

Social Media

A relatively new media opportunity for Odyssey site coordinators to use to help promote their events is social media. While traditional forms of communication still have merit in engaging your potential audience and generating interest in community events like Odyssey, social media has become the new media of choice for many young people, particularly those who are tech savvy—just the type of individuals who will be interested in learning more about alternative fuel vehicles.

Social media has several advantages over traditional media:

- It is less expensive, free in most cases
- It is very interactive—you can receive immediate feedback from your efforts
- It is easy to update and offers an opportunity to modify your message on a weekly, daily or even an hourly basis
- Social media works well with web sites and new smart phone technologies
- It is becoming another source for traditional media to generate/find story ideas

Social media also has some disadvantages:

- It must be updated OFTEN
- It must be interactive
- Interactivity must be monitored
- It does not appeal to as broad a demographic as most mass media

Social media is considered a valuable asset to have as part of the Site Coordinator's toolbox. Specifically, with the smart use of Social Media Networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and some blogs, you have the unique opportunity to take your message straight to the public and ultimately influence the voice of your city, your county, your state or even the nation depending upon how you position your social media.

Social Media, a few definitions:

A social network is a social structure made of individuals (or organizations) called "nodes," which are tied by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, common interest, financial exchange, etc.

Similarly, a social network service focuses on building and reflecting of social networks or social relations among people, e.g., who share interests and/or activities. A social network service essentially consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), his/her social links, and a variety of additional services.

Most social network services are web based and provide means for users to interact over the internet, such as e-mail and instant messaging. Although online community services are sometimes considered as a social network service in a broader sense, social network service usually means an individual-centered service whereas online community services are group-centered. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks.