



How Ron Paul Used Social Media To Raise Over \$10,000,000 in Small Donations And Change Political Fundraising Forever!

**And How You Can Use Social Marketing
To Fill *Your Own* Bank Account!**

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"The Ron Paul Effect" Report Provided Exclusively to Mike Filsaime

Disclaimer: The material in this report is not intended to further the Ron Paul campaign goals in any way whatsoever. The fact that this case study is about a political candidate doesn't negate the fact that social marketing is what MADE the candidate far more visible than he should have been.

I am just watching this phenomenon like the rest of you. I am not a Ron Paul supporter myself. The thing I am interested in is what these guys are doing with social media that we can learn from. My focus on any candidate in this regard shouldn't be construed as implied political support.

I do, however, hope you get the vote out when the time comes. Every person of voting age in this country needs to be involved in politics no matter what we think of the process.

Ron Paul's Social Marketing Success Story

Social marketing is big. Very, very big. In this report we will look at the Ron Paul campaign and show just how a politician who wouldn't know Facebook if he saw it **raked in more money than any of the other candidates** with small donations and word of mouth via social sites on the internet.

Make no mistake about the information you are about to read. The reason Ron Paul was able to **break fundraising records** set by way more popular Democrats or Republicans prior to the 2008 campaign was because of one thing and one thing only: social media.

**(See above for my political disclaimer in case you think I am a "Paul Head." This is about social marketing. The subject happens to be political candidates and their use of social marketing to do incredible things with it.)*

But first, the headlines...

White House hopeful and Iraq war critic hauls In \$4.2 million



"Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul, aided by an extraordinary outpouring of Internet support Monday, hauled in more than **\$4.2 million in nearly 24 hours.**" - Associated Press, November 6, 2007

Ron Paul Beats Own Fundraising Record

"In 2004, on the day John Kerry accepted the Democratic presidential nomination, the Boston senator raised \$5.7 million on the Internet, the biggest online fundraising day on record.

Yesterday, Ron Paul, the Republican congressman whose rock star status on the Internet has single-handedly fueled his campaign, broke that record, raising nearly \$6 million in 24 hours.

With 14 days left in the fourth quarter, the Texas Republican has amassed **more than \$17.5 million.**" -Washington Post

Ron Paul Sets Online Fundraising Record

"Yesterday's bid to raise \$10 million in one day for Ron Paul fell well short. Paul's campaign will happily settle, I'm sure, for the **\$4.2 million they brought in**, which is easily the most brought in on a single day of online fundraising."
– Outside the Beltway

Ron Paul says he's broken one-day online fundraising record

"According to Paul's campaign, he raised more than **\$2.7 million online in 16 hours** that ended at 4 p.m. ET. The campaign called that "the largest single-day online primary fundraising effort by a presidential candidate in United States election history." –USA Today

Paul sets one-day GOP fundraising record

Paul spokesman Jesse Benton said the effort began independently about two months ago at the hands of Paul's backers. He said Paul picked up on the movement, mentioning it in speeches and interviews.

"It's been kind of building up virally," Benton said.

The \$4.2 million represented online contributions from **more than 37,000 donors**, fundraising director Jonathan Bydlak said Monday night. - MSNBC

All previous fundraising records, including John Kerry's \$5.7 million day, were broken.

In one day the world of political fundraising had changed forever.



In a way, the internet changed forever as well. The "net heads" were capable of doing something incredible. Something the offliners would have never given the internet credit for before this.

135,124 results for ron paul

The internet, and more specifically social media, had proven there is no more powerful way to raise money and move people. Very large masses of people.

Pundits would have downplayed it if it was a popular candidate like the front-runners. They'd have said "Well that's Hillary Clinton" or "What do you expect, Rudy Giuliani is extremely popular from 9/11."

Except it wasn't Hillary Clinton or Rudy Giuliani.

It wasn't Barack Obama or Mitt Romney or Mike Huckabee. It was one of the *most unlikely people* in the race. A fringe candidate who would normally be no more than a blip on the radar of the primary scene.

What was the reason the Ron Paul campaign dominated, obliterated, and conquered the fundraising battle every candidate faces?

Social Media, The Internet And The Power Of Buzz!

It should be noted that the bulk of Paul's support came in micro donations compared to what's raised at fundraising dinners held by top tier candidates and their powerful political allies.

Hundreds of thousands of donations. Not big corporate checks.

