

# Powering up your campaign...

1

## ...with social media

**Flummoxed by Facebook? Twitter got you in a twist? Don't switch off. Harnessing the incredible potential people power at your fingertips is easier than you might think, and could be the key to bringing new life to your local campaign. Read on for ideas, tips and case studies to help your campaign get the most out of social media.**

Social media is the name for a range of online tools to enable people to communicate with each other, in increasingly versatile yet simple ways. The UK population spends an enormous amount of time online, and increasingly on social media sites. It's not just for personal use either – more organisations and businesses are using social media to engage with their target audiences online. Campaigners of all kinds too are harnessing the power of social media to mobilise people for their cause.



### Why use social media?

- To connect all campaign stakeholders in one place, rally existing supporters and keep them up to date with the latest actions and information.
- To reach new audiences and the next generation of Fairtrade campaigners. Offering new ways to engage with your campaign – and spread the word.
- It's the perfect interactive tool – bring your campaign alive with photo and video, start online conversations and get people involved.
- To showcase your offline activities to your online community and recruit new volunteers for your events and steering group.

**It's FREE and easy!**





# What should I use?

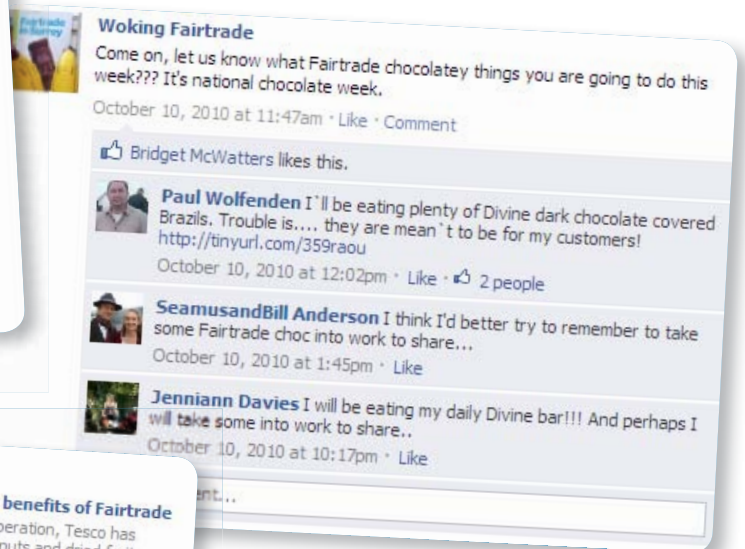
## Facebook

If you only use one social media site, make it this one. It's the most famous, most used social network, with around 30m estimated monthly visitors in the UK, and a huge built-in network of individuals and organisations. Individual users create a personal profile upon joining, and you can set up a Facebook group for your campaign, that other members can join. You can also create events and invite people to them, upload photos and video, and host comments/discussion on your group's page. Click on the examples below, to see how some groups are already using Facebook:



## Things to do on Facebook:

- Set up a 'fan page' or group, called [your town] Fairtrade group, for others to join.
- Upload your photos and videos from events – show what your group gets up to offline, and make it easy for your online community to get involved.
- Create events and invite all your online friends. As they forward the invitation to others, more people who are interested will hear about the event and join your Facebook group.
- Start a discussion and make it interactive! Ask open questions on your wall to get people commenting, or start specific discussions on your group's page. 'Which outlet in town would you like to see go Fairtrade?' could be a starting point.
- Share your campaign successes on Facebook, and join other Fairtrade Facebook groups to see what they're up to and share ideas.



## Case study

## Fair Traders Co-operative, Holmfirth

Members of the **Holme Valley Fairtrade Support Group** set up this community based co-operative selling Fairtrade and ethical products. In addition to an excellent website, they engage with an ever-growing online community through **Facebook**, **Twitter** and their **blog**. This gives them instant access to thousands of potential customers, campaigners, and attendees to their many events. Have a look for yourself and join the conversation!



