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Article:

Social Media and Community Volunteering

Executive Summary

This seed project aimed to explore to what extent the transformative potentials of digital technologies, in particular social media, are being realised in relation to community volunteering. The project was funded by the Communities and Culture Network+ and Canterbury and Herne Bay Volunteer Centre was a project partner. The research explored how small non-profit organisations in the case study area of Canterbury district used social media for volunteering as well as how they have adopted the tools in general. The project also examined how audiences interpreted social media content about community volunteering. The following findings emerged from the study:

- Resources, knowledge and perceived limitations are key factors that influence how and to what extent small non-profit organisations adopt social media;
- Volunteering is not a key reason for using social media in small non-profit organisations, and if it is used for that purpose it is mainly seen as a recruitment tool;
- Small non-profit organisations value social media for certain opportunities but they also see it as a source of additional pressure;
- Audiences frame social media content about volunteering as advertisements.

The research contributes to debates on the transformative potentials of social media especially in the context of community engagement and the non-profit sector. It also raises questions about how austerity measures and funding cuts in the third sector shape the adoption of social media in small NPOs.

Aims and Objectives

The significance of volunteering to communities and individuals has been widely acknowledged (e.g. Hedley et.al. 2005). It is perceived to be important for creating social capital, contributing to community cohesion and fostering community engagement. Social media tools have permeated most aspects of social and cultural life in recent years. These tools, and Web 2.0 in general, enable interactivity, interoperability and collaboration (Mandiberg, 2012) and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content. The underlying logic of such technologies is perceived to be openness and participation. For many they do not merely represent a technological phenomenon but also a cultural one (Jenkins 2006), where audiences are encouraged to participate. There is a growing body of literature which suggests that because of these features social media offers considerable opportunities for the voluntary and community sector (e.g. Kanter and Fine 2010) to enhance engagement and increase sustainability. Recent successes with using social media by large charities, for example the ice bucket challenge, also reinforce ideas that social media promises great potentials in the third sector.

This study sought to examine opportunities offered by social media and the realities of using the tools in the context of small non-profit organisations and community volunteering. The project addressed three aims:

1. to analyse audience interpretations of social media practices and content about community volunteering;
2. to consider the role of social media in encouraging volunteering and engagement in a community context;
3. to explore the value of traditional and non-traditional audience research techniques to the study of social media.

These aims were addressed through a case study analysis of social media use for community volunteering in the Canterbury district, in the south east of England, with Canterbury and Herne Bay Volunteer Centre as project partner. The project applied different research methods. Seven managers of community organisations who used social media were interviewed, as well as two focus groups were carried out with volunteers. The focus groups used both traditional and non-traditional audience research techniques to study audience interpretations of social media practices and content. The interviewed organisations were all small non-profit organisations who used volunteers, but their mission and sources of funding varied. The analysis below also utilised data from a questionnaire survey that was carried out with 53 community organisations in the Canterbury district in the Summer of 2014. The survey was a prelude to this seed project and examined extent and patterns of social media use by small non-profit organisations.

Key Findings

To understand social media adoption by small non-profit organisations it is important to consider the wider context and recent trends in the sector. Volunteering is perceived to go through a transformation not just because of technological developments, but as a result of wider societal changes. Levels of volunteering have remained remarkably stable in England over the last ten years with latest figures showing that 44% of adults volunteered formally at least once a year and 29% did so at least once a month (NCVO 2011). However, the average number of hours spent volunteering declined nationally by 30% between 1997 and 2007, and there is further evidence that volunteering is becoming more episodic (NCVO 2011). The nature of volunteering is also changing because motivations for and activities involved in volunteering are shifting. Although volunteering is a complex term that encompasses a wide range of activities and multiple motivations, broadly, three main types of volunteering can be distinguished: altruistic, instrumental and forced (Kelemen and Mangan 2012). "Altruistic volunteering is most closely linked to contributing to the public good. Instrumental volunteering is motivated by self-interest, where the volunteer expects to experience some personal gain. The final category of 'forced' volunteering relates to the recent trend whereby jobseekers are expected to volunteer their labour in order to gain work experience." (Kelemen and Mangan 2012: 4) Instrumental and forced volunteering have received more prominence in recent years, a shift that was noted on in the data collected:

> "I do think that people are becoming more 'choosy' about volunteering, and perhaps more aware of what they want to get out of it... The nature of volunteering has become more focused upon what people want to get out of it themselves." (Interview 1)

Not only patterns of volunteering are changing, but the third sector has also been affected by recent austerity measures. Funding cuts have hit hard particularly small community and non-profit organisations. This has had an impact on to what extent these organisations rely on volunteers and what roles volunteers carry out.