That's also representative of social media. Only peer pressure could make someone actually believe that their \$5 donation would count for something. And then, after the records were set, you couldn't tell a single contributor that their donation didn't amount to something!

All Those Tiny Donations Amounted To Record-Setting Support For A Candidate Who, At One Point, Was Not Likely To Raise Even \$10 million For His Entire Campaign!

How did it happen?

People started a real movement online around Ron Paul. His politics appeal to a large enough base of **social site "aware" surfers** that cared enough about his message to spread it among most any social site you can think of.

It's almost impossible to find a community online that hasn't been touched by devout Ron Paul supporters.



More than any other candidate, Ron Paul's social marketing team has been the most organized and effective at getting the word out via social media, hands down.

The beauty of social marketing is that once it is started, **it can hit a critical mass** where, as long as the source keeps putting out information for people to talk about, the conversation continues and spreads across more social sites and threads of discussions than any one person or team could ever manage or keep up with.

Stumble Upon Profile:

<http://www.stumbleupon.com/url/www.ronpaul2008.com/>

75,466 supporters on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/ronpaul>

759 followers on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/ronpaul2008>

LinkedIn Profile:

http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=campaign08_paul

Flickr:

<http://flickr.com/groups/ronpaul2008/>

69,202 Profile Views on Digg:

<http://digg.com/users/ronpaulin2008>

And **it can happen to unexpected "underdogs"** whether it is politics or small sites with something to say or sell that grabs people's attention and holds it long enough for it to take off like a California wildfire.

It must be noted that Ron Paul supporters don't necessarily know the rules better than any other new social media user. That's made for some pretty pissed regular users who have blogged about what they did wrong [here](#).

Then again, several Diggers are just mad that something they might not be personally interested in is taking up their **precious front page space** reserved for "sex with robots" stories and photos showing ways to blow up hard drives. Here's a story about the [Digg Bury Brigade](#) and how one Paul supporter feels about the fact. Note that there is an agenda on BOTH sides and everyone has an agenda to push online or off when in social settings. (You thought Digg was pure? lol!)

[This article](#) by Muhammad Saleem, **one of the Top 100 at Digg.com** and someone I have a lot of respect for, talks about the obvious mistakes Paul supporters make in their enthusiasm to get the word out, but I take issue with this quote:

"...this apparent popularity was simply a result of mass manipulation by Camp Paul." – Muhammad Saleem

Saleem knows better than this. In fact, in the same article he defends (rightly) the major difference between algorithms (search engines) and human networks. Humans

aren't that easy to game. They see crap and they vote the crap out. So someone has to actually be liking Ron Paul in big numbers to [get these kinds of stats](#).

Love `em or hate `em, they really get attention. And in this case even bad attention gets them further down the road.

Here's Where He's Proven There Is Interest By A Large, LARGE Number Of Real People:



[Ron Paul 2008](#)

100,596 Members in 1,563 Meetup Groups, 9,655 waiting for a Meetup Group

Compare that with social marketing rival Barack Obama, no slouch in the online race and you will see the difference:



[Barack Obama](#)

4,068 Members in 79 Meetup Groups, 2,271 waiting for a Meetup Group



[Check out the action for Ron Paul at YouTube](#)

Ron Paul's blog...

Look at how many Diggs [his posts](#) have gotten. There are people camped out at Digg ready to push the conversation, but it takes a conversation that is able to activate far more people to get that kind of attention on Digg.

You can't do it all yourself, which is **what protects social media from spam** making it to the front page. The users just won't let that happen and there are too many people using these sites for a small group to push things in front of the larger group that some percentage of the larger group doesn't care about.

I've seen plenty of Digg.com conversations where regular users let it be known that they are sick and tired of hearing about freakin' Ron Paul! Being this aggressive is impossible for the small website owner though, so you won't have to worry about being

blacklisted unless you simply spam all your own posts onto a social site and do nothing else.

In short, you can organize all you want but you still **have to have content that captures the attention** of the larger user base on social sites to get it to go anywhere significant. Like the front page of Digg.

Why Did It Happen?

Buzz, belief, a movement, a revolution.

“Paul's online popularity may have also translated to a serious boost in primaries’, says Michael Cornfield, vice president of the online grass-roots advocacy firm 720 Strategies.

Cornfield compares the campaign with Paul's presidential bid in 1988, when he ran as a libertarian and drew less than half a percent of the vote. “Twenty years ago, he had the same message, but there was none of this Internet thing going on,’ says Cornfield.

