



Impact 2.0 - New mechanisms for linking research and policy

Technical guidelines

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About this guide

This guide was developed by The Association for Progressive Communications APC¹ for the project *Impact 2.0 - New mechanisms for linking research and policy*. The development was supported by Fundación Comunica². The guide is aimed towards providing the national focal points in Peru, Uruguay and Ecuador with guidelines for how Web 2.0 tools can be used to facilitate participatory policy making process.

The main issues that the guide addresses are:

- How researchers can effectively and strategically use new information and communication technologies (ICTs), specifically Web 2.0 tools, to publish and publicise their research processes and findings so that they can reach policy makers and activists.
- How researchers can use Web 2.0 tools to establish links with policy makers and other stakeholders involved in their issues.
- How researchers can use Web 2.0 tools to encourage discussion and / or debate on issues based on their research findings.

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What are Web 2.0 tools and why we need them

Web 2.0 and social media⁴

We distinguish between Web 2.0 Technology – web-based applications that facilitate interactive information sharing and collaboration on the web – and Web 2.0 Behaviour. For our purposes Web 2.0 does not refer to a specific change in the technology of the internet, but rather a change in how the internet is used. Thus Web 2.0 Technology (wikis, flickr, social networking sites) can be used in distinctly non-collaborative ways – to merely broadcast information about an organisation's activities, for example – while Web 2.0 Behaviour can be exercised using a broad range of tools, including new interactive ones, but also “older” ones such as email.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that Web 2.0 Behaviour and Web 2.0 Technologies can reinforce each other in new and powerful ways. Collaboration on a document is much easier and “natural” with a platform such as Google Docs than with email, and social networking sites such as Facebook enable people with common interests to find each other and to develop campaigns involving millions. Despite these opportunities, there continue to be barriers to the use of these tools. Some of these are related to bureaucratic inertia and resistance and others are related to capacity issues, both human and technical. Many public institutions in Latin America still block or otherwise prohibit access to Facebook, Twitter and other Web 2.0 services from the work place. In the long run strategies to harness the potential of Web 2.0 will have to seek to overcome these barriers, but in the short run they will also have to use all available tools for collaboration, network building and campaigns.

For the purposes of this research project we understand the terms *Web 2.0* and *social media* to be synonymous - a combination of technologies and behaviours that enable people and organisations to efficiently and effectively:

- connect with other people and organisations via social networks;

1 [Http://www.apc.org](http://www.apc.org)

2 <http://comunica.org/>

3 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

4 Definition of Web 2.0 tools and Social Media from: Bruce Girard, *Impact 2.0. - New mechanisms for linking research and policy*, published by Fundación Comunica, February 2010.

- collaborate with those other people and organisations;
- create and share content; and
- find, use, organize and reuse content.

General Guidelines for Incorporating Web 2.0 Tools in Research, Policy and Advocacy

There are some lessons and guidelines to be learned from organisations and individuals who have been able to effectively use Web 2.0 tools for advocacy, awareness-raising and public debate. Below are some ideas to keep in mind in using Web 2.0 tools for research, policy and advocacy:

Have clarity on your role in the process. This will have implications on chosen tools and strategies for using them (e.g. you can set up a project website only if you know you can make sure it is supplied with content). In case of Impact 2.0 project, the role of national focal points is not as much to provide content and evidence that would support discussion among policymakers, researchers and activists, but rather to facilitate the discussion, make sure the best online tools are there to support the dialogue and that all stakeholders are as much involved in the process as possible. Their role is also to make sure that all stakeholders know and fully utilize the potential of web 2.0 tools to the benefit of the overall objective of this initiative – to ensure that public policies are informed by relevant research findings and that researchers are aware of the research needed by policymakers.

Have a clear communication plan. Organisations which have used these tools effectively have been very clear about why they were communicating, who they were communicating with, what information they were relaying, and how they were going to relay their messages.

There are four key aspects in communications planning:

- **Defining communication goals.** It is necessary to be specific and clear about communication goals, and to ensure that they are measurable and that their achievement (or non-achievement) can be assessed after some time.
- **Understanding who are your community and stakeholders.** Knowing who you want to talk to is important and requires more than just knowing who they are. This entails knowing where they are in the Web 2.0 sphere, what tools they use, what information is most relevant to them. It is also important to think about the route which our message has to take in order to reach our intended community . Sometimes this means that we have to include in the communication loop also some intermediaries who are likely to take key messages to their final recipient, which is true twice if we are targeting busy and 'important' people hidden behind firewalls of full agendas, secretaries and advisers.

Who is “community”?

Throughout the document, a term *community* is used to describe a network of people who are participants in the Web 2.0-enabled action you are planning to launch.

With Web 2.0 your communication counterparts will not be your 'users', recipients of your information. You are expecting them to read, react, discuss, protest, propose, collaborate with you and each other online in real time, etc, as much as you would expect if they were in a face-to-face team with you. While you will be likely to be the one who gets community starting by selecting the right online tools and actively facilitating, everyone will be a contributor to this process and it is expected that if the community is linked by a meaningful purpose, this dynamics will become more spontaneous with time and require less of your leadership.

Web 2.0 tools enable this spontaneity because they allow as much horizontal communication as participants permit themselves.

In this document, *community* is everyone whom you want to become involved in communication on specific issue (public policy), even if in real life we are probably talking about several partially overlapping networks (not everyone needs to talk to everyone) and people and groups who are joining the communication loop and leaving it at different phases of the process.

Welding different communities together

Rather than building completely new networks, the challenge faced by national focal points will be to bring existing communities together. Researchers already form some networks, activists and policymakers have their own networks and communication channels. The role of national focal points will be to 'open' existing closed circles and connect them through careful facilitation and with the help of web 2.0 tools that -out of their definition- lend themselves to strengthening horizontal and participatory relations between users/participants.

- **Clarifying the message/s.** Rich and substantive research has plenty of information. Very often, researchers tend to overload their communities with too much information, thereby making their communication efforts futile because the community is unable to process all of the information. In other cases, the requirements of academic community lead to a tendency that researchers use jargon or level of complexity understandable by other researchers, but not by outsiders who do not need to know the history of theoretical debates to understand the key points of a research and their implications and to respond to them on time (We are not talking about “dumbing down” the research, just communicating it better and encouraging more links between researchers and policymakers). In the Web 2.0 context, it is also important to note that the messages do not all have to be statements. Rather, think of questions and issues you would like to raise because the more discussion you will be able to generate the more attention you will draw to your key findings (and the more valuable feedback you can get).
- **Selecting Communication Tools and Channels.** This aspect of communications planning requires two things: understanding the tools that will allow you to relay your messages and get feedback from your intended community; and understanding the tools that are relevant to your community and your goals. There is a plethora of available Web 2.0 tools that will allow you to collaborate with your communities and stakeholders on the issues you are working on but if these tools are not relevant to the members of your community (if they are too hard to use, or if they require too much time to use), then they may not be appropriate.

It is necessary to flesh out and address these issues. This can be done with a workshop over a few days, but often a good start can be made by simply sitting down and answering a few questions that lead to having a clearer idea of the relevant communication channels and tools for specific communities.

Following are couple of examples of questions one might want to answer for themselves when planning the communication strategy...

- x What do I want to achieve with my communication (strategy) and why? What should be the “real life” outcome of this work?
- x How can I later verify my communication efforts had the right effect?
- x Who I need to get my message to? What are these people like? How they work with technology and with information in general? How are they mutually networked already (friends, colleagues, don't know each other....)? Who they listen to most? Whom do I need to approach one-on-one, and whom I can include into wider communication loop with others whom I consider important recipients of my information?
- x How complex can be the information shared with individual stakeholders? Are they subject experts?