> [Small non-profit] "organisations are finding it harder to make ends meet, so they are looking for different ways to their jobs ... this might broaden the scope of what volunteers do." (Interview 1)
>
> "In terms of volunteering, we are in a brand new world. Up to April this year we had a lot more staff, and we had little recourse to volunteers … but we had a big funding cut and lost a lot of paid members of staff so we have had to recruit more volunteers." (Interview 6)

In the context of these wider changes four key findings emerged from the data analysis:

1. *Resources, knowledge and perceived limitations are key factors that influence how and to what extent small non-profit organisations adopt social media*

> "Most volunteer and community organisations are not very social media or web-savvy, they would use traditional means and everything else is secondary." (Interview 1)

Although social media use by small non-profit organisations increased in recent years (Miranda and Steiner 2012), its importance as a communication or organisational tool remain

less significant compared to other methods. The survey[1] which preluded this project found that among the organisations who responded most had a website and the majority had both a Twitter and a Facebook account (see Figure 3 in Appendix). Other forms of social media were not widely used. Social media is perceived to be more important for external communication rather than internal (see Figure 1 in Appendix). However, emails and face-to-face conversations are still seen as more important tools for external communication compared to social media (see Figure 2 in Appendix). These findings suggest that social media is not key tool for most small non-profit organisations and their use is often limited.

"Social media is more in the background rather than the foreground at the moment." (Interview 5)

However, there are significant differences between small non-profit organisations in terms of how they use social media and their views about them. For example, among the organisations in the survey who had a Facebook site, 21% reported that they updated their account daily, 33% weekly and 46% less than weekly (see Figure 4 in Appendix). There were also contrasting views about usefulness of social media. For example, among the survey respondents 30% agreed that social media was extremely useful to organise events, while nearly 20% thought it was of little or no use at all. A similar divided view emerged in relation to social media usefulness for encouraging donations of money or time, with 15% saying that social media was extremely useful for that purpose while 13% thought it was not useful at all (see Figure 6 in Appendix). Social media management was another area where there were significant differences (see Figure 5 in Appendix). In 21% of the organisations in the survey a manager/director was responsible for social media, in 40% it was part of a few employees' responsibilities, while in 26% a volunteer looked after social media activities.

Other studies also found that the majority of small NPOs use social media to a limited extent (Kanter and Fine 2010), especially compared to large international charities, such as Oxfam or WaterAid (Anheier 2014). The reasons for this are multifold, some seeing limited resources and staff base as key causes (Watkins 2013), while others argue that lack of knowledge, small budget and the belief that social media is not a good use of resources are determining factors (Network Technology Community 2010). This study revealed similar factors that influenced how and to what extent small non-profit organisations have adopted social media and identified three key issues: resources, knowledge and perceived limitations of the tools.

Limited resources emerged as a key issue and the small size of the organisations was often seen as a disadvantage:

"You get the big organisations like Macmillan who are very media-savvy. They have lots of different types of advertising for volunteers ... Small organisations suffer from lack of resources, and the problem is that their work has to come first." (Interview 1)

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[1] The survey examined extent and patterns of social media use by small non-profit organisations in the Canterbury District. It was carried out in June-July 2014 among member organisations of the Canterbury and Herne Bay volunteer centre. The survey is not representative and as it was an online survey those using the Internet and social media were more likely to respond. However, 53 organisations responded giving a useful insight into social media adoption in the sector.

"In organisation such as ours, it is a bit of a challenge. We have limited funding and resources." (Interview 3)

"My organisation is quite small, so we are limited in what we can do. Bigger organisations have an established Twitter feed and so on, it means that they can communicate in a fashion that we cannot do." (Interview 6)

Limited resources also mean that some organisations are reliant on volunteers for social media activities and when volunteers are not able to help the activities do not get done.

YouTube "is great for putting up videos, but there were not any made this year, because the guy [who made videos the previous year] didn't come." (Interview 2)

Often social media was introduced in the organisation by one staff who was interested in and had social media skills already:

"Because I have a digital background I thought it was important to move with the times and start to develop [social media] as a communication channel." (Interview 3)

"Previously we had never used any social media, but last year – because it is something that I use a lot – I encouraged us to get onto that." (Interview 7)

These staff were motivated to use social media, but organisations were over reliant on them which could cause problems.