“The fact that Paul plus the Web has done about ten times better than Paul without the Web makes for a pure case of what the Web can get you.” –Forbes Online

The article goes on to say that you won't get into the White House with a massive social marketing campaign. **Luckily, you aren't running for President.**

I will argue though that Ron Paul would not be beating Rudy Giuliani and (former candidate) Fred Thompson in some state primaries without the internet.

Other Political Social Marketing Successes



Barack Obama has an incredible social marketing campaign going as well. Tons of chatter all over the web and hundreds of thousands of micro donations generated by social media activity.

Obama raised \$25 million last fall with \$6.9 million coming from online donations from **over 100,000 people**, according to the campaign's website. Again, the tool of choice was massive organizing and hammering home his message, developing strong supporters who use social media sites to get their news and information while showing their support.

Why Not Hillary?

The reason I chose Ron Paul and Barack Obama instead of a more high-profile (pre-primaries) candidate was because I wanted as pure data as possible. It is harder to tell with a candidate **as well known and popular as Clinton** whether or not people giving online for convenience-sake would have given anyway offline.

So it would be muddy stats at best to say what **impact social marketing has had** on all candidates' fundraising, though they are all benefiting greatly from social marketing without a doubt.

Barack Obama on...

[Flickr](#)
[Digg](#)

142,838 results for Barack Obama on [Technorati](#)

Barack Obama has 231029 friends on [MySpace](#)

Obama has 258,852 supporters on [FaceBook](#)
[LinkedIn Profile](#)

By showing candidates who weren't all over the news before the race really heated up, I know that the social media campaigns they mounted were both getting their message out **for the first time** to the people who are behind them *now* while at the same time moving people to contribute who, before, would have said "Ron who?"

The bottom line is social marketing has helped all the candidates a great deal. The internet is a major factor in all political campaigns now and forever. And the way information spreads on the web now more than any other way is through social media.

Social media sites dwarf Google and the other major sites in traffic. Facebook just announced their **daily page views have surpassed Google's**. And that's just Facebook. One of the least helpful social sites for marketers, but one of the highest traffic destinations on the web.

What does this mean to you?

Let's get the obvious things out of the way first. I know what you're thinking...

"These are major national political candidates! I am just a person with a website! Are you actually suggesting I could do the same thing?"

1. I am not saying you are going to raise \$4.2 million in the next 24 hours with social marketing.

2. Political candidates **“move” people to action.** One of the things about social marketing that the vast majority of marketers fail to understand is that you have to move people in your marketing. This case study shows what can happen when you start a movement and stop being an “icky marketer.”

3. If you could only generate **300 new visitors per day** to your marketing materials through your blog via social media, what would that mean financially to you given your current conversion rate? You don’t have to achieve the Holy Grail of social marketing to get incredible results.

No, you aren’t going to do anything near what national Presidential hopefuls are doing. That’s not the point.

I am also very aware that it takes special circumstances to do extraordinary things like Paul’s team pulled off. Social, political, and economic planets must be aligned for such a thing to happen.

But it doesn’t take one iota away from the fact that this phenomenon happened. And that it happened with a medium **you are intensely interested in learning more about** in order to pull the *kind* of attention Paul got for his political campaign to your site.

The power of social marketing cannot, for now, be represented in a more powerful way than with this case study. This is the big daddy of them all for social marketing, hands down.

The same things that work for political campaigns work for marketers. It’s just that most marketers haven’t a clue how it’s really done behind the headlines.

Starting A Movement

The thing you need to remember about social marketing is that you are dealing with people. In as visceral a way as is possible online, you are getting right in the thick of things and your **information is being judged by emotional triggers** that spiders, robots, and algorithms don’t have.

So don’t treat social marketing like Search Engine Optimization! It’s not about keyword density first. It’s about pulling people’s strings on products, services, issues, and stories first.

Search Engine Rankings Are A "Side Effect" Of A Good Social Marketing Campaign.

And a good one focuses on what people are interested in and injecting your .02¢ into the conversation to siphon off links, traffic, and generate viral buzz.

There are bloggers who generate a frenzy of activity on the social sites almost every time they post something. People are ***camped out*** on sites like TechCrunch.com just to get the scoop on the latest post and be the first to post to Digg or any number of other social news sites.

You want to **generate that kind of thing for your web presence**. And to do it, whether you sell after market auto parts, three legged stools, dog training videos, or exercise equipment, you must find the stories ***around*** what you sell and move people with them.