Do they have time for anything more than just key headlines?

- x What are the key points of my message that I need everyone to understand? What do I need answers to? What are the controversial issues or questions that are likely to get people interested and make them react?
- x What online tools are likely to make all this happen?

Use Web 2.0 to support collaboration. It is necessary to understand that collaboration and feedback are embedded in most Web 2.0 tools. They allow people to respond to what you are saying. If done properly, a blog post or a status update on Twitter, can stimulate debate and discussion on the issues you want to discuss.

Some strategies in achieving this include:

- **Do not overload your community with too much information.** One of the mistakes that many people using Web 2.0 tools do is writing up long and complicated entries that will take a while to read and go through. It is necessary to “chunk” your information in accessible and readable portions so that your community can easily understand the information and be able to respond to it.
- **Post questions that people can respond to.** One important consideration in getting people to discuss an issue is to raise questions that your community can think about and respond to.
- **Respond to people who respond to you.** It is also good practice to respond to people who have taken time out to provide feedback on your information. This could mean responding to their comments or highlighting their comments so that other people can respond to them.
- **Facilitate discussion.** As the main person providing information in the community, it is good practice to apply basic facilitation skills in your online spaces. This means getting the members of your community to talk to each other (not just to you) by pointing out relevant feedback from some members of your community to others.

Web 2.0 must support what happens in reality. One of the challenges in using Web 2.0 for advocacy, awareness-raising and public debate is that what goes on virtually does not always translate to “real” life action and changes. It is one thing to get people to sign up for an online community to discuss about ICT policy issues in your country, but getting the members of your online community to take local action on the discussions is another matter altogether.

Some of key strategies in getting Web 2.0 tools to support local and 'real' action are:

- **Be clear on what action you want your community to take beyond the discussions.** Specify what your goals are in using online spaces and allow for people in your communities to take action based on online activities and discussions.
- **Integrate face-to-face activities with online activities.** Support your online communities by organising events and spaces where the members can relate to one another in person. This builds trust within community members and will allow you to get to know which of your members are committed to supporting your issues. In the context of working with policy makers, once initial online connections are made, think about ways and opportunities to bring this linkage offline.
- **Bring the offline online.** The most effective online activities have 'offline' components. So in determining tools and channels, it is imperative to think not just of online tools but also offline materials such as brochures, leaflets, activities that will draw people into what is going on online. Also, using online tools effectively usually entails being able to translate online information into 'offline' materials.

Repackage information to fit online environments . While it is important to have complete research reports published online as reference and source materials, it is also important to be able to present some information from the reports in different ways to allow your community to process and understand them. It is easier to solicit comments on a few pages focused on a specific issue than on an omnibus research report.

There are different ways to repackage information:

- **Use metadata on your research reports.** Metadata is information about information⁵. Simply put, it is important to provide some basic information that will describe your research report or other content. This generally includes information such as the name of the resource, author/s, date of publication, the format of the document and abstracts. These are important markers that will allow people to know what the report is about before they read or download it. In the Web 2.0 sphere, this includes tagging of information, where you include topics and categories to describe your information resource. For Web 2.0, **tagging is a key element in finding and organizing content online**, so pay good attention to tagging your content and tagging search techniques.
- **Visualise your information**⁶. There are tools available on the web that will allow you to map your information as well as to illustrate it. These allow you to present large amounts of data at a glance⁷, which will allow your community to process the information quicker.
- **Use interactive tools and audio / video content.** Audio and video embedded in blogs or available for download as podcast (videocast) are very popular way of delivering content. Interviews with researchers and policymakers or short documentaries about people impacted by specific public policies can all be produced in no time with relatively small resources, while they can attract a lot of interest.
- **Chunk content.** One of the effective strategies in publishing and sharing content in Web 2.0 sphere is called *chunking*. That is, presenting text in portions rather than as one large page. This allows your community to get to the information that is most relevant to them.

Use a combination of tools. Using Web 2.0 tools effectively to repackage information is not just about using one tool to fit different messages, activities and communities. It is important to be able select and use a variety of tools and spaces to generate publicity and attention to your research findings.

In using a combination of tools consider the following:

- **Have a main space where the main content and communities are available.** This could be a main website or community space where all of the complete research reports and resources can be found, or it can just be a signpost linking together all different communication spaces and channels used by the network.
- **Have a presence in other online spaces that your community members frequent.** Use services like twitter and facebook to lead your community to the main space. Take advantage of mash-ups between many social networking sites and other Web 2.0 online applications (such as many existing Google application).
- **Participate in spaces that people you want to network with have set up for their work.** This means signing up in other online communities where they are.

5 For more information: www.niso.org/standards/resources/UnderstandingMetadata.pdf

6 Tactical Technology Collective published a resource manual on Visualising Information for Advocacy <<http://www.tacticaltech.org/infodesign>>, which present different tools and methodologies in information design.

7 The Value of Visual Thinking: http://darmano.typepad.com/logic_emotion/2009/10/the-value-of-visual-thinking.html

Web 2.0 Tools to Support the Political Context, Evidence and Links Framework

For this guide, the Political Context, Evidence and Links framework was used to flesh out strategies in utilising Web 2.0 to address the main issues above. This section specifically addresses the “What researchers need to do” portion of the framework.

	What researchers need to know	What researchers need to do	How to do it
<u>Political Context</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the policy makers? Is there policy maker demand for new ideas? What are the sources / strengths of resistance? What is the policy making process? What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get to know the policy makers, their agendas and their constraints. Identify potential supporters and opponents. Keep an eye on the horizon and prepare for opportunities in regular policy processes. Look out for – and react to – unexpected policy windows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the policy makers. Seek commissions. Line up research programmes with high-profile public policy events. Reserve resources to be able to move quickly to respond to policy windows.
<u>Evidence</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the current theory? What are the prevailing narratives? How divergent is the new evidence? What sort of evidence will convince policy makers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish credibility over the long term. Provide practical solutions to problems. Establish legitimacy. Build a convincing case and present clear policy options. Package new ideas in familiar theory or narratives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build up programmes of high-quality work. Action-research and Pilot projects to demonstrate benefits of new approaches. Participatory approaches help with legitimacy and implementation. Clear strategy for communication. Face-to-face communication.
<u>Links</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the key stakeholders? What links and networks exist between them? Who are the intermediaries, and do they have influence? Whose side are they on? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get to know the other stakeholders. Establish a presence in existing networks. Build coalitions with like-minded stakeholders. Build new policy networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships between researchers, policy makers and policy end-users. Identify key networkers and salesmen. Use informal contacts.

Web 2.0 tools

Before diving into overview of different Web 2.0 tools and strategies they can support it is important to have in mind that this is probably the **most rapidly changing area** in the history of technology development. New online tools are announced almost daily and new features are being constantly added. Consequently, in couple of months the tools suggested below might not be the most appropriate ones of all existing options. Users of this guide are encouraged to look out for all new developments of tools that match the strategies and usages described below, which will not get obsolete that fast.⁸

Section 1: Political Context

Web 2.0 tools present opportunities to support the work of researchers in understanding and responding to the political contexts in their countries. The main goal here is to understand the current policy scenario and to be able to establish and nurture relationships with local and national policy makers in order to respond to opportunities to influence policy processes and decision-making.

The tasks for researchers and activists are:

- I. Get to know the policy makers, their agendas and their constraints.
- II. Identify potential supporters and opponents.
- III. Keep an eye on the horizon and prepare for opportunities in regular policy processes.
- IV. Look out for – and react to – unexpected policy windows

Get to know the policy makers, their agendas and their constraints.