Knowledge about social media among staff in general could be a barrier and influenced to what extent small NPOs adopted these tools.

"One barrier that I have faced that … we have got a lot of paid staff who are very good at their jobs but do not want to mess about with social media … Nobody was really against it, there was a lack of knowledge." (Interview 2)

However, it was not only knowledge of staff that mattered but that of the audience and the community the organisation worked with too.

"the majority of our audience are not on social media, the communications I am having are with a select few, so it's not everybody. There is a certain age-range who are just not on there ... it's supposed to be inclusive, rather than exclusive." (Interview 2)

Interviewees emphasised limitations of social media that acted as barrier for greater use of the tools in the organisation. These limitations varied depending on the mission of the organisation and the activities involved:

"It's much more effective face-to-face than online, because online you don't get a chance to interact with someone for an hour." (Interview 1)

"It's never going to occupy a central role due to the type of organisation that we are." (Interview 4)

"There is the whole thing about confidentiality and data protection. ... There is a fear of putting people in touch with each other who shouldn't be." (Interview 1)

2. *Volunteering is not a key reason for using social media in small non-profit organisations, and if it is used for that purpose it is mainly seen as a recruitment tool*

Interactivity, collaboration and participation are heralded as key features of social media (e.g. Mandiberg 2012), and indeed reasons for its popularity. However, data in this study suggest that social media in the context of small NPOs is often perceived as a one-way communication tool mainly useful to raise awareness:

> "For a small organisation ... it's about telling people about our work ... It helps to raise awareness." (Interview 5)
> "Raising awareness, we've been around for a long time and no-one knows about us." (Interview 7)
> "Just awareness ... It's an extra presence on top of what [is already there]." (Focus group 1)

In the study's survey improving recognition of the organisation and raising awareness of a core issue were seen as the most important reasons for using social media by small NPOs with over a third of the respondents saying that the tools were extremely useful for those purposes (Figure 6 in Appendix).

Using social media for volunteering was seen as less important (Figure 6 in Appendix), and if it was used for that purpose it was mainly thought of as a potential tool to recruit volunteers.

> "If someone was interested in volunteering, I think that they'd do a Google search and visit organisational websites rather than go on social media." (Focus group 1)
> "We use it to publicise volunteering opportunities, when we get an opportunity we feed it out through Facebook and Twitter." (Interview 1)
> "I've been trying to promote the need for recruiting new volunteers through social media." (Interview 3)

Other potential purposes, such as communication between volunteers or communication between organisation and existing volunteers or communication with former volunteers, were not considered significant neither by the volunteers nor by the organisations.

There was little evidence that social media was a successful tool to recruit volunteers:

> "We have a real problem getting volunteers to get back to us. ... It's a one-way dialogue." (Interview 1)
> "I don't know if it'll be successful for volunteers." (Interview 7)
> "At the moment, the large majority of our followers on Twitter are members of other organisations who do similar work to us. So, we're unlikely to find new volunteers through those sources." (Interview 3)

Traditional methods to recruit volunteers remain dominant for most organisations:

> "We put adverts out for volunteers; they go in the ... e-newsletters that people sign up for. Maybe one in the local paper as well. It's not done through social media at the moment." (Interview 2)

However, one organisation used social media more widely for volunteering and for enhancing engagement with volunteers. Importantly though, volunteers in this organisation shared a key characteristic and formed a strong community of their own.

Social media has "helped to increase engagement [with volunteers], and it has helped to increase the volunteer hours, but not the initial cold contacts. ... Communication is made easier, and social media helps retain that link [with volunteers]. ... People often use social media to stay in touch. One guy set up his own ... business, and it might be like "I haven't got my van this week", and then he gets one and everyone's like really excited and posting comments ... They do support each other and stay in touch." (Interview 4)

3. *Small non-profit organisations value social media for certain opportunities but they also see it as a source of additional pressure*

Social media was associated with a wide range of opportunities by small NPOs. Most interviewees valued social media particularly for its ability to reach out to young people. This age group was seen as the main users of social media:

"Younger people are much more social media-savvy. ... Younger people are the primary users." (Interview 1)

