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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency/assessor/consultant</strong></td>
<td>Agency/assessor/consultant disseminating 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><strong>Branding/public relations</strong></td>
<td>Scoping – scale, stakeholders, history, experience, values, potential impacts</td>
<td>One-to-one conversations</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Inform/awareness/education</strong></td>
<td>Baseline data collection – community profile – sense of place</td>
<td>Facilitation of dialogue/participation</td>
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<td><strong>Communicate updates</strong></td>
<td>Data validation</td>
<td>Group targeting/inclusion</td>
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<td><strong>Administrative news</strong></td>
<td>Gauging and monitoring accounts – issues and public opinions</td>
<td>Message adjustment</td>
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<td><strong>Opinion related messages</strong></td>
<td>Software analysis of big data</td>
<td>Rumour management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Direction of information</strong></td>
<td>One way: from agent (ie developer/proponent, planner, government, NGO) to public/community</td>
<td>One way: from public/community to agent/assessor/consultant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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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