This requires an active approach in seeking information about policy makers' work agenda but also the political context in which they are working, as well as their working routines. Specifically, this is about:

- [Following online spaces where policy makers publish information about their work](#)
- [Following online spaces where secretariats publish information about policy makers' agendas, including attended negotiations, conferences, etc.](#)
- [Become involved on interactive spaces where policy makers are present](#)
- [Following online spaces which policy makers also follow](#)
- [Following personal online spaces which are publicly accessible](#)

⁸ Particularly interesting and promising are several initiatives responding to privacy & security issues emerging in relation to most popular social networking tools. These initiatives are generally aspiring to build more open and transparent environments that would meet the same needs as current champions/Web 2.0 tools, while they would minimize the risk of misuse of the growing volumes of data and personal information users entrust to online spaces. Most these initiatives are only in an early stage of development but they might play an important role in future of Web 2.0. One way to keep eye on these developments is to follow Mozilla Foundation's Drumbeat initiative: <http://www.drumbeat.org/>

- Learning about the political (and other) context in which policy makers are working, as this will give you an idea about their constraints and limitations.
- [Linking with policy makers whenever possible and build real life, as well as 'online relationships' with them.](#) There is no better way to find out details about their work and possible opportunities for your intervention in it, then by actively exchanging information on work-related, and eventually also other issues. Online work relationships if they are properly nourished can grow into as strong and as trustful relationship as any 'real life' relationship.

Strategy: Follow online spaces where policy makers publish information about their work

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>RSS Feeds. You can set up RSS feeds through web services (like Google Reader⁹ or Netvibes¹⁰) or through RSS readers (like Thunderbird¹¹ or Quick Reader¹²).</p> <p>Through RSS Feeds, you can follow websites (that offer RSS services) and monitor when they update their information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no need to go to each site that has relevant information. If the website offers RSS (most websites that run on Web 2.0 technology do), then subscribe and get updates when there is new information on the site. • For offline RSS readers (like Thunderbird or Quick Reader), you can download RSS Feeds like you would your email. This provides offline access to information. 	<p>Some websites are not able to organise their RSS services efficiently so their RSS feeds might not provide enough information to know if the new content would be relevant for you.</p>	<p>The Review of Policy Research Forum has RSS Feeds for updated content and new comments on the content. The RSS Feed for the update content can be set up here: http://rprjournalblog.wordpress.com/feed/</p>
<p>Twitter¹³, Google Buzz¹⁴ allow for short</p>	<p>By following someone on Twitter,</p>	<p>Only updates from people</p>	

9 <http://reader.google.com>

10 <http://www.netvibes.com>

11 <http://www.mozillamessaging.com/en-US/thunderbird/>

12 <http://www.quickrss.net/>

13 <http://twitter.com>

14 <http://www.google.com/buzz>

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
messages to be published and shared between different sites and systems, including number of mobile applications.	Google Buzz or similar tools we can get short updates on what they are doing, planning and thinking.	who use these systems can be followed. One must be authorised by twitter feeds' (tweets') publishers in order to follow their tweets.	

Strategy: Following online spaces where secretariats publish information about policymakers' agendas

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
RSS Feeds	See above	See above	See above
Online calendars, such as Google Calendar ¹⁵ Desktop applications able to use online calendar feeds (MS Outlook calendar, Mozilla Thunderbird calendar ¹⁶ , and many others)	Most modern sites and blogs which feature some type of calendar of events offer sharing the calendar through a standard calendar feed. Such feed can be imported to a Google Calendar or a desktop calendar application, exported into most mobile devices, etc. Planned events published by many different sources (e.g. gvt or municipal offices) can thus be displayed in a single calendar, they can be further shared, etc.	Not all secretariats make information related to policy-making publicly available online. If available, the information is often not available in shareable icalendar format.	
Alerts from sites/pages when content is added - Tools like Versionista ¹⁷ or Change Alert ¹⁸	Can be used to monitor sites of stakeholders in policy making processes. Versionista allows to monitor entire receive e-mail alerts when changes		

15 <http://www.google.com/calendar/>

16 <http://www.mozilla.org/projects/calendar/>

17 <http://versionista.com/>

18 <http://www.changealarm.com>

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	that meet specific regular expressions are made.		

Strategy: Become involved on interactive spaces where policymakers are present

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Online forums, GoogleWaves	Getting access to interactive online forums and similar spaces (such as Google Waves on specific topics) allows us to get involved in discussion, access additional resources linked from these spaces, get direct access to other members, etc.	Online forums and similar spaces are often private and the access is regulated (invited members only). One has to be known to existing members or to build sufficient credibility to be allowed to join such spaces (same as happens with face-to-face discussions and networks).	

Strategy: Follow online spaces which policy makers also follow

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
RSS Subscribe to RSS feeds from information sources that you know are followed by policy-makers.	See above	See above	
Twitter, Google Buzz	By following someone's tweets (stream of Twitter updates) we can also see what other tweets that person is following. That way we can eventually follow the same updates as policy makers do.	See above	

Strategy: Follow personal online spaces which are publicly accessible

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Social networking tools such as Facebook ¹⁹ , LinkedIn ²⁰ , Orkut ²¹ , Ning ²² , etc	Many individuals and groups maintain publicly accessible spaces on social networking tools (e.g. LinkedIn groups) which they want to share with other users of those tools. Depending on the setting it is common that it is possible to actively participate in these groups/spaces (post comments, alerts to own content, etc.	Many policymakers don't have publicly accessible profiles in social networking systems. Access to Ning groups used as real working spaces is usually restricted only to members.	
Blogs (through Rss)	If the policymakers you are interested in maintain their own blogs, follow these blogs through RSS feeds (see above)		

Strategy: Link with policy makers whenever possible and build real life, as well as 'online relationships' with them

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Social Networking tools	By inviting others to own social networks (e.g. by becoming 'friends' in Facebook) we get access to a whole bundle of private and work-related information about them. That includes also information about people they are linked with, things they are interested in, etc. Presence in each other's social	See above re necessity to gain access into other people's social networks. There are Important privacy issues with Facebook social networking service (see Appendix 1)	

19 [Http://facebook.com](http://facebook.com)

20 [Http://linkedin.com](http://linkedin.com)

21 [Http://orkut.com](http://orkut.com)

22 [Http://ning.com](http://ning.com)

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	networking spaces also create an illusion of a real linkage and a sort of intimacy, which can then help in building a work relationship in 'real life'.		
Twitter, Google Buzz	See above	See above	
Online forums	See above	See above	
Google Wave An interactive system incorporating chat, discussion group, shared editable spaces and several other web2.0 tools through one shared Google account	Ideal for dynamic discussion and collaborative work	Google Waves are private spaces to which a member must be invited by an existing member.	

Social networking tools mentioned above are so popular because they give users the impression of a real connection: One knows what others are doing right now, what they are thinking about (Twitter tweets and Facebook updates), others are always available and ready to react to ones' impulses (online status notifications, built-in chats, discussion threads, etc).

Most of this networking happens where people already know each other personally or through trusted intermediaries, have established certain level of mutual confidence and let each other into 'their networks'. Consequently, linking through social networking tools should be already built in other forms of real-life networking. Your new contacts from a conference or round tables should be immediately invited to link with your work spaces on Facebook or Linked-in, offered to follow you on twitter or to subscribe to rss feeds from your blog. People who you want to follow your information should be directly approached and offered these linkages, and these spaces should be publicized where appropriate (included in electronic signature, published on research institution's website, etc).