"Students … are telling us that "I don't use the web, I don't look at emails". There are a few audiences for whom social media is an exclusive platform who can't be communicated with in other ways. This alarms me a bit, but it's a flow that you've got to go with." (Interview 6)

"The fact is that the people who already volunteer with us are retired, and not interested in Twitter or Facebook, the [young] people that we would like to encourage are. ... There is an element that you have to cater for both or you are just going to isolate yourself. For quite a long time we have isolated ourselves, and that is why our volunteers are of a particular age." (Interview 2)

Social media also had other potentials for small NPOs. Some emphasised greater prospects for growing their organisation:

"Spreading the network of what we want to do very cheaply." (Interview 4)

Being on a worldwide platform promised endless possibilities for some:

"I like the idea that someone the world over could access something to do with us .... I really like that, it has endless possibilities, it's just that we haven't really tapped into them at all." (Interview 2)

"The information which is stored within the staff and volunteers in [the organisation] is phenomenal. The work they do is tremendous. Sharing that with the world is very important." (Interview 3)

While others highlighted social media's potential role in new forms of volunteering:

"We are at the start of a big shift in the ways to volunteer ... rise of 'virtual volunteering' which gives people the option of doing things not in a physical space ... that's one for the future." (Interview 1)

Another opportunity discussed in the interviews was how social media could help to run the organisation more effectively.

"The great thing about social media is not only that it's free, but it gives you a huge amount of data which you would not usually have. ... We have a lot of data about

people who are interested in us. It's essential in two ways; communicating with people who are interested ... and to ... make sure that [our events] appeal to everybody." (Interview 2)

"We go to a lot of networking events and network with people there, then I make it a mission when I get back to get those people on Twitter. We have had a lot of corporate buy-in from that; I think that is one of the best things I've done. …We've had people after events saying that they didn't get a chance to speak to us, but offering to help out with certain things. … so it does help from a fund-raising point-of-view." (Interview 7)

Arguably, using social media to enhance effectiveness of the organisation, applying the tools for strategic purposes and adopting techniques from the commercial world fit in with the 'professionalisation' agenda in the third sector. Although 'professionalisation' of the sector has gained more prominence in recent years (Kelemen and Mangan 2012) the trend is not without its critics. The concern is that it undermines traditions of the third sector, a view of which was echoed in some of the interviews:

"You've got to do it [social media] whether you like it or not … you're being dragged into doing it" (Interview 6)

"You can be wasting your time stuck behind a computer screen instead of at the actual point of contact, but that's happening with all organisations." (Interview 5)

Discussions on social media and the third sector tend to focus on the opportunities the tools offer for non-profit organisations (e.g. Guo and Saxton 2014). However, findings of this project suggest that small NPOs use social media not purely because they see opportunities, but because there is increasing pressure on them to use it. In some cases this is an internal pressure:

"Our Board give us targets, tells us that we need to get more [followers on social media]." (Interview 5)

But more often there is a perceived pressure from existing or potential funders. There is some evidence that social media is becoming more important in funding non-profit organisations. For example, Kanter and Fine (2010) found that eight out of ten people were more likely to support an organisation that had a social media presence. Funding is a key concern for small NPOs in the current political environment, thus any perceived pressure related to funding has special significance. Some interviewees found that funding decisions increasingly took into considerations the organisation's social media presence.

"I have certainly had the negative experience of fund-raisers who are looking at your online presence and also looking at your social media presence to see if you are there rather than just sitting in your office not doing much." (Interview 6)

"I think [social media] will get more important [for funding]. ... they keep cutting [our funding] annoyingly. ...We are beginning to look at philanthropy and individual donors, I think that is where Twitter might start being used more. ... the funders mostly follow us ... they can see we have a presence and it's a more immediate." (Interview 5)

There was related pressure on individuals themselves who were running social media activities of small NPOs. Most of the interviewees thought social media use in their organisations created more work for them which they tended to carry out in their own personal time.