And you must know how to analyze which of the social sites out of thousands are going to be your bread and butter. You **absolutely have to know** how to interact with them from setting up your profile to regular participation that goes beyond just submitting your own stuff.

You have to learn the ***culture*** of each site you use as your primary launch pad for your content and fit in. Once you have a base on some critical sites best targeted to your niche and you learn how to get your content on the first page of those sites, the other social sites will pick you up along with **other bloggers in your niche**.

Social Marketing Misconception #1

"I can't keep up with social media and a slew of different accounts all over the web!"

You're right! You can't! But that's not what a real social marketing campaign does. Real social marketing campaigns focus on **the best places for the message** to go out, which might be just 3 or 4 sites you monitor and interact on daily.

Your goal is to get **the army of social news junkies** on all the other sites possible to pick up your story and pass it on to THEIR favorite sites.

It is also to **catch the eye of an A-List blogger** or two and get them to do a review of your site, product, or post with a link back to your site. (This is where the real links start happening.)

I teach members how to do this in [Social Power Linking](#).

Social Marketing Misconception #2

“The traffic sucks! I get a lot of it, but it doesn’t convert well from certain sites. It’s not worth all the trouble.”

I’m not sure who started this one, but most marketers are under the impression that the purpose of social marketing is to get traffic from social marketing sites. That’s only a **small part** of the reason to do this stuff!

If you get **6000 visitors from Digg.com**, don’t get all excited about it until you see what they are doing. They will mostly come and go without clicking an ad, signing up for your list, or doing anything but reading your post.

If your idea of social marketing ends there, you are going to be **severely** disappointed in the whole thing.

What you need to watch for is **how many links** from other sites your front page story generated. How many bloggers found your story as a result of your front page success and blogged about it, sending you links you’d have to pay big bucks for otherwise?

Knowing the real metrics you are shooting for in a social marketing campaign is **crucial** to your success.

I teach this stuff at [Social Power Linking](#).

Final Thoughts On Social Media And Social Marketing

The kind of results people are getting from social marketing could **never** be achieved with any other form of free or paid advertising. Not search engine optimization and not Pay Per Click advertising.

There is **absolutely nothing** that can generate the scope and size of attention and traffic that social media and a well-run social marketing campaign can.

Social media sites are where all the internet traffic is, hands down. This is not a test, not a fluke, and certainly not something you should be watching to "see if it hangs around."

I have been working **social media for over 2 years**. Most people don't know it's been around that long. It is not a drill or a fad.

It is the biggest thing to happen to the internet since the internet began. **Interactive sites used to mean "forums."** Then social media came along and the web hasn't been the same since.

Every single website owner on the web **absolutely must be involved in social marketing** if they want to drive traffic, links, and raise their search engine rankings considerably.

Monumental Misunderstanding

Where **almost everyone** is failing in social marketing is in being authentic. Marketers immediately look for ways to "game the system" and you simply cannot do that in social marketing. It doesn't work. It never will.

This is because the **people** won't let their favorite sites become nothing more than a 1998 classified ad site with no value whatsoever. And they are 100% right to fight for a clean, valuable user experience.

The key above all else in social marketing is to be a real person. A real user. Someone who is contributing to the conversations related to your niche and **starting/leading other conversations**.

There is no anonymous billionaire on the web. They are all known. And a good deal of their success stems from buzz and putting themselves, their products, and their stories in the right places at the right time.

For you, those places are social media sites. Hands down they are the best places to be on the web to draw traffic and get search engine rankings.

The key is to be real. Be creative in starting conversations and writing content that relates back to your services or products in a non-obvious, non "ad like" way so that the anti-marketers on the social sites vote your stories up to help you gain attention from key people monitoring the front pages for good stories to link to.

Think like a publicist. [Hang out](#) with people who do as well to pick up killer ideas to implement in your own social marketing campaigns.

Social marketing is NOT just data entry and "hitting" a bazillion sites with your latest blog post on why people should buy your product. That is the shallow, lowest common denominator understanding of social marketing today and it is **100% completely wrong!**

When you find someone who says "Social marketing didn't do anything for me. It's a big scam!" then you know they did exactly what I mention in the paragraph above. They are **big fat idiots** for not looking deeper and for spamming.

Don't be like one of those big fat idiots!

You Don't Have A Legitimate Excuse For Ignoring The Easiest And Most Effective Promotion Method On The Web!

[Learn how it's done at Social Power Linking!](#)

You Can Easily Secure Enough Links And Value In One Week To Justify An Entire Year Worth Of Subscription Fees!