

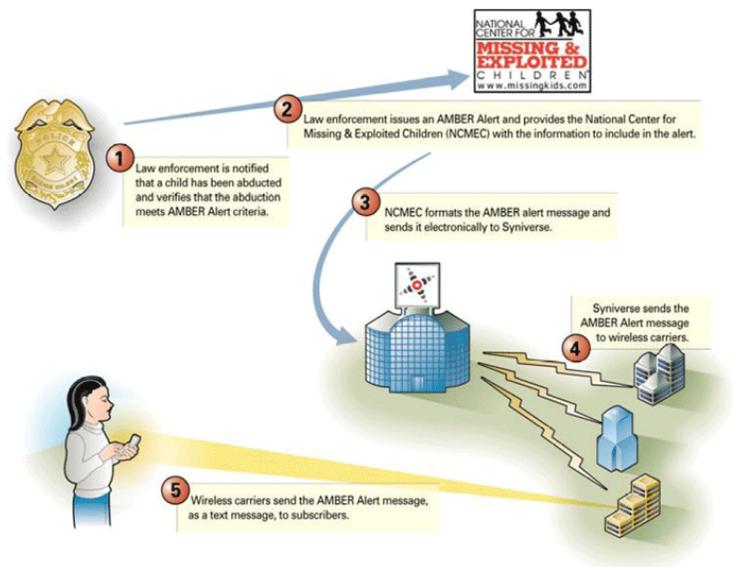
## NEW MEDIA – NEW AUDIENCES – NEW TECHNOLOGIES Social Media is Changing the PSA Landscape

By Bill Goodwill & Ken Fischer<sup>1</sup>

Does anyone know when the line was crossed between the old media and the new media? Was it when people were able to send “Amber Alerts” via the cell phone to alert people that there was a child molester in their midst?

Was it when You Tube allowed everyone to have their thirty seconds (or longer) of fame by posting their favorite videos online in full living color and decent sound?

Or was it when some genius geeks invented things such as iGoogle, Netvibes, Pageflakes, SpringWidgets, yourminis, Flickr, social networks, blogs, RSS feeds, podcasts, wikis and personal homepages on sites like MySpace and Facebook?



The answer is...nobody knows. And nobody knows how all these new terms and communications techniques will affect the world of mass communications in the future. The very moment this article is published, it will be completely out of date. That is how fast things are changing. However, at the risk of trying to stop technology for just a moment to figure out how these new techniques and tactics will affect most of us in the mass communications business, we would like to make a few fundamental observations. We believe these basic truths will serve all of us well in the years ahead as we watch the transformation of mass media to something much more personal.

First, the background – why should we care about this stuff? According to a new research report released at the Forrester Consumer Forum, interactive marketing in the U.S. will more than triple over the next five years, reaching \$61 billion by 2012. The big fish are already starting to swallow the minnows, as indicated by the purchase of YouTube by Google.

Based in part on a survey of 344 interactive marketing professionals and their budget decisions affecting display ads, search, email marketing, online video, and emerging media (social, mobile, and “advergaming”), Forrester's breakdown of spending includes the following:

- Consumer adoption of online video will result in a 72 percent increase in online video ad spending to \$7.1 billion by 2012. Customer-centric online video applications will increase the medium's appeal for consumers and marketers alike.

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- Social media will drive emerging channels to \$10 billion by 2012. Mainstream adoption will boost spending in emerging channels such as social media, mobile, game marketing, widgets, podcasts, and RSS (Really Simple Syndication). Spending on social media alone will grow to \$6.9 billion.
- Mobile marketing – sending messages via a mobile device such as a cell phone – will grow to \$2.8 billion by 2012, according to the Forrester study.

As consumers become increasingly tied to personal computing handsets, they'll want to extend their mobile utility to accommodate transactions and also social messaging. During the holiday season the Military Channel is asking all of us to text 89279 – <http://www.americasupportsyou.mil/americasupportsyou>. The Cellular Telephone Industry has developed radio PSAs that instruct cell phone owners how to donate money in times of national emergencies such as wildfires and hurricanes.

### **Social Drivers**

The migration of media to the internet is a confluence of three factors. People are spending more time online; technology now permits viewing of high quality online video; and the emergence of social networks. There are now opportunities to create affordable online messages which can deliver in-depth content that can be precisely targeted to a client's primary audience and the sites can generate better metrics than ever. In view of the fact that PSAs are getting more difficult to place and provide almost no targeting opportunities, all of us in the mass communications field must pay attention to these new media realities. Let's examine some of the Internet options available to us as mass communicators.

