, let it be interest, let it be business. Considering the customer relationship, updates should be provided in a regular basis.

The base line study showed one Facebook group that was created by one staff member. This group was not vivid. As Facebook shows relevance in the target audience⁶ a new colleague in the communications department started working with Facebook. A new avatar-user was created to moderate the group – one reason for using a neutral avatar might have been the fact that the new colleague was not member of the ethic group of the target audience and thus having her moderating this group could have caused resentments. After a while it was decided to go for a Facebook Fan page which was administered and maintained by the communications department – postings were made by the avatar-user. Streamlined with the media campaigns, content (like videos and, if available, audios) was provided in the fan page, discussions were sparked also according to some selected news that were considered to be relevant to the target audience and thus posted on the wall.

Using an additional discussion sub-page in Facebook and also marketing this resulted in little entries there, people seem to stick to the Facebook wall.

The Facebook fan page got more than 3000 fans within 10 months, some posts get more than 20 comments.

Facebook seems to have a rather quick innovation turn around. E.G. the group functionality which was additionally used to the fanpage for special events changed intensely, the process to create or embed sub-pages changed, the process to embed audio files changed, the need to have an avatar-user disappeared. Thus technological support was necessary throughout the usage.

Now the organisation considers giving the responsibility of the Facebook page to an outside media agency.

Additional lessons learnt: Automatic tweeting of new self created Facebook posts was used, however it needs to be kept in mind that the tweet will appear in a different surrounding: e.g. the hint: ‘click beneath to listen to the audio’ does not make sense as a tweet. People that are befriended in Facebook and on Twitter (and possibly in the future in google+) could be annoyed by cross and double posts. A strategy of what to post where could help here.

The organisation is well known for its assistance for youth and growing up related issues, also provides counselling with a call centre. Thus it happened that while putting content on the Facebook fan page or while changing settings people tried to chat with the avatar user, presenting really existential questions. Those questions were reverred to the Call Centre then, later the chat was disabled for the avatar user. A process to give counselling via Facebook chat was not considered to be realisable within the organisation.

Very private and existential questions were also posted on the fan page wall. To establish a process to give high quality answers an additional counselling avatar – ‘MizzB’ – was created, call centre staff was taught to answer questions as ‘MizzB’. After some time the communication department stopped this process because the call centre staff mistyped too many words. This leads to the point that now, if a question is posted, Communications sends this question via eMail to the Call Centre, the Call Centre answers, sends back to Communications and Communications edits and posts the answer – as ‘MizzB’.

One additional Facebook group was created to support a special campaign. This group summed up to 651 members, a lot of activity took place during this campaign and afterwards. Now this group is not used anymore. This seems to be one way of dealing with special campaigns: Having a group, marketing this group also with the fan page and thus avoiding to have several fan pages of the same organisation. However, at the end there will be – and in this case: there are already – several ‘unused’ group pages. The assumption is: fan pages should be more intensely connected to the whole organisation than group pages, those

⁶ See: <http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/global/social-networking-new-global-footprint/> (2007)

have more project or campaign character. At the moment, on the normal users Facebook home page, group pages are more visible than fan pages – if not deleted from individual's display they are all visible throughout the user's Facebook session.

Subpages in a Facebook fan page – earlier integrated via FBML pages, now via iFrame – can be used intensively, in some organisations those pages might even be used instead of an own organisations website. Integration important online-features is easy (at the moment) with Facebook subpages, thus for the organisation even an own mobile social network became interlinked as a subpage in the organisations Facebook fan page.

f) Online Magazin

Media department was pushing to get an online readable version of the bimonthly youth magazine. However, the digital versions of the magazine did not show up, but once. Putting this into an online magazine platform – issuu, calameo and scribd were tested – showed the need of really good bandwidth to be able to read and to have a nice view of the magazine. The usual target audience would not have access to that bandwidth. For the target audiences: press, donors and world, the necessary effort to go for the Social Media online magazine was not considered appropriate.

g) Online Photo Archive

Communications as well as Media deal with a lot of pictures on a daily basis. There is no central archive. To establish a kind of archive in the – parallel developed intranet⁷ – a Picasa-account was created quickly. Picasa is now used for archiving needs for whoever wants in the organisation. A long-term intern took responsibility to deal with the pictures, also embedding them then into the intranet.

