

Grassroot e-campaigns show results

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Background

- The Digital Society – What is happening when technology is put into use?
- Social Media Week, Rome
- Take Action Now – Panel on e-Campaigning
 - Daria Santucci, University of Turin

- Panel discussed e-campaigns
- But the story really started back in 2003..

Software Patent Directive

- During the fall of 2003, the European Commission proposed a new software patent directive.
- The open source community, other organizations and individuals were concerned that the new patent directive would hinder innovation.
- A petition web site was set up, and more than 300.000 signatures were collected.
- On September 24th 2003, the European Parliament passed the directive, but with significant limits on the patentability of software
- On July 6th 2005, the European Parliament rejected a revised proposal with 648 against 14 votes.



Property tax

- In Norway municipalities decide whether or not to collect property tax.
- February 2005, Holmestrand, Norway (a small city with a population of 10.000 (This is where I live))
- The majority coalition of the local government proposed introduction of property tax.
- Since property tax had been downplayed as a non-issue during the municipal election campaign in 2003, some citizens felt deceived by the majority coalition.



Property tax

- One citizen, Tommy Sundstrøm, took the matter in his own hands.
- He downloaded an open source petition application from the Internet, set up his own web site and registered the domain name nok-er-nok.net. (enough-is-enough)
- By sending e-mails to friends and acquaintances, asking them to sign, and also to forward the message, he was able to collect around 700 signatures within short time.



Property tax

- The largest party (Labour) changed its position, and the proposal was abandoned.
- The mayor made explicit references to the e-campaign when explaining the change of position.
- Also, the majority coalition fell apart as a result of this abandonment.



Research

- These two campaigns relied on technology to mobilize citizens against the political body responsible for a decision.
- They were both successful..
- But is there any theoretical framework that can be used to explain such campaigns?

Social Movement Theory

- Substantial base of research on Social movements
- Vietnam war, Women liberation, Environmentalists
- Social movements is one type of campaigns
- Can Social Movement Theory be used to explain the successes?



Social movements



Social Movements

- Political objective, change the society, long lasting
- Campaigns can be short lived, and can have other objectives, e.g. a marketing campaign
- Formal or informal structure that directs goals and means of the social movement
- Campaigns in social movements have a protest repertoire, means, tactics, strategies
- Demonstrations, signing a petition..
- **Is lifespan important anymore? Technology may reduce time to achieve a result.**



Social Movements

- A protest group is, by definition, a collectivity of actors who want to achieve their shared goal or goals by influencing decisions of target.
- What is the difference between a protest group and a social movement
 - Size
 - Structure
 - Longevity
- But what is really size, structure and longevity?

[Karl-Dieter Opp: Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements, Routledge, 2009]



Social Movement Theory

- During the last two decades, there has been a growing consensus that social movements can be explained from three factors: This theory identifies three factors that must be present.
- **Political opportunities**
- **Mobilizing structures**
- **Framing processes**

[McAdam, D., McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. N. (1996). Introduction: Opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes - toward a synthetic, comparative perspective on social movements. In D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy & M. N. Zald (Eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements* (pp. 1-20): Cambridge University Press.]



Social Movement Theory

- **Political opportunities**
- A political opportunity must exist. In order to mobilize, there must be a possibility to change current policy. If no one believes it is possible to do something about a problem, it will be impossible to mobilize.



Social Movement Theory

- **Mobilizing structures**

- There must be some kind of structure that makes it possible to enroll supporters of the movement. John D. McCarthy (McCarthy 1996) tried to enumerate the range and variety of mobilizing structures. He stressed the importance of existing informal human networks such as kinship and friendship networks for mobilization. But mobilizing structures may also include such things as a computer network. In this context the computer network may help mobilization, by facilitating enrollment and communication. Without mobilizing structures, it will be impossible to mobilize.



Social Movement Theory

- **Framing processes**
- There must be a clear message that is well understood by people deciding to support or not to support the movement. If there is no clear message, it will be impossible to mobilize.