### **Banner Ads**

As long as the exposure is free and the production cost is minimal - such as the case with banners - any exposure generated is cost effective. However, in our experience most banner ad aggregators think their real estate is too precious to give away so they have developed very rigid procedures for getting quality banners placed. Both Yahoo and AOL, for example, have a fairly strict protocol for getting banner PSAs on their sites, and then you stand in line waiting for your moment in the sun. Even if you are able to get a banner ad on a site, you then need to look at the value of that exposure in terms of effectiveness. According to current data "Clickthroughs" resulting from banner ads have declined to less than 0.1%.

### **Google Searches/ Search Engine Optimization**

There are techniques for getting priority listings on search engines like Google, getting mentioned in blogs and listed in directories, which are often overlooked as part of a national PSA campaign. Optimizing your key word searches will drive a lot of traffic to your website or organization. Another way is to use Google ads which can be very cost effective, as they are highly targeted, displaying a client's ad when certain keywords are "Googled." They only charge on Clickthroughs, which can be as little as 5 cents each - about one tenth of paid banner ads. While still expensive by PSA standards, these can at times be much more effective than banner ads.

*"A satisfied customer tells an average of three people about a product or service they like, and eleven people about a product or service they did not like."*

## Online Viral Marketing

It is claimed that a satisfied customer tells an average of three people about a product or service they like, and eleven people about a product or service they did not like. Viral marketing is based on this natural human behavior.

Here is how Wikipedia defines the term: “Viral marketing and viral advertising refer to marketing techniques that use pre-existing social networks to produce increases in brand awareness, through self-replicating viral processes, analogous to the spread of pathological and computer viruses.

“It can be word-of-mouth delivered or enhanced by the network effects of the Internet. Viral marketing is a marketing phenomenon that facilitates and encourages people to pass along a marketing message voluntarily. Viral promotions may take the form of funny video clips, interactive Flash games, advergames, images, or even text messages.

“The goal of marketers interested in creating successful viral marketing programs is to identify individuals with high Social Networking Potential (SNP) and create Viral Messages that appeal to this segment of the population and have a high probability of being passed along.”

Surprisingly, the logic behind search engines and the social networking concept has not changed that much. Ten years ago if you read a book about how search engines such as Google work, you would have discovered that they use a “crawler” that instantaneously searches websites, looking for websites with the most links. The logic of the crawler is that sites with the most links – organizations which are most connected to others - would rise to the top of search engine results.



At Goodwill Communications, we split our corporate website from our other site called the PSA Research Center. Our logic was if we were

Web Results 1 - 10 of about 98,700,000 for [public Service Advertising](#).

### PSA: Public Service Advertising

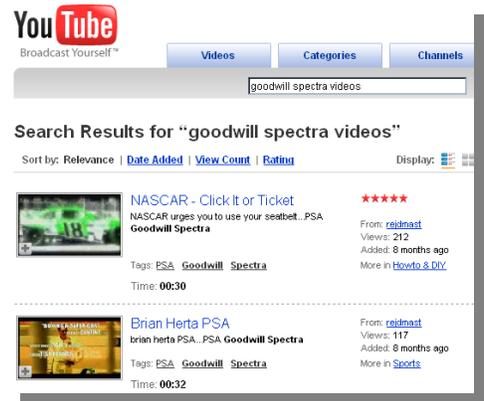
The PSA Research Center is an on-line information resource dedicated to **public service advertising**, social issues marketing, **public** interest communications ...  
[www.psaresearch.com/](http://www.psaresearch.com/) - 2k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

giving something for free – not trying to sell anything – just trying to educate folks on our profession, then we would increase our chance of getting a better ranking and do a public service at the same time. Remember, we did this ten years ago – eons in internet life. Today, proudly to say, our PSA Research center is the number one unpaid reference when you Google “public service advertising.” We are not bragging - we are just trying to illustrate the importance of how the new media works – something we are all studying now together.

## On-Line Videos

With the phenomenal success of You Tube, everyone wants to have presence there, but unfortunately it may be overwhelmed by its own success.