"... tend to be me in the evening ... it means more work for individuals" (Interview 4)

"Because we are so limited on staff and volunteerings means that it's fallen on my shoulders to look after it all." (Interview 3)

"It's mainly me, because I'm sad. ... doesn't use it because she doesn't know how to tweet, and she hasn't got Facebook at home. .. Manager does it a bit .. But yeah, I'm the one who checks it and re-tweets." (Interview 5)

"We try to use it, well I try to use it because I do it completely … I tend to do the social media in my own time." (Interview 7)

4. *Audiences frame social media content about volunteering as advertisements*

Volunteers shared similar views about benefits and opportunities of social media for small NPOs and volunteering than those running the organisations, while understandably they had less insight into the issues and pressures associated with using the tools. One of the aims of the project was to explore how volunteers 'read' social media messages about community volunteering. The focus group data revealed that these messages were interpreted by audiences in similar ways as they read 'advertisements'. The language they used, the explanations they provided and the creative ideas they proposed all suggested that they perceived social media messages about community volunteering as a form of advertisement.

The significance of this particular interpretation is that it framed the thinking about what social media is useful for in the context of community volunteering and how best to use it. Notably, type of content, text, techniques and methods of persuasion were factors that were considered when audiences were asked for their interpretation. A key feature that emerged in their reading was the emphasis that was placed on the use of 'images', similarly as if one would be reading advertisements.

[images] "get people looking, grabs their attention. (P1)
Yeah, they're important. (P2)
Probably more than the text. If I see the image, I am more likely to read what it's about. (P1)" (Focus group 1)
"it [image] would engage me because I like the look of the photos. … I would be more inclined towards looking a tweet with a picture … I have a tendency to scroll through, but if there's a picture I go more slowly to see what that picture is of and pay attention." (Focus group 2)
"I scan down Facebook or Twitter so quickly, that it's only video or a picture which captures my attention." (Focus group 1)

Social media content for volunteering was seen as effective if it contained visuals and specific details or call for action. According to participants' interpretation brevity and clarity were key features social media text about volunteering needed to be.

"Has to be succinct, to the point and not overlong." (Focus group 2)
If "it's too much to read, by the time I've got to the bottom of that I've lost interest." (Focus group 2)

Positive messages and using phrases to appeal to particular 'target audience' were also seen as ways to make social media content about volunteering work for volunteers.

"Highlighted words; short and sweet. ... happy." (Focus group 1)

"Slightly bigger font; coloured word or face." (Focus group 1)

"Should be positive statements rather than negative." (Focus group 2)

"Capturing modern phrases too. "Night Owls needed"; that would capture my attention if I was a night owl." (Focus group 1)

"... the hashtag ... [to] look quite upbeat and fun" (Focus group 2)

However, there was also some evidence of critical reading of social media content.

"I'm probably different … I don't want to be told that I'm going to have fun" [in social media postings about volunteering opportunities] (Focus group 2)

"There doesn't always have to be a positive image, sometimes you can have shocking pictures ... sometimes the harsh reality is important." (Focus group 2)

Nevertheless, the discussion around social media content about volunteering was framed in general like it was an advertising text and the focus was often how to make messages more 'effective'.

There are different reasons why this particular type of interpretation prevailed among audiences in the focus groups. One reason links to the second finding of this study that social media was not seen as key to use in community volunteering and participants did not have a lot of experience using the tools for that purpose. Additionally, if small NPOs did use social media for volunteering they mainly used it as a recruitment tool. Pushing out messages about volunteering opportunities was then read as a type of advertisement. A further possible reason is that organisational use of social media in general is often associated with a commercial context, because social media companies are themselves commercial and because business entities dominate the social media environment in terms of organisations. This impacts on how audiences read and contextualise messages from any organisation on these platforms. The latent presence of the commercial world was evident even on the social media pages of small NPOs:

"I've noticed that there are a lot of people who follow you so that they can get some marketing out or appeal to your audience. I had a look yesterday and there were three new followers, one was PR, one was marketing, and another was to do with a product from .... It's not just the lady next door that wants to follow you." (Interview 2)

Key Issues

Two key issues emerge from the findings of this project. These are tentative as the study was a small-scale seed project and its samples were not representative. The first issue is concerned with the transformative potentials of digital technologies, in particular social media. Discourse on social media adoption in the third sector is dominated by a technological determinist approach. The focus is often on the opportunities the tools offer for non-profit organisations (Kanter and Fine 2010) and on the interactivity potentials (Mandiberg 2012) that can herald a cultural shift (Jenkins 2006) in how organisations work. Findings of this study suggest that there are opportunities for using social media for community volunteering. There were a few examples of enhanced engagement with stakeholders and increased interactivity with specific groups. However, overall findings suggest that social media has not been transformative among small NPOs and the opportunities have only been realised to a limited extent.