Identify potential supporters and opponents.

This requires taking a step back and looking at the decision making scene as a whole, with all lobby groups and grey eminences, internal party politics and influence of mass-media and public. Particularly, this requires:

- [Getting a clear map of who are the key players on policy making scene, and what are the power relations](#)
- [Identifying potential supporters and linking with them, establishing channels of effective information exchange with them and rapidly working on pushing common agenda](#)
- [Following closely the development on policy making scene, in order not to miss new potential allies or other important dynamics.](#)
- Involvement in discussions on spaces where opponents present their finding and views

Strategy: Getting a clear map of who are the key players on policy making scene

Tools and Usages	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Online diagram drawing applications Gliffy.com (need to find a free alternative)	Useful to have a visual overview of complex relations (e.g. among specific stakeholders, their spheres of influence, etc). Possible to build collaboratively online with others		
Online mind mapping applications like http://bubbl.us or http://www.mindomo.com (a lot more complex)	Similar usage as above but allowing more complex schemas. Possibility to link graphs to more complex information, possibility to capture relations as meta-data that can be exported, etc.	Steeper learning curve than in case of tools designed only for generating visual schemes. Might be more complex than what is needed in most cases where a simple snapshot overview of a situation is needed.	

Strategy: Identify potential supporters and link with them

Tools and Usages	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Social bookmarking tools, such as Delicious or Blogmarks ²³ – Find people who book the same issue as you do			
Google Scholar Google's search service allowing to search within	A possibility to find valuable academic resources, as well as		Example of a search result for terms "Políticas TIC"

²³<http://blogmarks.net>

Tools and Usages	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
academic journals and legal documents.	other researchers working on the same issue.		and Uruguay: http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=%22Pol%C3%ADticas+TIC%22+Uruguay&btnG=Search&as_sdt=2000&as_ylo=&as_vis=0
Blog aggregators, such as Technorati	Technorati aggregates posts from thousands of blogs. Searching on Technorati for terms related to specific policy issue can help us to identify people who blog about the issue		
Google Blogs ²⁴ Google Blogs allows user to find blogs on specific topics.			
Social Networking tools, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and others – find groups concerned with the same issue as you are			
Social media scanners scanning conversations on selected social networks for predetermined keywords. UberVU ²⁵ ,	Allows us to be informed about ongoing discussions on specific topics, and eventually link with people involved in these discussions. UberVU provides alerts when specific keywords are mentioned.	UberVU is a paid service	Search on key terms “políticas” and “TICs” (results limited because of a cost-free type of search): http://www.ubervu.com/pol%C3%ADticas+tic/social-media/

Strategy: Follow closely the development on policy making scene

²⁴ <http://blogsearch.google.com/blogsearch?hl=en>

²⁵ <http://www.ubervu.com>

Tools and Usages	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Content syndication tools, such as RSS or Atom feeds' readers. Bloglines and Netvibes are two of the most popular online feed aggregators			
Tag aggregators such as Flickr (Mainly for images)	Tag aggregators help us to find content that is specifically "labelled" by terms (tags) that we are searching for.		
Alerts from sites/pages when content is added - Tools like Versionista ²⁶ or Change Alert ²⁷	Can be used to monitor sites of stakeholders in policy making processes. Versionista allows to monitor entire receive e-mail alerts when changes that meet specific regular expressions are made.		
Online calendars, such as Google Calendar ²⁸ Desktop applications using online calendar feeds (MS Outlook calendar, Mozilla Thunderbird calendar ²⁹ , and many others)	Most modern sites and blogs which feature some type of calendar of events offer sharing the calendar through a standard calendar feed. Such feed can be imported to a Google Calendar or a desktop calendar application, exported into most mobile devices, etc. Planed events published by many different sources (e.g. gvt or municipal offices) can thus be displayed in a single calendar,		

26 <http://versionista.com/>

27 <http://www.changealarm.com>

28 <http://www.google.com/calendar/>

29 <http://www.mozilla.org/projects/calendar/>

Tools and Usages	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	they can be further shared, etc.		

Keep an eye on the horizon and prepare for opportunities in regular policy processes

This activity involves a bit of oracle work. In order to be prepared for future opportunities, we must understand the dynamics of policy making processes, as well as development on the political scene in general (entry of a new government into power might lead to devaluation of our links with policy makers which we built with such a care). This involves particularly:

- [keeping track of all policy making processes, round-tables and public debates, as well as other events that might change power relations on policy making scene \(e.g. elections\)](#)
- [Keeping a dynamic record of all windows for interventions legally guaranteed by given policy-making processes \(public comments on policy proposals\), as well as informal windows that accompany such processes](#)
- [building relationships with and involving in discussion with experts who are not currently having influence on public policies but who might have it in future](#)
- [positioning oneself as a recognized and credible expert on specific public policy issues, by boosting own online presence and active participation in relevant online spaces and face-to-face events.](#)

Strategy: keep track of all policy making processes

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Alerts from sites/pages when content is added - Tools like Versionista ³⁰ or Change Alert ³¹	Alerts can be used to monitor websites of all stakeholders, using key terms related to specific issue/policy.		
Calendar applications (online or desktop)			

Strategy: Keep dynamic record of all windows for interventions legally guaranteed by given policy-making processes

³⁰ <http://versionista.com/>

³¹ <http://www.changealarm.com>

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Google Sites – set up including online planner	A Google Sites website can be set up which includes a planner displaying timeline of policy making processes (milestones), links to spaces where these processes are publicized, where feedback is collected, etc.		

Strategy: Building relationships with and involving in discussion with experts who are not currently having influence on public policies

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Blogs	Blog authors love having users comment on their blogs. Involving in discussion with people who write relevant articles on issue related to specific policies can help us find experts and future allies.		
Social Networking tools	Link with people with similar interest/expertise who publish their views on publicly accessible social networking spaces		
Online forums	Find other experts and link with them on online forums dedicated to discussing specific policy issues.		

Strategy: Position yourself as a recognized and credible expert on specific public policy issues, by boosting own online presence

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Blog	Blogs can nowadays gain as much credibility as traditional scientific publications, while they can receive much wider attention.	Building a blog that is recognized as a credible and valuable source of information requires: - prudence in information accuracy (as is required in any scientific journal) - persistence – blogs must be regularly updated in order to keep the community involved.	
Webinar – a real time online video seminar on a specific issue Robust and popular webinar (online meeting) systems are Elluminate Live! and Webex. A popular free service is, for example, DimDim.com ³² .	Thematic webinars can be organized periodically, for specific groups of participants, or topic-specific. If well done, webinars represent a good way to bring people together and have them learn in a participative way.	Production of a webinar is time consuming Steeper learning curve in for using the tool effectively and organizing webinars Most webinar services are costly (the user has to pay in order to be able to use the platform to organize webinars). Free webinar systems have limited features and not always work on all operating systems.	

Look out for – and react to – unexpected policy windows

This part has a lot to do with the previous strategy. It requires a proactive approach in seeking new policy windows (reading newspapers won't do) and having credible arguments ready. This includes:

- [Following all available news on how specific issues are being picked up by policy makers and other key players](#)

³² [Http://dimdim.com](http://dimdim.com)

- [Following all opportunities to profile the issue in media, thus influencing policy makers](#) (e.g. when unexpected events of public interest relate to issues that are subjects to given public policies)
- [Following of, and participating in all public hearings, special commissions, etc organized by government around particular issue](#)
- [Following favourable movements growing around particular issue, and supplying them with credible arguments \(Labour unions, activist campaigning movements, etc\).](#)
- [Having key findings and policy implications ready to be presented in a schematic, yet understandable and credible manner](#)
- [Having layered information available online, from a very schematic form to an in-depth analysis.](#)

Strategy: Follow all available news on how specific issues are being picked up by policy makers and other key players

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
News aggregators, such as Google News ³³	Google news can be customized in such a way that it filters only news relevant to researcher's keywords		
Google Alerts ³⁴ Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic.			