With literally tens of thousands of videos on You Tube, and hundreds being added every day, eventually it could prove to be only a novelty that does not help organizations achieve their communications objectives.



We created a special site on YouTube called PSA USA, thinking that would be a neighborhood network where all our neighbors were kindred spirits. We soon found out that anyone could post a video to that site – including, yes questionable videos about subjects we cannot mention here. So that could mean loss of control over content and brand image. We are aware that there are many other sites such as Yahoo and [cite them} which also have videos, but posting a video there may not help you achieve your communications goals in an era where *audience involvement* is the primary goal.

## Web 2.0 & Widgets

Web 2.0 is a term used frequently to describe a combination of personalized sites which allow easy connection with others through groups and new technologies such as instant messaging, online streaming video, widgets, RSS feeds and more. While viral marketing has been an important feature of the Internet since its beginning, there are new opportunities to use these techniques as part of a low-cost viral marketing effort for public service causes.

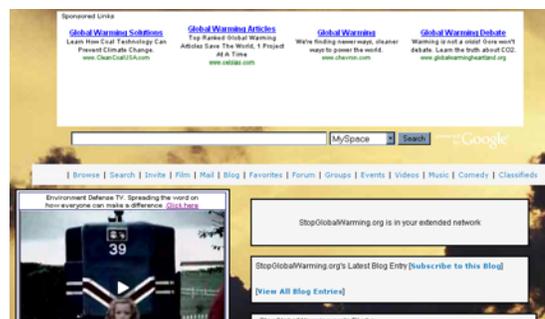
The infrastructure for non profit organizations to use effective Internet engagement technologies is here and we predict they will be the future of public service messaging. Let's take the term "widget" for example. Until very recently the term "widget" was not part of the popular vernacular, and again, Wikipedia does a great job defining the term which we paraphrase here:

"A web widget is a portable chunk of code that can be installed and executed within any web page by an end user. A widget is anything that can be embedded within a web page to add content to that page that is not static. Basically a widget is a miniature website which can easily be placed on anyone else's site with zero cost and minimal effort to the owner of the second site. Activity on widgets can be tracked in very similar ways to tracking a website."

## Widget Applications

Now that we have reviewed the Geek speak, how can a widget be used in a public service message context? Let's say you are involved in a campaign designed to try to energize people in the fight against global warming. Let's say you learned that there were some 600 mayors who signed an agreement to fight global warming in their communities. And let's say you got access to their email addresses (lucky you). So you start out by designing a website to engage them in your campaign. First you have to *give context*, and it would be nice if they *could see samples* of the PSAs you are pitching to them. Next, you have to show them *what you have already done on the issue* and finally figure out a way to *engage them* in your campaign.

So, using the global warming problem as an example, we can create a website that addresses all these issues. It spells out the problem; it gives visitors and community activists the reason why they should get involved; it tells them what to do; it shows them where the global warming PSAs were distributed, and finally it provides the mechanism to spread the word to other kindred spirits who feel as they do about the problem.



The mechanics of doing this are fairly simple and there is just a minimal amount of html code that permits a widget to be placed on another organization's website.

This uses a "push" strategy, in that people are directed to some other website such as one hosted by an environmental protection organization. Or, you can put the code on your website and "pull" people into your website by placing a widget on your webpage.

### Widgets & Social Sites

Another interesting application for Widgets is to use them in conjunction with a social website such as My Space. By clicking on the link below, you can see how placing videos on a page drawing visitors interested in a particular subject can make the web experience much more interesting and compelling.

<http://www.clickforhelp.com/artwork/Goodwill/Demo/demo.htm>

Social media can also provide insights about the behaviors of the people who visit a particular website. On Facebook, for example, you can add a Widget to your page which tells how "green" your organization is....what type of vehicle you drive and what kind of energy--aving bulbs you use. The widgets can bring your cause to life and engage social network users which will then spread the message by posting the creative content on their sites – all with little effort and minimal cost.

### GoodCauses – a Social Issues Site

Our first foray into this brave new media is to add video to PSAResearch.com and make it into a social networking opportunity for the social issues advertising profession.