Contemporary realities of the sector, in particular tensions around sustainability and funding, as well as issues around resources, knowledge and perceived limitations of the tools have acted as barriers for greater use of social media and realisation of the transformative potential. Management and organisation of volunteering in a community context are still mostly thought of and practiced in a non-digital fashion. An important finding of the study is that small NPOs do not just engage with social media because of perceived opportunities and benefits, but also because there is some pressure on them to use it, for example in the context of funding. This is significant because how social media is embedded in these organisations then is driven partly by external agendas. Social media can also be seen as a tool used for greater professionalisation in the sector. There was evidence in the study where the tools were applied to 'manage things better' and make the organisation more 'effective'. While there were clearly organisational benefits as a result, there were also concerns about the impact of professionalisation on the fabric of the voluntary sector. This image of social media as a 'managerial', 'professional' tool sits uneasy with the idealistic views that emphasise the tools' potential for democratisation, openness, interactivity and community enhancement. This apparent contradiction needs further investigation.

The second issue emerging from the project is concerned with research methods. Research on social media has mainly focused on content and especially quantitative analysis of 'big data', while audience research has lagged behind. One of the aims of the study was to analyse audience interpretations of social media practices and content about community volunteering to gain a better understanding about how audiences 'read' these texts. The project also aimed to explore the value of traditional and non-traditional audience research techniques to the study of social media through applying both types of methods in the data collection. The impetus for non-traditional 'creative' media research methods, which have gained popularity in audience research during the last decade, came "from qualitative researchers seeking to move beyond what were seen as the limitations of talk-based methods such as interviews and focus groups" (Buckingham 2009: 2).

The application of non-traditional audience research techniques resulted in limited data both in scope and in extent and as a result the value of this method could not fully be explored. Participants did not engage meaningfully with that part of the data collection, although provided valuable insights through traditional research methods. A possible reason for this is that audiences had limited engagement with social media for community volunteering which then restricted the extent to which they were able to engage with the topic creatively. Another possible reason is that audiences framed social media content about volunteering as advertisements which then shaped thinking about the subject. It would be useful to explore the value of non-traditional research techniques in further studies that may address the limitations of this project.

Next Steps

This seed project has provided some useful insights about an under-researched subject area and has also raised questions for future studies. A number of participating organisations expressed interest for follow up research and to explore in more detail the transformative potentials of social media in relation to community volunteering. Thus, a further research project is being devised by the PI with the collaboration of community partners. It is envisaged that a wider range of stakeholders will be involved in this larger study.

Impact

Impact has been limited so far as this has been a short seed project that has just finished. It is expected that impact from the study will ensue as results are disseminated during 2015 and a follow-up project is developed. There are also plans to develop knowledge exchange activities linked to some of the findings under the umbrella of the newly established Centre for Research on Communities and Cultures at the School of Media, Art and Design, Canterbury Christ Church University.

Dissemination

Research outputs for academic audiences include a journal article for *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary & Nonprofit Organizations,* a peer-reviewed journal. The findings are currently being written up for this article and will also be presented at a relevant academic conference (e.g. MeCCSA 2016). Findings will also be disseminated to non-academic audiences. An infographic is currently being designed by the PI which will be distributed on appropriate platforms. It is also planned that the PI will write a contribution about the study for relevant newsletters used by small NPOs.

Funding

The PI will be working on a larger project bid with potential partners. The PI is also planning to develop a knowledge exchange bid which will aim to explore and address some of the knowledge and skills issues in small NPOs regarding social media that emerged as barriers to using social media for community volunteering.

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Appendix: Survey data on social media adoption by small NPOs in the Canterbury district