Pictures from there can now be used for press released, webpage design, in the Facebook fan page and subpages, also for downloading and then embedding e.g. in powerpoint-presentations.

As Picasa's free of charge space is limited to one gigabyte the decision is made to change to the cheaper Flickr platform, but till now the Picasa-space is enough.

Sustainability

Working in an NGO in southern Africa the main success factor quickly became visible: ownership. The departments involved would need to deliver their content. And if several departments involved a good cooperation is essential – and even better – a reliable process to cooperate. Here the communications department plays the lead role, it needs to interact with Media, Call Centre, HR and more. Maybe another structure of the organisation might do better.

Ownership emerges when a department and – even more sustainable – a staff member realises surplus when participating in Social Media. Ownership was created mostly – not always sustainably – when a quick-win could be realised, when e.g. a video file was embedded on a webpage within an hour, when an audio-file was displayed and commented on the Facebook wall, when the Facebook fanpage or a Facebook campaign group got a lot of fans and members.

Advantage of Social Media is the curiosity and the excitement especially young staff members show for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs. This excitement creates self-interest to deal with Social Media. Blocking some Social Media in an organisation from this point of view is counterproductive – from the point of view of reducing time really working it may be seen different.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/is-your-target-audience-on-twitter-facebook-or-linkedin-2010-2> (2010)

⁷ For intranet, googleSites was used

Populating Social Media with content still is at risk, also because:

- the usability of some platforms is not perfect, sometimes the functionality changes quickly (as e.g. with Facebook)
- passwords and usernames keep being lost
- ownership and self-interest declines
- sometimes the whole maintenance is dependent on one person. When this person quits, the maintenance stops.

There seems to be a trend for passive transparency: staff is interested in being informed on a large variety of topics and organisational news. Active transparency would go further, would have staff involved in giving info, sharing news, providing content.

To sustainably secure the successful usage of Social Media those contributions might help:

- preparing content long in advance, thus 'non-content' weeks of can be bridged – by the costs of loss of actuality.
- trainings, 'how to' documentations, special support for the ones that take ownership
- usernames and passwords should be stored at a secret place that is accessible for the people that might need it

Showing up in Social Media needs to make sense for an organisation. Reconsidering the implementation steps, experienced persons should pretty quickly be able to give an estimation which platforms can add surplus or minimise costs.

No matter where or which organisation, content – or better: a predictable flow of content –, ownership and skills are needed. If only going for archiving, Social Media will need less attention than going for interacting with target audiences. Long term customer relationship management will take more resources, marketing efforts and endurance than quickly creating e.g. a Facebook page.

And not to forget: access is relevant, in terms of bandwidth, costs and connection, all the three especially relevant to developing countries.

Links

Social Media Channels of the organisation:

loveLife: <http://www.lovelife.org.za>

YouTube: <http://www.YouTube.com/loveLifedia>

Vimeo: <http://Vimeo.com/channels/lovelifengo>

Audio-Podcast: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/loveLifeRadio> (= <http://lovelife.podspot.de/RSS>)

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/lovelifeNGO>

Facebook: <http://www.Facebook.com/lovelifeNGO>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LoveLife_South_Africa

Selected 'How-to' documents:

Podcast hosting:

http://nherrmann.files.WordPress.com/2011/05/nherrmann_audiofilesonlinewithPodHost_en.pdf

WordPress.com: <http://learn.WordPress.com>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Starting_an_article

Additional:

Barriers for an Efficient Management of Knowledge (2011): <http://www.community-of-knowledge.de/beitrag/barriers-for-an-efficient-management-of-knowledge/>