

# MEASUREMENT EVERYTHING

APRIL 2010



**Shabbir Imber Safdar** The power of Facebook's 400 million users is attractive to any nonprofit, if you can figure out which of your tactics are working.

7 minutes ago · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Report](#)



**Shayna Englin** What, exactly, is your organization getting for all those Facebook hours logged? It's an answerable question: set goals, measure against them, and fix what's not working. Done and done.

Wed at 3:50pm · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Report](#)

With a new introduction from Katya Andresen of Network for Good

## IS YOUR NONPROFIT FACEBOOK PAGE WORTH IT?

ANALYTICS AND MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES

**SHABBIR IMBER SAFDAR**  
FOUNDER, VIRILION INC.

**SHAYNA ENGLIN**  
FOUNDER, ENGLIN CONSULTING, LLC

### Learning more

If you'd like to keep up with Shabbir and Shayna's work, you can:

Follow Shabbir's blog at <http://www.truthypr.com/>

Follow Shayna's blog at <http://www.englin.net/blog>

You can also join their Facebook pages from there, and follow them regularly.

### Acknowledgements

We owe a great debt of thanks to Alisa Aydin, Andrea Carricato, and Sameer Singh at the US Fund for UNICEF. They patiently worked with us, provided us their data and answered our questions. We also owe a debt of thanks to John D. Porter, PhD from Miradia Inc. who was our sounding board for our statistical findings. Shannon Coulter of One Block Off The Grid and Eve Smith of Easter Seals read advance copies and helped refine our tone and voice.

### Nomenclature

Throughout this book we refer to Facebook fan pages, to people becoming your fans, and other language that's been in use up until now in the Facebook world. In April 2010 Facebook changed the user experience to allow people to "Like" organizations, in the same way that they "Like" status posts, photos, and other assets. We continue to refer to them as "Fans" in the book, because it sounds better than "Likers".

**Table of Contents**

Foreword by Katya Andresen, COO Network for Good ..... 3

Introduction ..... 5

What is your indisputable, primary goal for your Facebook efforts? ..... 6

Measuring the impact of your Facebook fan page: The US Fund For UNICEF Case Study ..... 7

    US Fund for UNICEF's Facebook fan page metrics..... 7

        Facebook Traffic in Context for UNICEF-USA..... 8

        The Funnel: How does Facebook activity fit into the donations funnel? ..... 8

Metrics-driven analysis and recommendations..... 9

    Clickthrough spikes on Wednesdays..... 10

    Clickthrough is stratospheric on disaster days ..... 11

    New fan growth is more organic than episodic..... 13

    Additional Research Required: Does what happens on Facebook stay on Facebook? ..... 14

    Additional Research Required: What About the Content?..... 14

Adapting UNICEF-USA's results to your own work..... 15

    What kind of measurement program should you have in place? ..... 16

        Set clear, well-articulated, and indisputable strategic goals for your work on Facebook..... 16

        Describe the metrics that make up your funnel. .... 16

        Describe the tactical variations you can test for impact on your metrics. .... 16

        Determine your measurement intervals. .... 17

        Set up your measurement tool..... 17

        Lay out your actionable decisions – what will you do if the data tells you to? ..... 18

About The Authors ..... 19

    About Shabbir J. Imber Safdar ..... 19

    About Shayna Englin ..... 19

## **Foreword by Katya Andresen, COO Network for Good**

When I'm speaking to nonprofit professionals about social media, the first question they want answered is this: "Do we really need a Facebook page?" (That is unless they already have a page for their organization. Then they want to know: "How do I get more people to like me on Facebook?")

My answer is usually along the lines of, "It depends."

It's not the answer they want, but it's the right answer. That's because the truth is, these questions aren't your best starting point in thinking about social media – or Facebook. If you're contemplating committing time to engaging people on Facebook – and it does take time – you need to ask yourself a bunch of other questions first. And that's what this foreword – and this Guide – will help you do.

The first question you should ask yourself as a fundraiser is, do you have your most basic online outreach in place? You shouldn't be committing staff to Facebook if you don't have a decent website home page or can't email supporters.