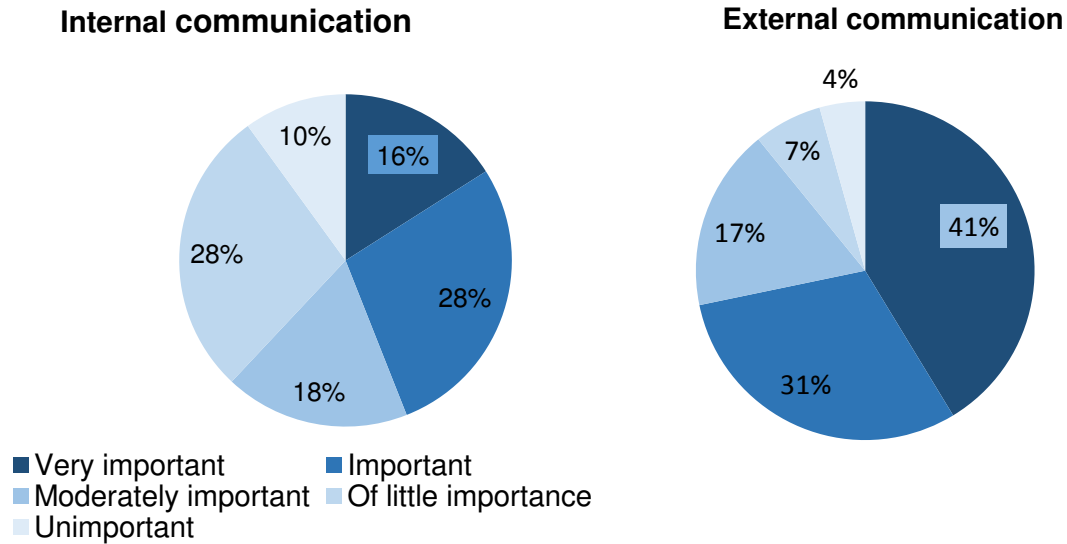**Figure 1 - Perceived importance of social media in internal and external communication in small NPOs (%)**

Internal communication

16%
28%
18%
28%
10%

External communication

4%
7%
17%
41%
31%

■ Very important   ■ Important
■ Moderately important ■ Of little importance
■ Unimportant

Figure 2 - Perceived importance of tools in external communication in small NPOs (%)

Email

Face-to-face

Telephone

Social media

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Very important ■ Important ■ Moderately important ■ Of little importance ■ Unimportant
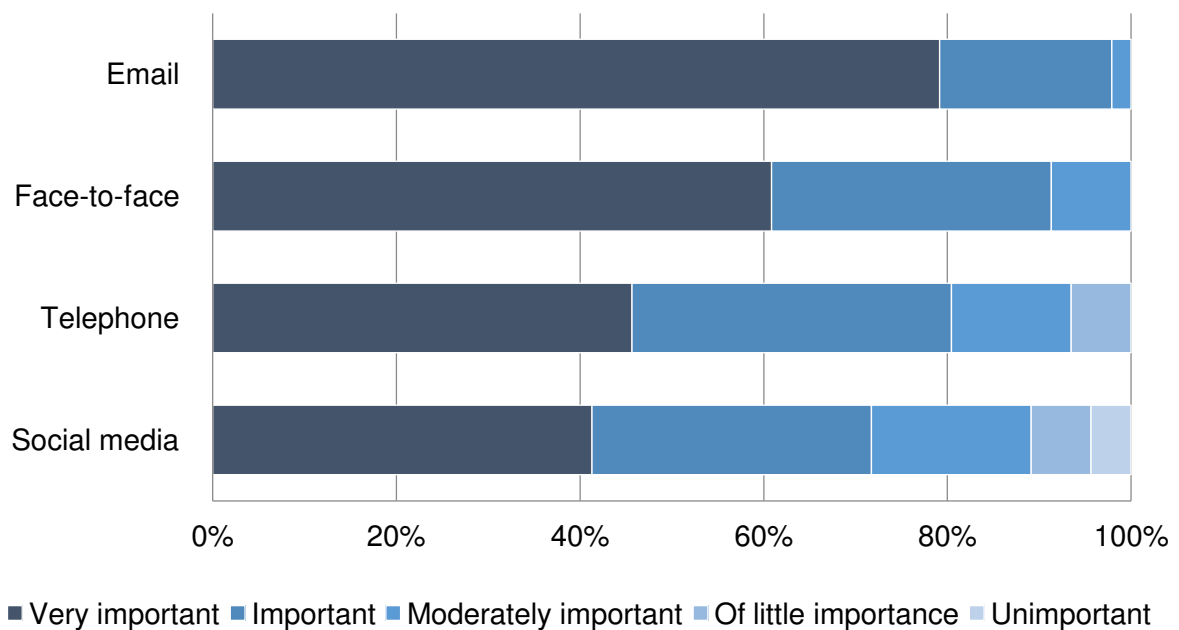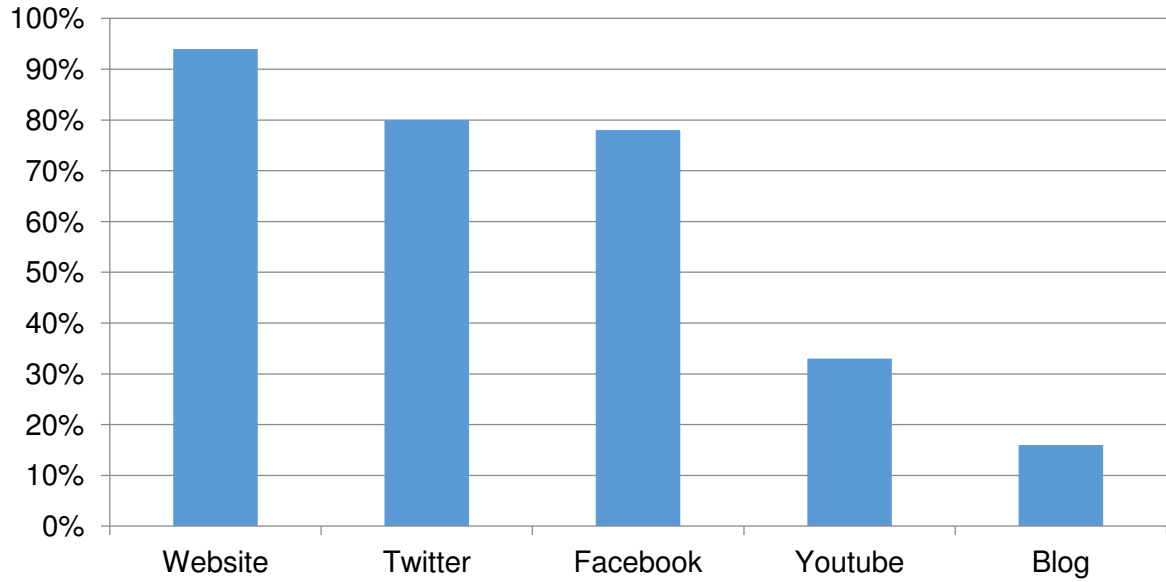
Figure 3 - Online presence of small NPOs (%)