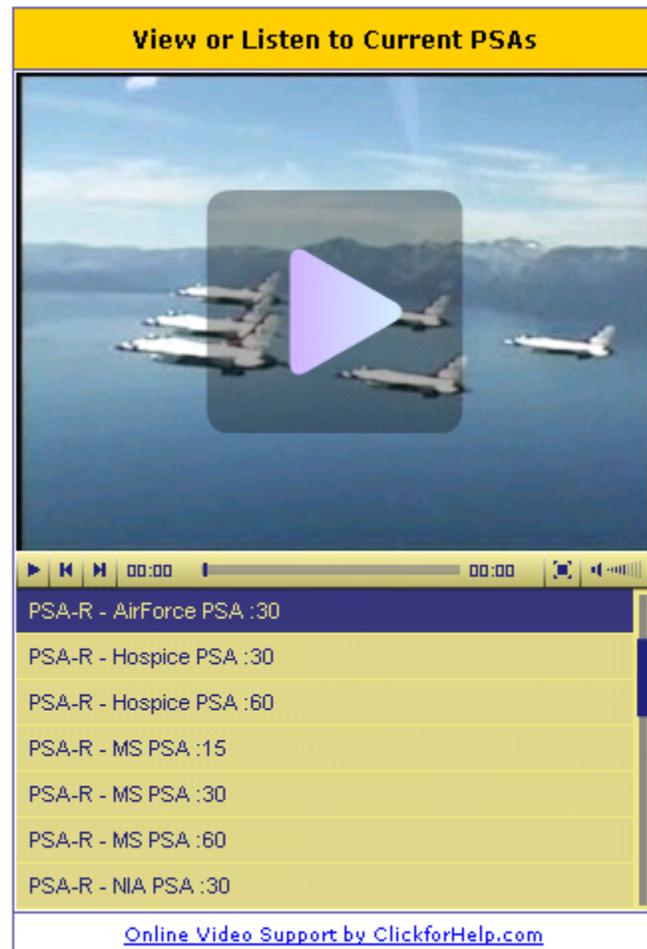
When completed, visitors to our site can view video clips – PSAs, VNRs, even a half hour program. They can also click on other links for additional information, or a link to our client site, depending upon the desired call to action.

And going back to the Widget discussion, we can export this technique to other sites where the content is appropriate, or we can customize it to make it applicable to another site.

### Other Breakthrough Techniques

#### EmailGram

For a radio campaign we launched for the March of Dimes, we wanted to find a creative and impactful way to spread the word about the campaign.



We wanted a technique that went beyond a traditional blast email effort that probably would be regarded by most people as spam. We also wanted to educate both the media and vertical audiences on the issue of premature births. The technique we developed is an EmailGram. By clicking on the following link you will see what it looks like

<http://www.clickforhelp.com/artwork/GoodCausesPremature/NewsLetters/Newsletter2new.htm>

To avoid the spam issue, we developed a list of major websites reaching each of our clients' four primary audiences for the campaign – expectant mothers, young fathers, African-American and Hispanic families. We contacted each of them to get their permission to send this EmailGram and obtain the name of the appropriate person to get it. Our goal was to get each of these websites to add content to their websites on the issue. While our task for this particular campaign was to distribute to radio only, recipients of the EmailGram can also see March of Dimes TV PSAs to enrich the user experience.

The EmailGram was also be sent to all state broadcasters, NAB, the Radio Advertising Bureau, and other media related websites to encourage them to spread the word about the campaign. While we do not have feedback on how many sites picked up the Email content, we do know that the radio PSA we launched for MOD generated over \$2.3 million in ad equivalency value, the most successful radio PSA we have distributed.

Finally, we developed a custom website to engage the 50 state MOD chapters in the campaign. Here they can see distribution lists in their state, listen to the PSAs, download them, learn about making local media contacts and review evaluation data in a variety of report formats.

**Custom Web-based Promotions**

For Environmental Defense, we used creative web-based techniques to tackle a very different challenge – engaging local mayors in the campaign to reduce global warming. We learned through our research that some 600 local mayors had signed a commitment to reduce global warming in their communities. Since the national office had no network of state chapters or community partners, mayors were the perfect change agents.

**GOOD CAUSES**

**MARCH OF DIMES LAUNCHES PREMATURETY RADIO CAMPAIGN**  
 Cost of Premature Babies Exceeds \$2 Billion Annually  
 With more than 500,000 premature infants born each year in our country – or one out of 8 new births - this major medical problem is having a serious impact upon our health care delivery system, on the parents of the newborn, employers who often shoulder much of the cost, and on society as a whole. As the graph below indicates, given the number of premature births occurring in our nation each year, and a cost differential of nearly \$40,000 per birth between normal babies and those born prematurely, the cost to society is just under \$2 billion annually.