Before you think about Facebook, you should have:

- A well-branded, easy-to-use website
- The ability to process secure donations
- An email campaign tool that complies with federal anti-spam laws
- A website analytics tool (like Google Analytics)
- A listening tool (so you can monitor online conversations)
- Great follow-up for online donors and supporters
- Smooth integration between online and offline efforts
- Regular reporting on all of your efforts so you can learn and correct as you go

If you don't have these things, Network for Good can help. We're a nonprofit like you – and we have tools like [DonateNow](http://bit.ly/dnow123) (<http://bit.ly/dnow123>) and [EmailNow](http://bit.ly/emailnow123) (<http://bit.ly/emailnow123>), as well as training and eBooks like this one, so you can check off this list.

If you have all of this, you may be ready for the next step: creating a social media strategy. If you're actively conducting online outreach, monitoring results and listening to what people are saying about your issue, you will be able to put together a realistic strategy that identifies an audience you want to engage – and a goal for that engagement. As the authors of this guide,

## MEASURE EVERYTHING

---

Shabbir Imber Safdar and Shayna Englin, rightly point out, you are best off with clear, small goals that will give you sense of your progress and your return on investment for time spent on activities like Facebook engagement.

They have great advice on exactly how to accomplish this on Facebook – and they speak from experience. They took a year’s worth of data from US Fund for UNICEF’s Facebook fan page and website, studied it, and used statistical methods to find connections between certain activity and success in click-throughs and donations. They found some amazing things about how posting frequency affects engagement, as well as some ways to optimize your work when there’s a high-profile disaster tied to your issue.

Read on and get the benefit of their analysis and advice. They’ll even tell you how to get more “likes” – once you have your strategy in place. I’ll give you a hint – the answer isn’t by using Facebook to relentlessly hit people up for money. It’s about building relationships with people. That’s what always works best – not just on Facebook but wherever and however you fundraise.

May you have many great relationships!

Katya Andresen, Chief Operating Officer of [Network for Good](#)

May 17, 2010

# Introduction

The amount of pressure on organizations to "get on Facebook" is tremendous. It's driven partly by hype and by consultants who see an opportunity to add a "buzzy" set of services to their roster. Everyone's audience is shifting the way they divide their attention, and nobody wants to be left out.

But it's also partly due to the fact that Facebook has over 400 million users, 100 million of which use the site monthly<sup>1</sup>. For context, cnn.com gets roughly 25 million unique users monthly.<sup>2</sup> And just this month, Facebook passed Google in number of pageviews for the first time.<sup>3</sup>

Those are great numbers, but they aren't "pour money down a hole forever" numbers. In our view, there's no such thing as "pour money down a hole" numbers. Nonprofits have rushed onto Facebook driven by the promise and potential of the audience, but there are few easily repeatable successes. While nonprofits aren't awash in money, they're putting valuable staff resources into updating, maintaining, and conversing with their supporters on Facebook. And a lot of them are asking when that payoff comes, because they haven't seen it yet.

Nonprofits need to answer a few simple questions to justify the time and expense they're investing into maintaining a presence on Facebook:

How effective is the work I do on Facebook in producing bottom line results for the organization?

What should I be doing differently on Facebook to improve my results?

Should I take resources away from Facebook and devote them to something else?

Unless you can answer these questions, Facebook will become yet another unproven checklist task you must do without justification because "everybody else is there".

In this book we show you a method for measuring the bottom line results of one organization's Facebook work, and offer guidelines to help you set up your own Facebook page measurement program so you can evaluate your Facebook bottom line.

---

<sup>1</sup> TechCrunch: <http://www.crunchbase.com/company/facebook>

<sup>2</sup> TechCrunch: <http://www.crunchbase.com/company/cnn-com>

<sup>3</sup> [Facebook Tops Weekly Ranking, Surpassing Google](#) (Dow Jones Newswire) Mar. 15, 2010

## What is your indisputable, primary goal for your Facebook efforts?

While PR experts measure things like "message retention" of your social networking efforts, nobody gets paid in "branding impressions" or "advertising value equivalents". We get paid in money, and your organization is probably seeking the same, or some combination of money and time.