Figure 4 - Frequency of updating social media accounts by small NPOs (%)

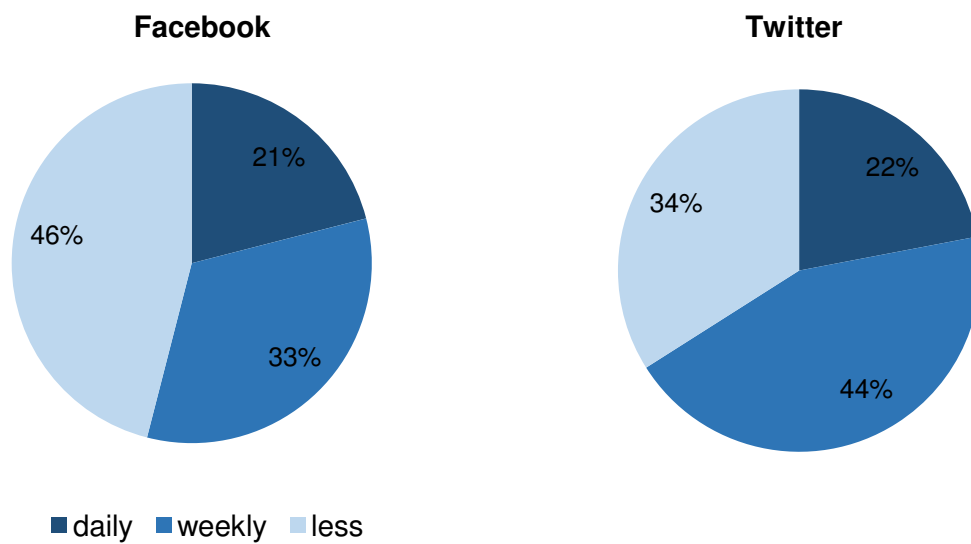**Figure 5 – Person responsible for managing small NPOs' social media (%)**

Manager/director	21%
A dedicated employee	30%
Part of a few employees' responsibilities	40%
Volunteer	26%
External agency	0%
Other (responses: Fundraiser, Anyone, Trustee)	11%
No social media activities	6%

Figure 6 - Reasons for using social media by small NPOs (%)