# What should I use?

## Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blogging site which gives you just 140 characters per post or 'tweet'. Supporters and campaign partners who follow you will receive all your tweets on their home page, so individuals and organisations that might not take the time to read a newsletter or long email can follow your latest news and thoughts simply and quickly. And you can follow them.

## Twitter case studies

### Ealing Fairtrade

(@EalingFairtrade) have built up over 300 followers, with regular tweets about the local campaign and ways to get involved. Check them out here.

### Woking Fairtrade Group

(@wokingfairtrade) were called by a journalist about an event after he spotted their post on Twitter, but they also use it to retweet other Fairtrade news, with a local spin.

### Oxford Fairtrade Coalition

(@oxfairtrade) have built up over 500 followers – follow them to see why and pick up tips to make the most out of your tweets.

### Fairtrade Leeds (@FairtradeLeeds)



## Make the most of Twitter by:

- Including links to articles, photos, blog posts, websites and e-actions in your tweets. Use a url shortener like [bit.ly](http://bit.ly) to compress website links to fit in to the character limit.
- Preceding a word with a hashtag - # to link that tweet to all others containing the same word. Try #FairtradeFortnight (when tweeting about Fortnight!) or find local groups or events using similar hashtags to make online friends near you.
- Using @ to 'tag' one or more other users, so the tweet appears in their page too.
- Retweeting relevant tweets from others.
- Searching with the Twitter search function to find out who's talking about any subject, and choose advanced search to find those in your area.
- Varying the subject of your tweets for your different followers, but always with some relevance to your campaign.

## Lobby your MP

## TOP TIP



Use social media to develop your relationship with local MPs. Invite them to join your group on Facebook, lobby them through messages on twitter, ask where they stand on an issue, or thank them for signing an EDM or attending your event. Film them at your event and post it to your blog, website or Facebook page. They may like to host the footage on their own website too. Many MPs manage their own Facebook and Twitter profiles, so it can be the most direct way to reach them. With all their online networks (i.e. all their Twitter 'followers' or Facebook 'friends') able to see your question (and their response) it's a bit like speaking to them in a crowded room and they will want to engage with you!

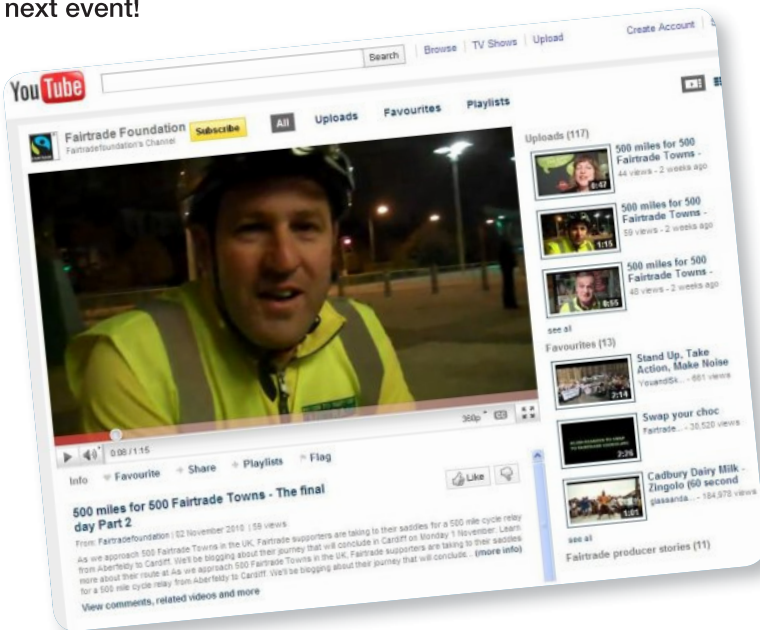


# What should I use?

## YouTube

### YouTube

Whether it's a short clip from your latest event, or video created by local students as part of a Fairtrade project, YouTube allows you to upload and edit your videos, and view millions of others. Once on YouTube, you can either send a link to get people watching them, or embed them directly into your blog or website, and share them on your Facebook page. You could start by looking at the Fairtrade Foundation's YouTube channel, and then experiment with a camera at your next event!