When it comes to your organization's work on Facebook, the most direct thing to measure is how it hits your bottom line: how does it deliver against your undisputed goal(s)? When your efforts result in progress toward an organization-wide goal (money, volunteers, sponsors) that is easy to understand even by people who don't understand the Internet, there's no debate about the benefit or budgeting of resources to Facebook.

Determining whether Facebook is an effective use of resources requires measurement against a specific goal or expectation: if your online efforts are working perfectly, what would you expect them to accomplish? Are you trying to convert donors? Recruit volunteers? Turn people out to events? Then: how well are your Facebook efforts delivering against that goal?

Regardless of what you're doing online, you can't know if you should keep doing it without a clear goal that is well-understood across the entire organization. Well-articulated, useful goals are:

Singular and focused on a specific deliverable that is important to your organization, not just your online department. Things like: Recruit volunteers; Get people to come to an event; Get new people to sign up for our email list; Convert new donors.

Important and well understood by people who aren't online or Facebook-savvy.

Examples of well-articulated goals:

<b>Organization Type</b>	<b>Indisputable, primary goal of the online work</b>
Disaster relief organizations	Donations to fund relief work
Homebuilding organizations	Volunteers to work onsite helping to build homes Donors to fund homebuilding



Issue education organizations	Attendees at an issue debate People sharing informational materials with others.
-------------------------------	---

Once you have your undisputed primary goal, everything else is going to be easier. See if you can get your Executive Director to say this goal consistently to different staff, and getting buy-in for your online work, including Facebook, will be easier. And measurement will mean something – is Facebook the best or even a good way to deliver against that goal, or are there other ways your organization could be better spending staff time and energy?

## Measuring the impact of your Facebook fan page: The US Fund For UNICEF Case Study



With the cooperation of the US Fund For UNICEF (UNICEF-USA), we examined ten months of Facebook and website data from their website and Facebook fan page to measure how their efforts delivered on one critical, undisputed, and well-understood goal: driving online contributions.<sup>4</sup>

Like many organizations, UNICEF-USA devotes staff resources to maintaining its Facebook fan page and communicating with its fans, but heretofore had not measured the results of that investment. Our tasks were measuring the work they've already done, establishing the basis for an ongoing measurement program, and surfacing opportunities for testing. The

completion of these three tasks would allow UNICEF-USA to discern what to keep doing, what to stop doing, and where to put resources into testing for improvements.

Because this project was an archival review of past activity, it includes measurement of only those tools UNICEF-USA made use of as part of its Facebook efforts. There are as many approaches to Facebook as there are non-profits trying to figure out how to use it, so UNICEF-USA's efforts might include or leave out tools or tactics you've seen other organizations try. This case study is a demonstration of how to apply generic measurement principles to UNICEF-USA's specific implementation of their particular Facebook strategy. So, while the specifics won't translate directly to other organization's, the ideas and methods should.

### US Fund for UNICEF's Facebook fan page metrics

---

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF-USA also uses their Facebook page to drive advocacy actions, but we did not include that goal in our analysis for purposes of this case study.

UNICEF-USA utilizes their Facebook fan page as a way to broadcast news, information, volunteer opportunities and fundraising asks and to drive traffic to their main website, [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org). Their Facebook fan page has a little over 20,500 fans. Since May 2009, they've posted something to their fan page an average of 2 times per day (they posted more often during the days following international disasters in the Phillipines, Indonesia, and Haiti). Their posts include videos, photos, and links to blog posts and other content on [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org).

### Facebook Traffic in Context for UNICEF-USA

Since UNICEF-USA utilizes Facebook as a way to drive traffic to their website, traffic statistics are an obvious first measurement. As a benchmark, [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org) served 136,412 visitor sessions and 128,818 unique visitors in February 2010. These visits generated 222,516 pageviews. Traffic from Facebook to UNICEF-USA's website represented about 1.8% of total traffic.<sup>5</sup> Google drove 14% of website traffic (about 5% organic search and 9% from cost-per-click advertising), and "direct traffic" accounted for just over 50% of site visitors.