Strategy: Follow all opportunities to profile the issue in media, thus influencing policy makers

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
News aggregators	News aggregators can help to keep us informed on important events with implications for specific policies. If these events receive attention of mass-media, those often seek		

³³ <http://news.google.com>

³⁴ <http://www.google.com/alerts?hl=en>

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	experts ready to offer relevant analysis and views.		
Google Trends ³⁵ – see how many people search on Google for particular terms.	Google Trends can give us an idea of a general level of interest in a specific issue (reflected in frequency with which people perform searches on it in Google).	Only frequent searches are displayed. Very specific searches don't have enough occurrences to be recorded on google Trends.	

Strategy: Follow favourable movements growing around particular issue, and supply them with credible arguments

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Social Networking Sites	Many activist movements are using social networking tools as their principal campaigning platforms.		
Google Sites	Google Sites represent a convenient tool to organize outcomes of research findings in such a way that these can be further shared, re-used, etc.		

Strategy: Have key findings and policy implications ready to be presented in a schematic, yet understandable and credible manner

³⁵ <http://google.com/trends>

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Dynamic graphs and maps showing possible future scenarios.</p>	<p>Animated maps can demonstrate scenarios and trends in a glimpse with more power than pages of text can ever achieve.</p>	<p>Requires complex statistical data over a timeline in formats compatible with available tools</p>	<p>A map showing different climate change scenarios http://www.google.com/landing/cop15/</p>
<p>Online maps Using Google Maps , Google Earth or OpenStreetMaps³⁶ can be used to present geographical data.³⁷</p>	<p>The geographical information can be completed with data relevant to specific policy (e.g. statistics of people with access to internet, healthcare, etc). Maps can provide a good visual representation of statistical data and they can be often used as a powerful evidence (e.g, map of how access to a specific public service is distributed in different districts).</p>	<p>Simplification Common online maps don't capture evolution over time</p>	<p>BBC's map of internet access across the world: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/8552410.stm The Global Voices Advocacy Project http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/projects/maps/ presents data on internet censorship and activists against censorship in different countries. In one look, you can see where there are threats to freedom of expression in the world.</p> <p>Mobile Active has a map of mobile telephony use and providers in different countries: http://mobileactive.org/mobiledata</p>

36 [Http://openstreetmaps.org](http://openstreetmaps.org) – OpenStreetMaps (OSM) - open alternative to Google maps. Using OSM where possible should be preferred over Google Maps because in the long term perspective it offers more possibilities in terms of what one can do with geographical data one produces. However, for many regions OpenStreetMaps are currently less detailed than Google Maps.

37 Additional information on strategies for using online maps can be found at <http://www.tacticaltech.org/files/tacticaltech/infodesign.pdf> and <http://tacticaltech.org/files/tacticaltech/MapsForAdvocacyTacticalTech.pdf>

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Graphs & Diagrams Google Chart Tools³⁸ or any of the many existing online services for Graphs and charts³⁹ (depends on aesthetic preferences)</p>	<p>Online Charts can visualize statistical information in an understandable and powerful way.</p>	<p>simplification</p>	
<p>Video interviews and short video documents Short video interviews with people who understand implications of planned policies or are directly impacted by them is a powerful tool to draw attention of public/media to specific issues.</p> <p>Vimeo, Engagemedia, Blip.tv, Youtube and other free online services make it easy to upload videos and share them in number of formats across blogs, websites, videocasts, etc. Video-enabled mobile phones and cheap cameras can be often used as they are sufficient for common online video quality and the content and timeliness of video contributions are usually more important than image quality.</p>	<p>Real people talking about an issue from their perspective can make even complex issues and their consequences understandable to a layperson.</p>	<p>Steep learning curve in capacity to turn raw video material into a short and consistent video message.</p>	<p>Witness' The Hub http://hub.witness.org/ features videos from activist film-makers on different human rights issues.</p> <p>Engagemedia http://www.engagemedia.org/ has videos from Asia Pacific that focuses on environmental rights.</p> <p>Both communities are great at abstracting and summarising content.</p>

Strategy: Have layered information available online, from a very schematic form to an in-depth analysis.

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Google Sites</p>	<p>Google Sites is a convenient tool to organize research findings in such a way</p>		

38 <http://code.google.com/apis/charttools/index.html>

39 See <http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/22-useful-chart-graph-diagram-generators/> for a listing of the most popular services with screenshots of output graphs.

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	<p>that the frontpage shows a schematic glimpse of key research findings (including maps, charts, etc) while other sections and links contain detailed analysis, supporting evidence, statistics, references to other resources, etc.</p>		

Section 2: Evidence

The main goal here three-fold: for researchers to present their research findings in qualitative and engaging ways that will encourage discourse on the issues and build the researchers' reputations as credible sources of information in their research fields.

The main tasks for researchers are:

- V. Establish credibility over the long term.
- VI. Provide practical solutions to problems.
- VII. Establish legitimacy.
- VIII. Build a convincing case and present clear policy options.
- IX. Package new ideas in familiar theory or narratives.

Establish credibility over the long term.

For researchers to establish long-term credibility, the following strategies are recommended:

- [Present research findings in ways that are useful and relevant to your communities and community](#)
- [Build a presence in key social networking sites](#)
- [Regularly update your content in your social networking spaces to reflect your research activities and findings](#)
- [Interact with other credible researchers in your field](#)
- [Provide relevant information and knowledge to your communities and community through online spaces and activities](#)

Strategy: Present research findings in ways that are useful and relevant to your communities and community

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Graphs & Diagrams Google Chart Tools ⁴⁰ or any of the many existing online services for Graphs and charts ⁴¹ (depends on aesthetic preferences)	Online Charts can visualize statistical information in an understandable and powerful way.	simplification	
Video interviews and short video documents Short video interviews with people who	Real people talking about an issue from their perspective can	Steep learning curve in capacity to turn raw video	Witness' The Hub http://hub.witness.org/

40 <http://code.google.com/apis/charttools/index.html>

41 See <http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/22-useful-chart-graph-diagram-generators/> for a listing of the most popular services with screenshots of output graphs.

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>understand implications of planned policies or are directly impacted by them is a powerful tool to draw attention of public/media to specific issues.</p> <p>Vimeo, Engagemedia, Blip.tv, Youtube and other free online services make it easy to upload videos and share them in number of formats across blogs, websites, videocasts, etc.</p> <p>Video-enabled mobile phones and cheap cameras can be often used as they are sufficient for common online video quality and the content and timeliness of video contributions are usually more important than image quality.</p>	<p>make even complex issues and their consequences understandable to a layperson.</p>	<p>material into a short and consistent video message.</p>	<p>features videos from activist film-makers on different human rights issues.</p> <p>Engagemedia http://www.engagemedia.org/ has videos from Asia Pacific that focuses on environmental rights.</p> <p>Both communities are great at abstracting and summarising content.</p>

Strategy: Build a presence in key social networking sites

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Build profile on Blip.tv ⁴²			
Build a profile on Facebook and LinkedIn	See above		
Set up an account on Twitter			
Set up a blog account on Blogger, Livejournal or Wordpress			
Integrate these online spaces by using applications such as Follow Twitter (to integrate your Facebook with your twitter).	This allows you to update all your social networking space by just updating one of them.		