### Blog

A blog is a free and easy way to get your campaign online, particularly if you don't already have a website. Check out <http://oxfairtrade.wordpress.com> for an example. You can include all the information you might on a website, and also much more dynamic content including comments and messages, newsletter sign up, photos, videos and your latest tweets. Tell the story of your campaign through your blog, from event reports and short video clips, to posts about local Fairtrade-friendly businesses and community organisations. There are hundreds of interesting blogs out there already about Fairtrade; share posts you're interested in with your online community through Twitter. Have a look at the related blogs on Fairtrade Foundation's blog, and check out these popular blogging websites to set up your own.

[www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)  
[www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)  
[www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com)

### Some other links

Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are just a selection of the most widely used social media sites. The following links may also be useful as tools for you to use, or guides to learn more about the power of social media.

[www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com) upload your photo albums to flickr, then use a flickr 'plug in' to display them on your blog, Facebook page, or website.

[www.louder.org.uk](http://www.louder.org.uk) is a social network site, much like Facebook or ning, but designed specifically for campaign groups.

[www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com) helps you find and lobby your local MP, MEPs and councillors.

[www.foursquare.com](http://www.foursquare.com) is a growing social network, that allows you to leave tips about your favourite places, and share them with your friends. An internet enabled phone is essential!

[www.mashable.com](http://www.mashable.com) is the top source of news for what's happening in the social media world, and also has [these useful guides](#) to Facebook and Twitter.



A range of 'web badges' have been specially designed for social media, to be used as profile pictures or logos for your group. Visit [www.fairtrade.org.uk/webbadges](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/webbadges) to choose your favourite!

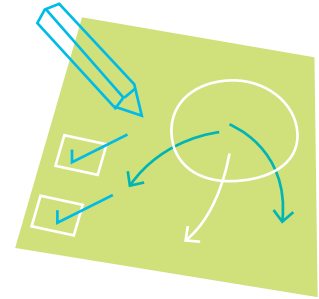
# Mobilise your online communities

5



## What's next?

All campaign groups are different, and the way you use social media will differ depending on what you want to get out of it, so don't use it for the sake of it. Before you start, think about what you want to achieve (and how you will measure this), who you want to connect with, and what you want them to do as a result of joining your online community. How will you shift people from clickers to campaigners? Or transform offline interest into online engagement? It's helpful to agree this with your group and draw up a strategy with some targets, even if they are fairly loose.

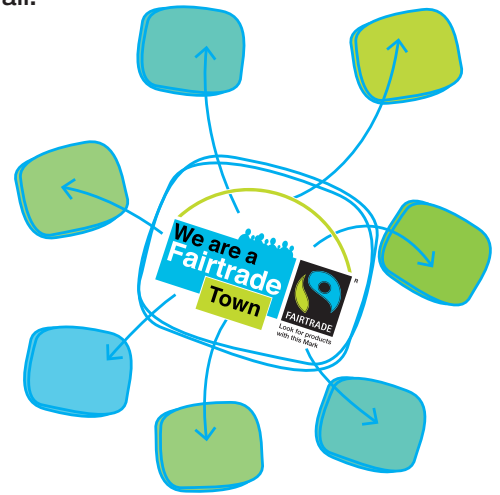


## Every contact counts

Decide which tools will work best for you, then create your profiles, start blogging, tweeting and uploading your pictures. Let all your campaign partners know and include your Facebook and Twitter addresses on all communications, website and at events you attend. Facebook and Twitter make it easy to find people you know and invite them to 'follow' you or join your group, and have inbuilt functions to enable you to invite all or some of your email contacts. Supportive businesses, local newspapers, MPs, other community organisations and local residents are a good place to start. They will also act as multipliers who will share your news and messages with their communities if they like what you're saying, so think about how you tailor your content to appeal to them all.