The reason to drive Facebook users to [unicefusa.org](http://unicefusa.org) is that's where they have online donation capacity. During the study period, Facebook visitors converted to donations at a rate of 1.8%, or about half as often as visitors who landed on the site from a search (3.8% conversion rate) and the website average (4.3%).



While Facebook traffic and conversions represent a small percentage of UNICEF-USA's total website traffic and online donations, it is the most effective non-advertising outreach they do and should probably remain a piece of their outreach mix. The bottom line: when visitors come to UNICEF-USA's website from Facebook, they do convert into donors even if at lower rates than visitors from other sources. Until UNICEF-USA can efficiently collect donations from Facebook users without leaving the fan page, UNICEF-USA will have to drive fans back to the main [unicefusa.org](http://unicefusa.org) website through links, widgets, or other mechanisms.

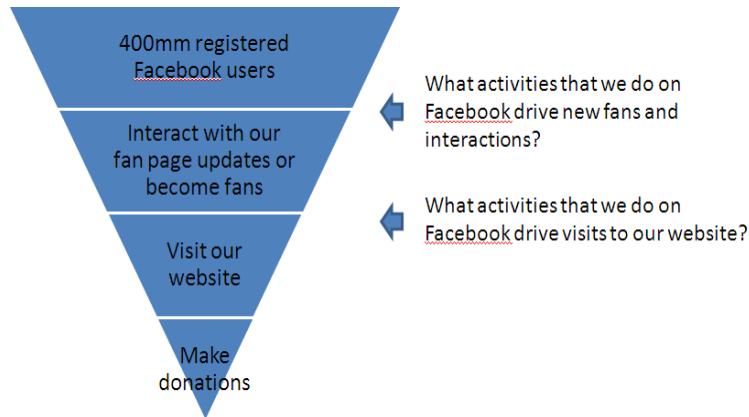
So, we turn to how to make better use of Facebook to drive clickthrough to the website. We could also look at how to make the website landing page a better conversion engine once Facebook users get there, but that's another e-book.

### The Funnel: How does Facebook activity fit into the donations funnel?

We are considering Facebook part of a donations funnel that looks something like this:

---

<sup>5</sup> For the curious: Twitter is the next most productive traffic source, and drove about 1.65% of traffic during the same time period.



Again, there is work to do on the website side to improve the conversion rate once Facebook users land there, but on the Facebook side, the decision-making metrics we need are:

What Facebook activity drives clickthrough to the UNICEF-USA website?

What does the data tell us that we can implement right now to improve clickthrough?

What content, timing, and other testing should we do to collect data for future improvements?

### Metrics-driven analysis and recommendations

The following pages go into detail on our findings. Here's the summary of what UNICEF-USA's Facebook and analytics data revealed about clickthrough over the eight months covered by our analysis (May 2009 – February 2010):

Clickthrough response spikes on Wednesdays and is most sluggish on weekends.

Except in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, clickthrough rate drops off when UNICEF-USA posts to their fan page more than 3 times per day.

Clickthrough rates skyrocket during disasters, providing the best possible opportunity for fundraising.

Our statistical analysis also revealed some preliminary findings that we think are worthy of further experimentation:

Days with photo views and more comments on posts correlate with higher clickthrough rates to the [unicefusa.org](http://unicefusa.org) website.

"Likes" and video plays on posts don't correlate strongly with clickthrough.

Aside from clickthrough, the data show that fan growth is not linked to disasters except in the most high-profile cases (like the earthquake in Haiti).

## MEASURE EVERYTHING

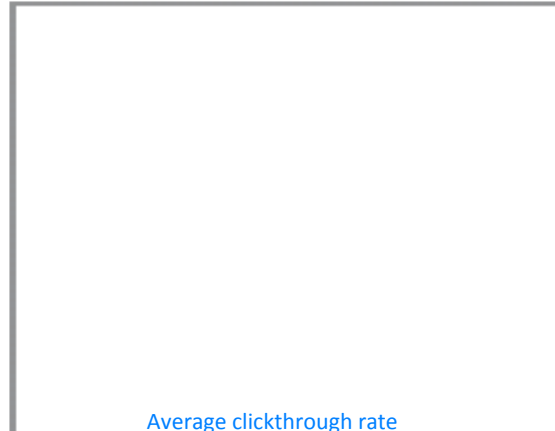
---

Based on these results, we see some clear data-driven recommendations UNICEF-USA might consider to improve their Facebook results.