⁴² <http://blip.tv>

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Do a search for relevant applications.			

Strategy: Regularly update your content in your social networking spaces to reflect your research activities and findings

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Using Facebook, Twitter and / or Google Buzz			

Strategy: Interact with other credible researchers in your field

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Use pipl.com to search for online spaces where specific researchers are located.	Pipl.com allows you to search for specific names or email addresses. Search results will show which online spaces individuals are using.		

Strategy: Provide relevant information and knowledge to your communities and communities through online spaces and communities

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Webinar – a real time online video seminar on a specific issue Robust and popular webinar (online meeting) systems are Elluminate Live! and Webex. A popular free service is, for example, DimDim.com ⁴³ .	Thematic webinars can be organized periodically, for specific groups of participants, or topic-specific. If well done, webinars represent a good way to bring people together and have them learn in a participative way.	Production of a webinar is time consuming Steeper learning curve in for using the tool effectively and organizing webinars Most webinar services are costly (the user has to pay in order to be able to use	

43 [Http://dimdim.com](http://dimdim.com)

Tools and Uses	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
		the platform to organize webinars). Free webinar systems have limited features and not always work on all operating systems.	

Provide practical solutions to problems

It is important for the proposed solutions to be understandable and do-able. While Web 2.0 tools can not fully address this issue – as it requires for the analysis of the problem and the development of the proposed solutions to be concise and logical – there are ways in which Web 2.0 tools can support the presentation of solutions.

The key strategies to achieve this are:

- [Present the problems and solutions as simply as possible through visualisation tools](#)
- [Promote the proposed solutions in clear and concise ways](#)
- [Make research findings and further resources available online in formats that journalists will be able to turn into news articles](#)
- [Create a space where policy makers can get up-to-date and concise information based on research findings](#)
- [Make it easy for other stakeholders to take action. In online spaces, individuals need to be able to 'take action' within a few minutes.](#)

Therefore, the 'call to action' must be easy to understand and easy to do.

Strategy: Present the problems and solutions as simply as possible through visualisation tools

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Use animation application to present the problem and proposed solution.	Animation is a good way to simplify how issues and solutions are presented. In dealing with sensitive issues, using inanimate objects to represent individuals can allow the community to have a more open mind in understanding and solving the issue.	Using animation requires advanced skill levels. Finding inanimate metaphors for an animated video requires creativity and literary skills.	

Strategy: Promote proposed solutions in clear and concise ways

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Use blogs to write about the issues and the solutions.	Blogging is a 'friendlier' way of presenting information.		
Use other social networking tools like twitter to promote your blog.			

Strategy: Make research findings and further resources available online in formats that journalists will be able to turn into news articles

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blogs can be used to summarise and to publish full research findings. One potential is to create a public blog for specific research findings and to post blog entries on each 'chapter' of the research paper. This will allow the researchers to make the research findings easier to digest for their community . 	Having a blog is not enough. The blog must be augmented by other communication tools so that people will know that the space exists.	

Strategy: Create a space where policy makers can get up-to-date and concise information based on research findings

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Build a website on content management systems like Drupal, or 'free' web services like Google	Content management systems like Drupal or Joomla make it easy to	Building a website does require some resources	

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Sites.</p> <p>Having a web-based repository of research findings (both summaries and full research reports) will make it easier for policy makers to refer to research.</p>	<p>set up sites that can handle various types of data.</p>	<p>such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having a server to host the website • a planning process to determine what the website will have and how it will run • staff to maintain the website 	

Strategy: Make it easy for other stakeholders to take action. In online spaces, individuals need to be able to 'take action' within a few minutes. Therefore, the 'call to action' must be easy to understand and easy to do.

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Break research findings into key messages and present them in a simplified form on a blog or a page in a social networking space</p>	<p>Simplification of the message means opening it to a wider community , both in term of numbers, as well as profile of message recipients.</p> <p>Such accessibility is often the only possible way to involve the right people (or enough people) to turn research into action.</p> <p>Power of internet-based or mobile-based campaigning lays in numbers and speed of action. If message is accessible, the Web2.0 tools are ideal tools for quick mobilization.</p>	<p>Simplification represents risk of changed meaning and over-simplification.</p>	<p>On genderit.org, they summarise current editions (based on policy papers and articles) regularly to present information concisely:</p> <p>http://www.genderit.org/en/index.shtml?apc=f--e--1&x=96162</p>

Establish legitimacy

The key strategies that will support this are:

- [Follow all opportunities to profile the issue in the media, thus influencing policy makers](#)
- [Encourage debate and discourse on the issue](#)
- [Gather supporters and allies that support the work you are doing in relation to the issue](#)

Strategy: Follow all opportunities to profile the issue in media, thus influencing policy makers

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
News aggregators	News aggregators can help to keep us informed on important events with implications for specific policies. If these events receive attention of mass-media, those often seek experts ready to offer relevant analysis and views.		
Google Trends ⁴⁴ – see how many people search on Google for particular terms.	Google Trends can give us an idea of a general level of interest in a specific issue (reflected in frequency with which people perform searches on it in Google).	Only frequent searches are displayed. Very specific searches don't have enough occurrences to be recorded on google Trends.	

Strategy: Encourage debate and discourse on the issue

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Use a blog to write about the issue and to present research findings.	Blogs are fast becoming a channel for discussion on specific issues and topics.		

44 <http://google.com/trends>

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	The comments feature that is native to all blogs allow for discussion and debate.		

Strategy: Gather supporters and allies that support that you do in relation to the issue.

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Use twitter to update supported and allies on the issue			
Set up a facebook page on the work you are doing to gather supporters			

Build a convincing case and present clear policy options.

The key strategies are:

- [Gather online support for the issue](#)
- [Have key findings and policy implications ready to be presented in a schematic, yet understandable and credible manner](#)
- [Have layered information available online, from a very schematic form to an in-depth analysis.](#)

Strategy: Gather online support for the issue.

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Use facebook pages to gather supporters for the issue.	Facebook pages allow users to follow specific issues quite easily. You can also get a sense of how many people are interested in your issue.	Limited to Facebook users.	

Strategy: Have key findings and policy implications ready to be presented in a schematic, yet understandable and credible manner

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Dynamic graphs and maps showing possible future scenarios.	Animated maps can demonstrate scenarios and trends in a glimpse with more power than pages of text can ever achieve.	Requires complex statistical data over a timeline in formats compatible with available tools	A map showing different climate change scenarios http://www.google.com/landing/cop15/
Online maps Using Google Maps , Google Earth or OpenStreetMaps ⁴⁵ can be used to present geographical data. ⁴⁶	The geographical information can be completed with data relevant to specific policy (e.g. statistics of people with access to internet, healthcare, etc). Maps can provide a good visual representation of statistical data and they can be often used as a powerful evidence (e.g, map of how access to a specific public service is distributed in different districts).	Simplification Common online maps don't capture evolution over time	BBC's map of internet access across the world: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/8552410.stm The Global Voices Advocacy Project http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/projects/maps/presents_data_on_internet_censorship_and_activists_against_censorship_in_different_countries . In one look, you can see where there are threats to freedom of expression in the world. Mobile Active has a map of mobile telephony use and providers in different countries: http://mobileactive.org/mo

45 [Http://openstreetmaps.org](http://openstreetmaps.org) – OpenStreetMaps (OSM) - open alternative to Google maps. Using OSM where possible should be preferred over Google Maps because in the long term perspective it offers more possibilities in terms of what one can do with geographical data one produces. However, for many regions OpenStreetMaps are currently less detailed than Google Maps.