**Annual Societal Economic Costs Associated with Preterm Birth, US, 2005**

Special Education Service	\$1.1 billion (4%)
Early Intervention Services	\$611 million (2%)
Maternal Delivery	\$1.9 billion (7%)
Medical Care Services	\$16.9 billion (65%)
Lost Household and Labor Market Productivity	\$5.7 billion (22%)

**Every Baby Has a Story**

Home Station Distribution Usage/Airings Listen to PSAs Ordering Links

**CONTACT**

**For Media Promotions:**  
 Suzanne Cale-Young, National Director  
 555-555-5555  
 Contact Suzanne

**For Usage/Airings Questions:**  
 Barb Goodwill  
 555-555-5555  
 Contact Barb

**For National Media Promotions:**  
 Peter Rozzell  
 636-220-7266  
 Contact Peter

**Listen to PSAs**

MOD - Baby-Story African-American (15 sec)  
 MOD - Baby-Story African-American (30 sec)  
 MOD - Baby-Story African-American (60 sec)  
 MOD - Baby-Story Moms (15 sec)

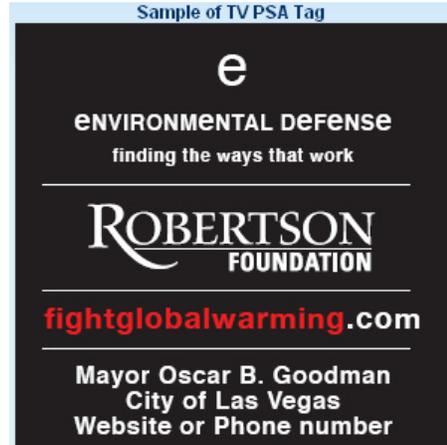
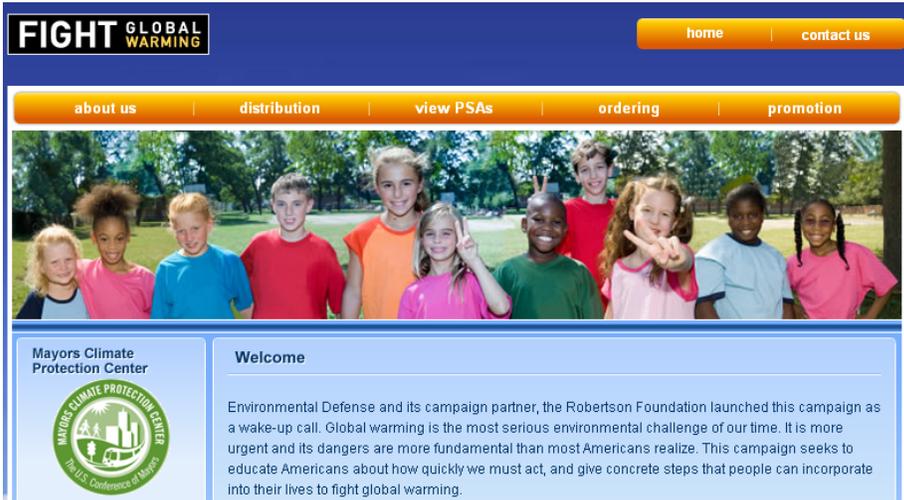
**Station Distribution**

Click on your state to see Distribution list for your state.



And for certain, when the mayor or someone from his or her staff calls the media to book an appointment to discuss global warming, they are probably going to get through.

Our first task for engaging local mayors was to inform them on what Environmental Defense is doing at the national level and then help them get involved locally by adapting national materials for local use. Via a website we created, mayors could view the national PSAs and then complete an order form to tag PSAs with their localized information. See what the website looks like by clicking on: <http://www.clickforhelp.com/artwork/edf/fgw/Ordering.aspx>



Information from the order form is captured in a database and transmitted electronically to our dub house to produce local tags, replicate the appropriate number of dubs and ship tagged PSAs to mayors.

To summarize, conventional media was meant to create awareness and some type of response. Social media is meant to increase involvement and spread the message to others, thus building a much larger audience, as well as one more deeply committed to our cause than what was possible a few years ago.