### Clickthrough spikes on Wednesdays

Clickthrough is best on Wednesdays (about 5% on average), followed by Thursdays (just over 3%) and Fridays (just under 3%). It drops precipitously on weekends, and is low on Mondays and Tuesdays (about 2.5%).<sup>6</sup>

This analysis represents clickthrough performance over eight months, encompassing every day of the week during disasters and not. Higher clickthrough on Wednesdays was an enduring fact regardless of how we approached the data.



### **Metrics-driven Recommendation**

UNICEF\_USA should never fail to post on Wednesdays. UNICEF-USA should also avoid breaking news or announcing programs in posts on Mondays, Tuesdays, and weekends.

### Clickthrough drops on days with more than three posts

Clickthrough rates dropped on days with four or more posts on the fan page, with the exception of the day of and days immediately following major international disasters (more on that in a minute).

There's an additional reason to limit posts to 3 times per day: the average unsubscribe rate (the rate at which fans "hide" updates from UNICEF-USA) doubles for days when UNICEF-USA posted four times versus days when they posted only three times.

---

<sup>6</sup> It is possible that different content posting habits, or even staff working habits caused Wednesday to produce better content and therefore higher clickthroughs, but we could not determine if this effect existed.



**Metrics-driven Recommendation**

UNICEF-USA should limit posts to no more than 3 per day except in the immediate aftermath of an international disaster.

Clickthrough is stratospheric on disaster days

When we examine the top 5% performing days for clickthroughs from Facebook, we see that they are almost all driven by major external events.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Clickthrough rate(top 5% performing days)</i>
1/13/10	Haiti earthquake	85.31%
1/14/10	Haiti earthquake	53.06%
9/30/09	UNICEF on Oprah	37.33%
1/15/10	Haiti earthquake	31.49%
9/28/09	Philippines floods	26.27%
1/12/10	Haiti earthquake	25.05%
9/11/09	Release of child mortality data	19.46%

## MEASURE EVERYTHING

---

10/1/09	Indonesian earthquake	19.33%
1/16/10	Haiti earthquake	17.55%
10/4/09	Phillipines floods	16.16%
10/5/09	Indonesian earthquake	13.93%
1/18/10	Haiti earthquake	11.80%

This is not a surprise to anyone working in disaster relief, but on days when news-covered disasters are being discussed by UNICEF-USA on Facebook, clickthrough to the [unicefusa.org](http://unicefusa.org) website performs like a car on Flubber. (Conversion rates spike as well, but we haven't included those here since they happen on the website, not on Facebook.)

This has clear, specific implications for how material is posted to the fan page on those days. As of this writing, donations cannot be easily collected on Facebook, so every bit of user attention on a high clickthrough days should be directed to getting the viewer off Facebook and back onto the [unicefusa.org](http://unicefusa.org) website.

UNICEF-USA posted quite a bit in the days after the earthquake in Haiti, but they may have failed to capitalize on the resulting traffic as only two-thirds of those posts linked to page with an opportunity to contribute to UNICEF's work in Haiti.

The Haiti earthquake struck on January 12<sup>th</sup>. For this day and the next two, UNICEF-USA posted, twenty-two times to it's Facebook fan page. The table at the right provides the breakdown of clickthrough destinations.

Destination	Number of Times
Facebook event page	1
UNICEF-USA hosted page with news about the earthquake and an ask	14
CNN.com hosted video of UNICEF ambassador Mia Farrow asking for help for Haiti's children	1
UNICEF-USA twitter page	1
No destination, just a thank you.	2
YouTube.com-hosted videos of UNICEF celebrity ambassadors urging donations	3
<b>TTL</b>	<b>22</b>

On disaster days, when every visitor that touched UNICEF-USA's content had a high chance of converting, UNICEF-USA should have avoided sending fans anywhere without a clearly defined ask. Sending users to YouTube and CNN place them an additional click away from UNICEF-USA's donation forms, and therefore potentially allow valuable support to slip away.