46 Additional information on strategies for using online maps can be found at <http://www.tacticaltech.org/files/tacticaltech/infodesign.pdf> and <http://tacticaltech.org/files/tacticaltech/MapsForAdvocacyTacticalTech.pdf>

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
			biledata
<p>Graphs & Diagrams Google Chart Tools⁴⁷ or any of the many existing online services for Graphs and charts⁴⁸ (depends on aesthetic preferences)</p>	<p>Online Charts can visualize statistical information in an understandable and powerful way.</p>	<p>simplification</p>	
<p>Video interviews and short video documents Short video interviews with people who understand implications of planned policies or are directly impacted by them is a powerful tool to draw attention of public/media to specific issues.</p> <p>Vimeo, Engagemedia, Blip.tv, Youtube and other free online services make it easy to upload videos and share them in number of formats across blogs, websites, videocasts, etc.</p> <p>Video-enabled mobile phones and cheap cameras can be often used as they are sufficient for common online video quality and the content and timeliness of video contributions are usually more important than image quality.</p>	<p>Real people talking about an issue from their perspective can make even complex issues and their consequences understandable to a layperson.</p>	<p>Steep learning curve in capacity to turn raw video material into a short and consistent video message.</p>	<p>Witness' The Hub http://hub.witness.org/ features videos from activist film-makers on different human rights issues.</p> <p>Engagemedia http://www.engagemedia.org/ has videos from Asia Pacific that focuses on environmental rights.</p> <p>Both communities are great at abstracting and summarising content.</p>

Strategy: Have layered information available online, from a very schematic form to an in-depth analysis.

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Google Sites</p>	<p>Google Sites is a convenient tool to organize research findings in such a way that the frontpage</p>		

47 <http://code.google.com/apis/charttools/index.html>

48 See <http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/22-useful-chart-graph-diagram-generators/> for a listing of the most popular services with screenshots of output graphs.

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	shows a schematic glimpse of key research findings (including maps, charts, etc) while other sections and links contain detailed analysis, supporting evidence, statistics, references to other resources, etc.		

Package new ideas in familiar theory or narratives.

The key strategy for this is to maximise available Web 2.0 tools to create new ways of presenting theories and narratives. Packaging new ideas using multi-media tools is one way of gathering support for and increasing interest in the issues.

Strategy: Maximise available tools to create new ways of presenting theories and narratives

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Visualisation tools: photographs, charts and maps.</p> <p>These are a set of tools that allow complex information to be presented in visual form. This can include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Google Maps , Google Earth or OpenStreetMaps to present geographical data. • Using flowcharts (generated from Microsoft excel or Open Office Spreadsheet) to present trends • Using desktop drawing tools (like MS Paint, or Inkscape) to create images that represent research findings. 	<p>Visual representations of issues evoke more from community s.</p> <p>Graphs and charts present complex data in a flash.</p> <p>Map presentation is powerful when argumenting on unfair distribution of goods/services among regions or population.</p> <p>Animated maps can demonstrate scenarios and trends in a glimpse with more power than pages of text can ever achieve.</p>	<p>There is a steeper learning curve to be able to use these tools effectively.</p>	<p>Tips on effective infodesign:</p> <p>http://www.tacticaltech.org/files/tacticaltech/infodesign.pdf</p> <p>http://tacticaltech.org/files/tacticaltech/MapsForAdvocacyTacticalTech.pdf</p>

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Using Video: Short video interviews with people who understand implications of planned policies or are directly impacted by them is a powerful tool to draw attention of public/media to specific issues.</p> <p>Youtube, Vimeo, EnagageMedia and other free online services make it easy to upload videos and share them in number of formats across blogs, websites, videocasts, etc.</p> <p>Video-enabled mobile phones and cheap cameras can be often used as they are sufficient for common online video quality and the content and timeliness of video contributions are usually more important than image quality.</p>	<p>Video material has a capacity of capturing the attention of target community in a way that written text rarely can. Real people talking about an issue from their perspective can make even complex issues and their consequences understandable to a layperson.</p>	<p>Steep learning curve in capacity to turn raw video material into a short and consistent video message.</p>	

Section 3: Links

This section is about building collaborative partnerships with stakeholders that are relevant to your issue and area of work.

The main tasks for researchers here are:

- Get to know the other stakeholders
- Establish a presence in existing networks
- Build coalitions with like-minded stakeholders
- Build new policy networks

Get to know the other stakeholders.

Besides policy makers, there is usually number of other stakeholders with interest in particular issue, or with some type of influence on the formulation of corresponding public policies. Getting to know them and getting a clear picture of what role they play (or could play) helps us in finding allies for our cause and designing our strategy of intervention in the policy making process. We can keep track of who the main stakeholders are by:

- [researching of who is involved in discussions on particular issue](#)
- [involvement in online forums and other spaces where issues related to specific public policy are being discussed](#)
- [building online relationships with main stakeholders](#)
- [surveys among end users of specific public policies](#)

Strategy: Find out who is involved in discussions on particular issue

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Social media scanners such as UberVU ⁴⁹ ,	Allows us to be informed about ongoing discussions on specific topics. UberVU provides alerts when specific keywords are mentioned.	UberVU is a paid service	
Subscription to RSS feeds from online spaces where discussions on particular policies take	Follow posts by people interested in the specific issue	Not all sites offer RSS feeds for all posts, including	

49 <http://www.ubervu.com>

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
place		comments and discussions.	

Strategy: Involve in online forums and other spaces where issues related to specific public policy are being discussed

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Most online forums (such as Google Groups ⁵⁰) provide a possibility to list forum users, filter posts of a specific user, see who are the most active members, etc.		Online identity does not always represent real identity of forum members.	

Strategy: Build online relationships with main stakeholders

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Social Networking tools, such as Facebook, Orkut, Twitter...	Link online with people whom you know are involved in policymaking processes. Share information about your work with them through alerts and other sharing tools, learn through their SN profiles on what they are working.	Politicians and grey eminences of policymaking processes (particularly from corporate sector) are difficult to access through social networking tools, as these tools build on personal (human) connections.	
Blogs Mutually reference blogs of other stakeholders on your blog.	By referencing “blogs-friends” on your blog, a network of mutually connected spaces is created. That opens possibility of information exchange, sharing of views on each other's blog, etc.	Similar limitations as above	

Strategy: Conduct surveys among end users of specific public policies

⁵⁰ [Http://groups.google.com](http://groups.google.com)

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Online Survey tools, such as Limeservice⁵¹, SurveyMonkey⁵² or Google Form (part of Google Docs⁵³)</p>	<p>Data collected through online survey tools can be visualised as graphs or further analyzed using standard statistical methods and tools (statistical data).</p> <p>If online surveys are conducted in accordance with sociological survey methods, the collected data can be used as an evidence in supporting our cause.</p>	<p>SurveyMonkey is a paid service. Limeservice is also a paid service, but it has a free limited version.</p>	
<p>Opinion polls – feature available in many blogging systems</p>	<p>Allows blog author to have users express their opinion (vote) on a specific issue and instantly displays polling results.</p> <p>The polls are very easy to set up and manage and the results can be used for our own information about readers' views, as well as (to a very limited degree) to support our arguments.</p>	<p>The results of polling are never representative because:</p> <p>a) the numbers of voters is rarely high enough to be statistically significant</p> <p>b) people expressing their opinion on a thematic blog are already only a selective group – readers of the specific blog.</p> <p>Therefore there are significant limits as to the degree to which polling results can be used to support scientific arguments.</p>	

51 <https://www.limeservice.com/>

52 [Http://surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com)

53 <http://docs.google.com/>

Establish a presence in existing networks.