## Keep building the momentum

Once your online community starts to take shape, get them taking part. Don't worry if you don't have 100 followers overnight, or even in a month. A busy profile attracts more followers than a static one, so keep it updated, but make it more than just a news feed. Engage all your campaign partners and supporters online by discussing ideas, asking questions, and inviting people to contribute. Invite blog contributions from campaign partners on what Fairtrade means to them, and tweet links to local press coverage of your latest event. Follow other Fairtrade groups to share ideas and top tips with other activists.



## Turn clickers into campaigners

Always showcase what your group is up to offline, and offer opportunities for people to be involved at all levels. Show how taking action for Fairtrade makes a difference in your community and overseas – it's motivating! From signing an e-petition, to buying a new Fairtrade product, attending a steering group meeting or emailing your MP, everyone can do something – but they might need you to suggest it! Not everyone in your online community will get involved in every opportunity you offer, but by building them up, involving them online, and keeping them interested, something will eventually grab their attention.

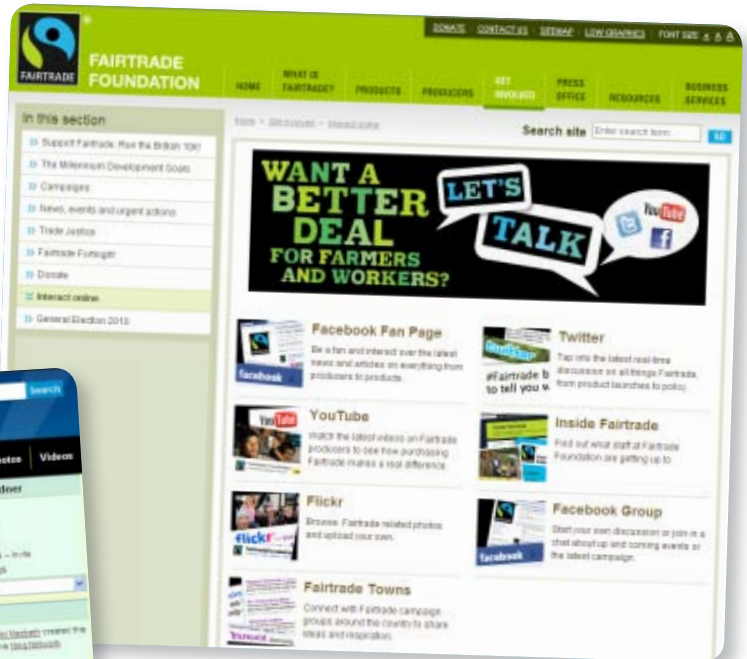


# Other links and further support

6

## Join the conversation

Visit [www.fairtrade.org.uk/online](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/online) to link up with all the Fairtrade Foundation's social media platforms - including the Fairtrade Towns Yahoo Group. Stay up to date with the latest news and debates, and use content for your own profiles to get a discussion going in your online community.



Do you have questions, problems or ideas about social media to share? Join the online community on the Fairtrade Towns website [www.fairtradetowns.org](http://www.fairtradetowns.org) and sign up to the social media discussion group.

### Q&A

#### What about privacy and Facebook?

Facebook is also an online community of personal information and contacts, which at times makes it seem self-indulgent or superficial. This is also its strength. Being a Fairtrade Town is a community initiative, and being able to reach people on a personal level makes them automatically more receptive and willing to do what you want! You can control privacy settings on your profile too, so no one can see any information other than your name and profile picture unless you approve them.

#### What about the website we spent a year building?

A good social media strategy enhances a website, and helps drive people to it. The drawback of many websites is the lack of interactivity – social media provides this space to have a conversation with your audience, to be dynamic, and point people to your website, as well as to taking action offline. You can embed YouTube videos, Twitter feeds and blog posts to enhance your site, and direct people to it by joining the conversation on Facebook and Twitter.



[www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)

Fairtrade Foundation, 3rd Floor, IbeX House,

42-47 Minories, London EC3N 1DY

Tel: 020 7405 5942 Fax: 020 7977 0101

Registered Charity No. 1043886.

A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales No. 2733136

Photo credits: Trevor Leighton, Irfan Qureshi, Graham Jepson