### Metrics-driven Recommendation

Posts during high-profile events should ***always include an ask*** to click through to a website donation page (or page where an ask for donations and simple method to give are prominent).

During high profile events, posting assets directly on Facebook, driving actions that are solely on Facebook, or sending Facebook fans to other sites such as YouTube or CNN are wasted opportunities. The conversion rate of UNICEF donors on the [cnn.com](http://cnn.com) and [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) websites is ZERO. We recommend posting videos on YouTube and then embedding them on blog posts on your website, which is already well optimized in its page layout to make an effective ask.

The link to that blog post can be easily posted to Facebook with a still image of the video if desired and keep your would-be supporter in a context where they can make a meaningful contribution.

### New fan growth is more organic than episodic



On January 11<sup>th</sup>, the day before the Haiti earthquake, the UNICEF-USA fan page had 9,900 fans. From January 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, the day of and after the earthquake, the fan page picked up 1,089 fans, and generated 11,877 visits to the website. Clearly some of the new fans joined and clicked thru, but the original population of roughly 10,000 fans that had been nurtured for many months was also tapped as a part of that traffic.

While the earthquake in Haiti had a tremendous impact on UNICEF-USA's Face book fan base, other major events (natural disasters in Indonesia and the Phillipines) did not, suggesting that unlike clickthrough and conversion, fan growth is more organic than episodic.

The "New Fan Rate" (new fans added on any given day divided by the total number of fans on that day) has a very strong correlation to clickthrough, suggesting that there may be value to campaigns to convert

## MEASURE EVERYTHING

---

Facebook users into fans. UNICEF-USA should continue to monitor the correlation between the new fan rate and clickthrough rate to determine if it is enduring, and not a function of the spike in new fans in the wake of the earthquake in Haiti.

### Additional Research Required: Does what happens on Facebook stay on Facebook?

We ran two popular statistical analysis techniques<sup>7</sup> on the data trying to find a correlative relationship between having people comment or like our posts and clickthrough rates. We did the same analysis to see if days with higher numbers of photo views or video plays corresponded with higher clickthrough rates. In other words, we were looking to find a connection between the number of “likes” or comments on UNICEF-USA’s posts and the number of clickthroughs.

Understanding that correlation is not the same as causation, we found that the “Photo View Rate”<sup>8</sup>, (daily photo views divided by the number of fans on that day) and the daily comment rate (daily comments / number of fans) corresponded to higher clickthrough rates.<sup>9</sup> The Like rate (daily likes / fans) and the Video play rate (daily video plays / fans) correlated poorly with higher clickthrough rates<sup>10</sup>.

Both of these observations might tell us something useful about the links between engagement on Facebook, and productive action – in this case donations – off of Facebook. Specifically: while some engagement appears productive (comments and viewing photos), number of clicks on the “Like” link (the most popular, easiest way to interact with Facebook posts) isn’t connected to clickthroughs to the UNICEF-USA website, where fans can take meaningful action. If the UNICEF-USA team has been eagerly reporting how many Likes their fan page posts get, they can stop now.

This data suggests there may be small improvements in clickthrough rate achievable by attaching photos to posts, but these would have to be measured under a controlled experiment to confirm. The existing analysis is not sufficient for us to comfortably recommend attaching photos to posts as a data-driven approach.

### Additional Research Required: What About the Content?

---

<sup>7</sup> For all you statistics nerds, we tried a linear regression and then a correlation between the Daily Like Rate (likes/total fans) and the Daily Clickthrough rate. We did the same analysis between the Daily Comment Rate (comments/total fans) and the Daily Clickthrough rate. These two comparisons had correlation coefficients of 0.55 (for comment rate) and 0.49 (for like rate).

<sup>8</sup> Yes, we’re making up names for new measurable metrics.

<sup>9</sup> Correlation coefficients of +0.56 (photo) and +0.55 (comment).

<sup>10</sup> Correlation coefficients of +0.49 (like) and +0.31 (video).

You might be thinking, “but wait, surely the words, pictures, videos, story topics, and other content specifics matter!” You might be right, but the eight months of data we analyzed did not illuminate any clear conclusions about content. While it’s possible that there was something that made Wednesday content uniquely interesting and thus drove clickthroughs higher every Wednesday, that “something” wasn’t apparent.

Our metrics-driven recommendation isn’t that UNICEF-USA should ignore content. Rather, archival analysis isn’t a productive way to measure the impact of content and well-planned, deliberate testing is required.

### **Adapting UNICEF-USA's results to your own work**

Facebook offers non-profit organizations a captive audience of 400 million people across all demographics and a free tool for communicating with them. Furthermore, the idea that you can reach these supporters multiple times per day without having them unsubscribe is really attractive. Even better is the fact that you don't have to pay to deliver these messages, something the traditional email delivery vendors going to hate.

So there is a lot of potential, but to go from potential to actual takes:

A dedication to measurement and the willingness to respect the results of the data;

An honest understanding of your relationship with your supporters, and what they want; and

A willingness to experiment, fail quickly, and learn from the results.

We aren't deluding ourselves that many organizations we know and love don't have what it takes to get there. Web analytics, for many organizations, still means reporting pageviews and sometimes even hits, instead of completed transactions and conversion rates. We have hope though that as the number of digital touchpoints consistently increases, people will start asking "which ones should I choose?" The answer to that question lies in having a measurement program.

We know that many people will read this e-book hoping for a quick set of instructions to make their own Facebook fan page successful. Let us urge you to obsess less about having the perfect Facebook fan page plan, and obsess more about having a measurement program in place so you know when you are successful. For your organization, all you may need to succeed is to post a photo of a puppy once per week and a plea for donations. Or maybe you need to post a photo of a cat twice a day. Not until you try these experiments with a measurement program in place will you know for sure.



### What kind of measurement program should you have in place?

For UNICEF-USA, we applied the general principles of sound measurement and analysis to illuminate the results of their work on Facebook and provide metrics-driven recommendations to help make that work more effective. We also surfaced important questions that can't be answered without deliberate testing – the archival data wasn't clear enough to yield reliable metrics-driven recommendations.

Follow these steps to build a measurement program that applies these same principles to your Facebook efforts:

#### Set clear, well-articulated, and indisputable strategic goals for your work on Facebook

Finish this sentence with just one thing: “We will know our Facebook efforts are worth further investment if...”

Examples of good ways to finish that sentence include:

- Facebook fans become donors.
- Facebook fans become volunteers.
- Facebook fans take advocacy actions.
- Facebook fans share our content.

Add more sentences if you need to, but each one should reflect a singular, measurable outcome that you can measure your Facebook results against.

#### Clearly define your funnel.

For UNICEF-USA's work on Facebook, we defined a funnel that begins with all of Facebook's users and ends with supporters completing a donation form on unicefusa.org. What is your funnel? If your clear, undisputed goal is content distribution then maybe your funnel begins with Facebook users targeted by your Facebook ads and ends when converts click “share” on your video.

Clearly defining your funnel allows you to test and measure for improvement at every point along the way.

#### Describe the metrics that make up your funnel.

Once you know the path to victory for your Facebook efforts, describe the ways you'll know you're getting there. Do you need fans, clickthrough, “shares” or something else? The rates at which these things happen will make up the meat of your measurement program. These will be the column headings in your weekly reporting.

#### Describe the tactical variations you can test for impact on your metrics.

What will you do to try to have an impact on your Facebook performance? This is a list of tactics you can test, through archival investigation by compiling data on the work you've already

## MEASURE EVERYTHING

---

done and analyzing it for lessons learned and in the future through structured tests. Tactics that might make sense for you to include:

Post frequency: how many times per day does your organization post, and how is that correlated to performance in your funnel?

Post timing: what times of day and days of the week do you post?

Post content: what kinds of content are you posting?

Inclusion of images or photos: do your posts always/sometimes/never include images or photos? If so, is there variation in the kinds of images you include?

“Voice”: what tone do your posts take? Is it informal and friendly or official and authoritative? Do you post as a “we” or an “I”?

Ask: Do you always/sometimes/never include a specific ask in your posts?

Campaign-specific fan pages: If you’re an organization that does significant work on a wide variety of issues, do you post everything in one fan page or create campaign-specific fan pages? See Appendix A (Do you have the right sort of fan page?) for a more detailed exploration of this tactic.

### Determine your measurement intervals.

If you’re starting with an archival exploration, set a bounded time period to review that includes both extraordinary periods of time (like the natural disasters UNICEF worked in) and more workaday periods of time. Ideally, the time period will also include some changes in your approach to provide you a window into unscientific tests you may have already unwittingly done.

For ongoing measurement, decide now whether you’ll compile data to review weekly, every other week, monthly, or quarterly. Align your tactical testing schedule with your review periods. We’ve found weekly measurement effective, but it can be a heavy lift; less frequent compilation and review may work best for you. We recommend looking at your analytics no less frequently than monthly, and no more frequently than weekly.

### Set up your measurement tool.

We are fans of the humble spreadsheet, when set up properly. You’ll want separate sheets for each of the distinct metrics you’ve decided to measure (i.e. clickthrough, new fans, etc.) along with the baseline data you pull from Facebook fan insights and your analytics package.

Start with your column headings. They will almost certainly include and date and post. The rest are driven by your specific metrics. If you’re measuring post frequency then “posts on this day” might be an appropriate column heading.

Using the insight tool on Facebook and good old-fashioned hunt and click, fill in baseline columns including the number of fans and the Facebook engagement metrics such as number of comments on each post.

From your analytics package, plug in conversion rates – the rates at which people on Facebook do the non-Facebook things in your funnel you’ve decided are critical.

## MEASURE EVERYTHING

---

Lay out your actionable decisions – what will you do if the data tells you to?

Finally, go back to your metrics and the list of tactical variations you're setting out to understand. Articulate what decisions you're going to make informed by this newly available treasure trove of analyzed data. Are you going to post more or less frequently? Always include an image of people or just your logo? Always include a specific call to action or only in emergencies?

Knowing ahead of time what decisions you need data to help you make will ensure that your measurement program is not just more numbers to report up the chain, but a meaningful tool to help you make your efforts on Facebook more productive.

## About The Authors

### About Shabbir J. Imber Safdar

Shabbir is a serial founder. In the early 1990's he started a grassroots organization called the Voters Telecommunications Watch to help fight Internet Censorship, culminating in the Turn the Web Black Day, and the Supreme Court decision overturning the censorious aspects of the Communications Decency Act.

In 1997 he founded Virilion (then called Mindshare Interactive Campaigns) with his long-time online organizing collaborator. Through several iterations, the company has grown to become a full service digital agency, with strong strategic, creative, technical, media, and account management divisions serving the Energy, Healthcare, Sports Marketing, Education, Agricultural, Conservation, and Government Relations sectors. It remains one of the largest digital public affairs firms in the field today.

As the company has grown, Shabbir has returned to his first love, measurable client work, in order to service key clients and consult on the analytics needs of several others. He provides analytics services to nonprofits and online communications strategy advice to brands online.

Shabbir writes an excellent weekly column at [www.truthypr.com](http://www.truthypr.com). He lives with his wife, two children and some very badly behaved dogs in San Francisco, CA. You can reach Shabbir at [shabbir@safdar.net](mailto:shabbir@safdar.net).

### About Shayna Englin

Shayna launched Englin Consulting, LLC with over a decade of experience identifying and mobilizing supporters for non-profits, causes, and political candidates.

From her roots in Colorado as an organizer for Colorado NARAL, to her role as Fundraising Practice Manager at Mindshare Interactive Campaigns (now Virilion), to her leadership as Program and Political Director at the Women's Campaign Forum, Shayna has been on the cutting edge in producing innovative and effective plans, programs, and materials that yield results: dollars raised, votes won, and policy changed.

Shayna earned a Master in Public Policy degree from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and teaches graduate classes in strategy and communications at Georgetown University and at the George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management.

Shayna lives in Alexandria, Virginia, with her husband, David, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, and their son, Caleb.

Reach Shayna at [shayna@englin.net](mailto:shayna@englin.net).