Partnerships between researchers, policy makers and policy end-users, Identify key networkers and salesmen, Use informal contacts.

In case of most issues which are subject to public policies, there already exist formal and informal networks among stakeholders with interest in given public policy. These networks represent an opportunity for a researcher or activist to present their findings and push their agenda. In order to establish a presence in such networks with the help of Web2.0 tools, it is necessary to:

- [find electronic \(online\) representations of these networks](#)
- join these networks
- publicize ones' own findings in these networks
- [make findings available in proper formats that capture attention, facilitate data verification and allow easy sharing and interactivity](#)

Strategy: Find electronic (online) representations of existing networks, join them and publicize own findings in these networks

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Internet search can help to find appropriate online forums, but the most efficient way of locating and joining such networks is by inquiring among stakeholders.			

Strategy: Make findings available in appropriate formats (these formats differ for specific networks)

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Wikis ⁵⁴ , Google Docs, Google Sites and other online collaboration tools.	Ease of editing and sharing encourages participation Easy to develop an attractive presentation Possibility to reference supporting evidence		
Graphs and other visuals	See above		
Videos	See above		

⁵⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki>

Build coalitions with like-minded stakeholders.

Once you have found the other stakeholders in the issue you are working on, Web 2.0 tools also have the potential to help build more significant partnerships with stakeholders who have the same values and principles as you do.

Keeping in mind that coalition-building requires online and offline strategies to be successful, these are the key strategies in how to use Web 2.0 tools to achieve this:

- [Create a space for the coalition to continue interacting between and beyond face-to-face events and activities](#)
- [Broaden the coalition by reaching out to stakeholders that have not taken part in face-to-face events and activities](#)
- [Hold online events for the coalition to learn more about the issues based on your research findings](#)
- [Document and manage your coalition members](#)

Strategy: Create a space for the coalition to continue interacting between and beyond face-to-face events and activities

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Google sites	Use this service to create an online space for your coalition		
Ning	Ning is built for online communities. It has functionalities that allow community members to interact with each other, such as blogs, discussion forum, etc.	By July 2010, Ning will no longer be free.	

Strategy: Broaden the coalition by reaching out to stakeholders that have not taken part in face-to-face events and activities

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Use twitter to promote the coalition's online spaces, face-to-face activities and discussions.			

Strategy: Hold online events for the coalition to learn more about the issues based on your research findings

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Webinar – a real time online video seminar on a specific issue Robust and popular webinar (online meeting) systems are Elluminate Live! and Webex. A popular free service is, for example, DimDim.com.</p>	<p>Thematic webinars can be organized periodically, for specific groups of participants, or topic-specific. If well done, webinars represent a good way to bring people together and have them learn in a participative way.</p>	<p>Production of a webinar is time consuming Steeper learning curve in for using the tool effectively and organizing webinars Most webinar services are costly (the user has to pay in order to be able to use the platform to organize webinars). Free webinar systems have limited features and not always work on all operating systems.</p>	

Strategy: Document and manage your coalition members

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>If you have a very broad coalition, use Civicrm⁵⁵ to manage your contacts database.</p>	<p>Civicrm is free and users to set up a contacts database that can then be used in websites.</p>	<p>It needs to be hosted in a server. It has requires advanced skills to set up and install.</p>	
<p>Use Google spreadsheets to document and manage your contacts.</p>	<p>You can create spreadsheets for free.</p>	<p>This is not advisable for large amounts of data.</p>	

Build new policy networks.

Where there are no existing policy networks on a specific issue, Web 2.0 tools can be used to support building such networks. This has an advantage that from the very beginning, we can chose tools and strategies that are transparent and participative, making it more difficult for a

⁵⁵ <http://civicrm.org/>

policy-making process to be hijacked by strongest interest groups. This can be done by building attractive and interactive online spaces which:

- are participatory and enable online collaboration, such as collaborative development of documents, synchronous and asynchronous meetings, etc
- enable participation of those stakeholders who are usually excluded from policy making processes (e.g. general public – end users of public policies)
- enable easy integration into online tools/spaces that other stakeholders are already using in their work
- enable easy sharing of the argument-supporting evidence
- are credible in terms of transparency of administration of all shared information, particularly in terms of privacy

Many of the tools that have been defined and described in the previous sections are useful in building networks.

The key strategies are:

- [set up a space where the network will interact](#)
- [promote the network](#)

Strategy: Set up a space where the network will interact

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
<p>Facebook groups. These can be created and people with Facebook accounts can be invited as a way to deliver news and information about research process and findings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a built-in 'forum' for each group where they can discuss various issues. • Individuals who are part of your Facebook group can get updates as private messages on their in-box. • They can also immediately publicise the information from the Facebook page on their 'walls' and to their other contacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The members of the community will be limited to those with Facebook accounts. • If the information being sent out through the page is not useful, people can easily leave the group. • There is a limit to how many 	

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
		<p>members can join a Facebook group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important privacy considerations (see Appendix 1) 	
<p>Ning <www.ning.com>. On ning, you can form private or public communities based on a particular topic / field / interest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ning community site includes a blog and forum. • You can also create groups within your ning space so that people can join sub-topics / themes that are more interesting for them. • Members of your ning community can opt to get email notifications on topics and discussions they are interested in, so they do not need to go to the site unless something they are interested in is updated. 	<p>Ning used to be a free service but will be a paid-only service by July 2010. Unlike is the case of Facebook, owners of Ning groups can export content of the group for usage elsewhere, migrating to other system, etc.</p>	
<p>Blogs, such as wordpress.com, livejournal.com or blogger.com, provide 'free' services to build community spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog posts can be used to summarise and link to research findings. • Members of the community can directly comment on and discuss blog posts. • "Tagging" of blog posts allow for content to be organised and easily findable by someone searching on the internet for your specific topics. • The community blog may be made public in order to attract 	<p>Blogs need to be updated regularly for the community to thrive.</p>	

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
	<p>more community members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blogs come with RSS (Real Simple Syndication) that will allow users to receive updates via email clients such as Thunderbird so that they don't need to go to the site regularly. This is especially useful for those with limited internet access. 		

Strategy: Promote the network

Tools and Usage	Potentials	Limitations	Examples
Interact with related networks in other social networking sites			
Use twitter to provide updates on the network.			

Appendix 1

Facebook Controversy⁵⁶

Although Facebook is – and is likely to be for some time to come – one of the most popular social networking tools, thus having the highest potential for information dissemination, awareness rising and campaigning, there are some important privacy issues every Facebook user should be aware of. In everyday common use of the service you might not find those problematic, but many users have already faced severe problems because they ignored these issues. According to Facebook user policies...

- Facebook users are not owners of their content. If you publish a research outcomes on Facebook group page, in extreme cases Facebook might claim ownership of that report.
- Facebook is entitled to close your group at any time for no reason. And there have been many cases that Facebook has done so in the past.
- Facebook has a user-driven mechanism of blocking pages with 'harmful content'. If a sufficient number of users mark a page as a page with harmful content, the page is automatically blocked. If there is a group of people determined to get rid of your page, they have a relatively simple way to do it.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ For more details, see: <http://www.rocket.ly/home/2010/4/26/top-ten-reasons-you-should-quit-facebook.html>

⁵⁷ See <http://tinyurl.com/facebookblocking> for details on how this works and examples on how 'harmful content' reporting has been abused in the past.