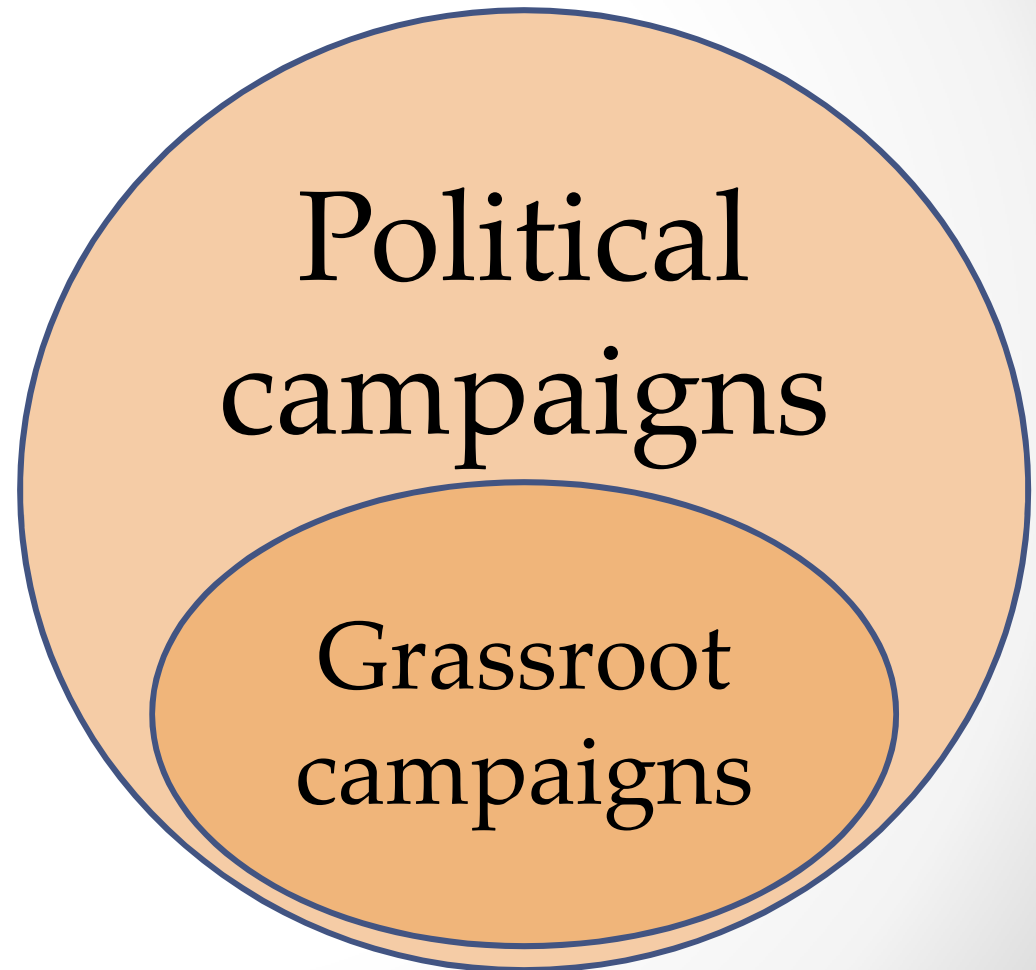


Political Campaigns

Two types of political campaigns:

Politicians trying to influence the public, e.g. election campaigns

Citizens trying to influence politicians



Campaigns

- Bottom up (Initiated by the public)
 - Grassroot campaigns
 - Campaigns by organizations / groups
- Top down (Initiated by politicians)
 - Election campaigns
 - Campaigns to get support for a cause

Grassroot campaigns

- What is the grassroots?
- From answers.yahoo.com:

"grass roots" means at the individual level.

So a grass roots campaign is one where most of the action and support is coming from little guys/individuals at the local level as opposed to a top-down campaign where big money donors and people in powerful positions are driving it.

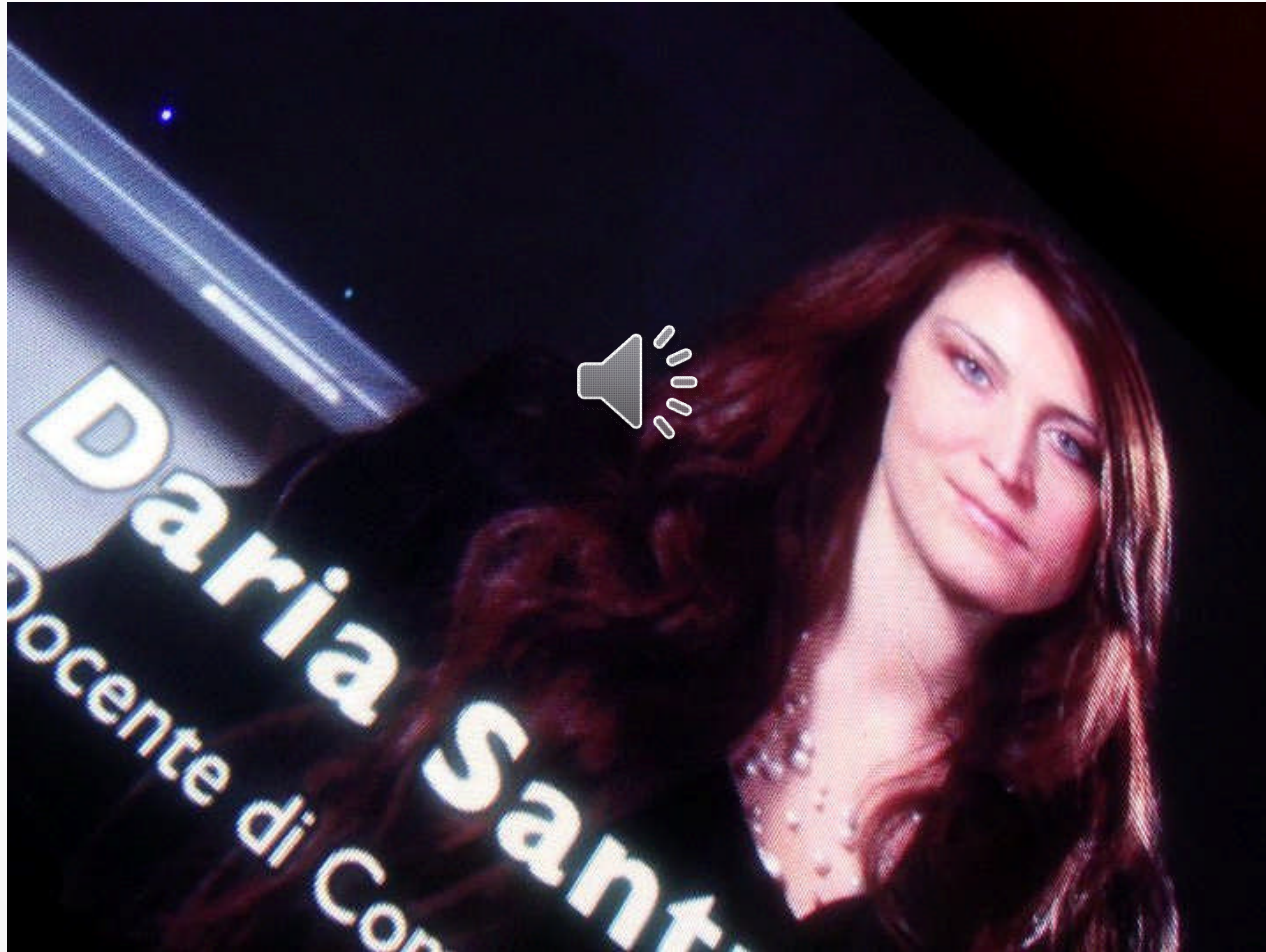


What is new

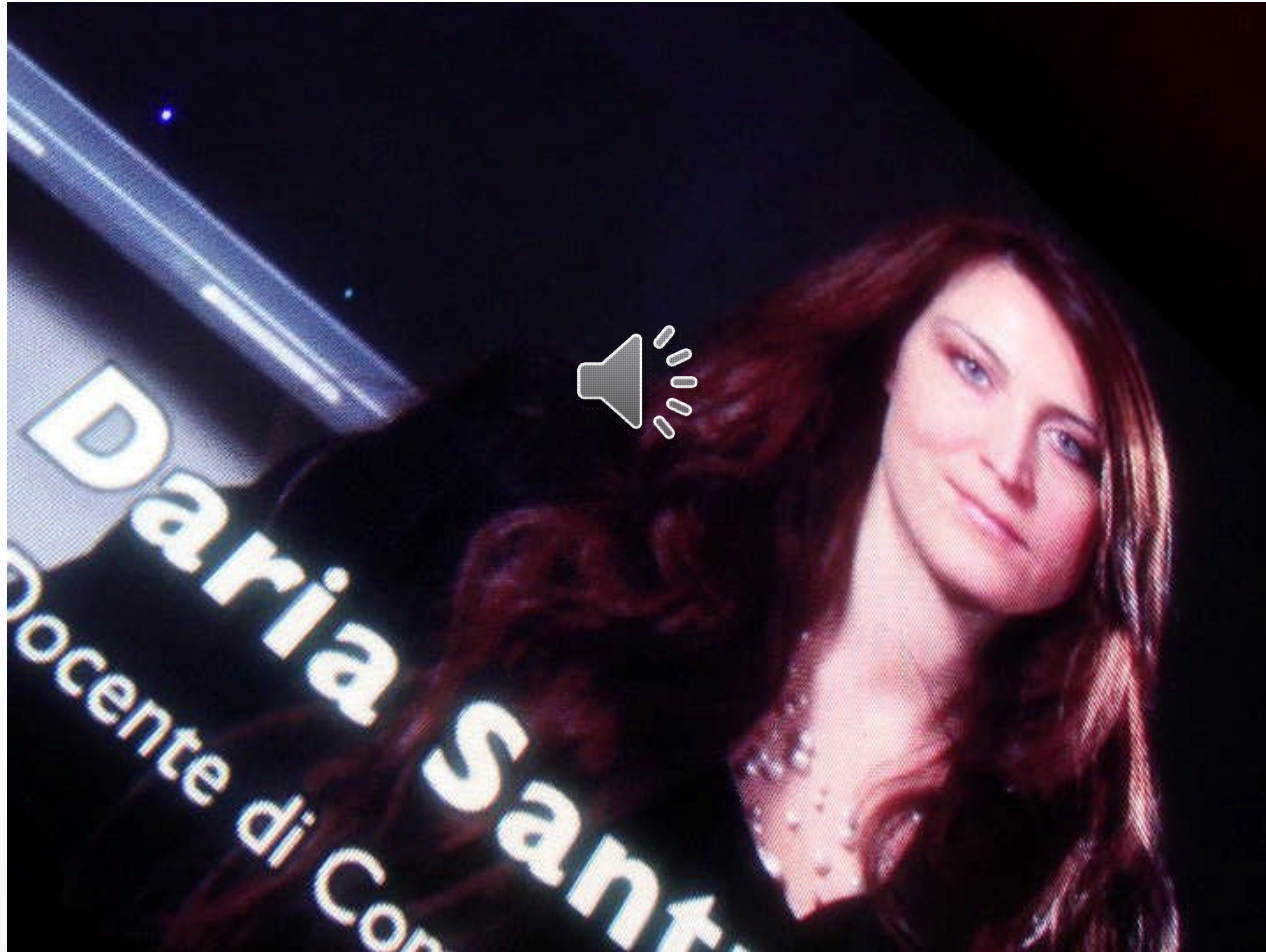
- So we had successful e-campaigns for many years
- But what is new, what is the new mechanisms or new technology?



Social Media Week



E-campaigning



Impact of Technology

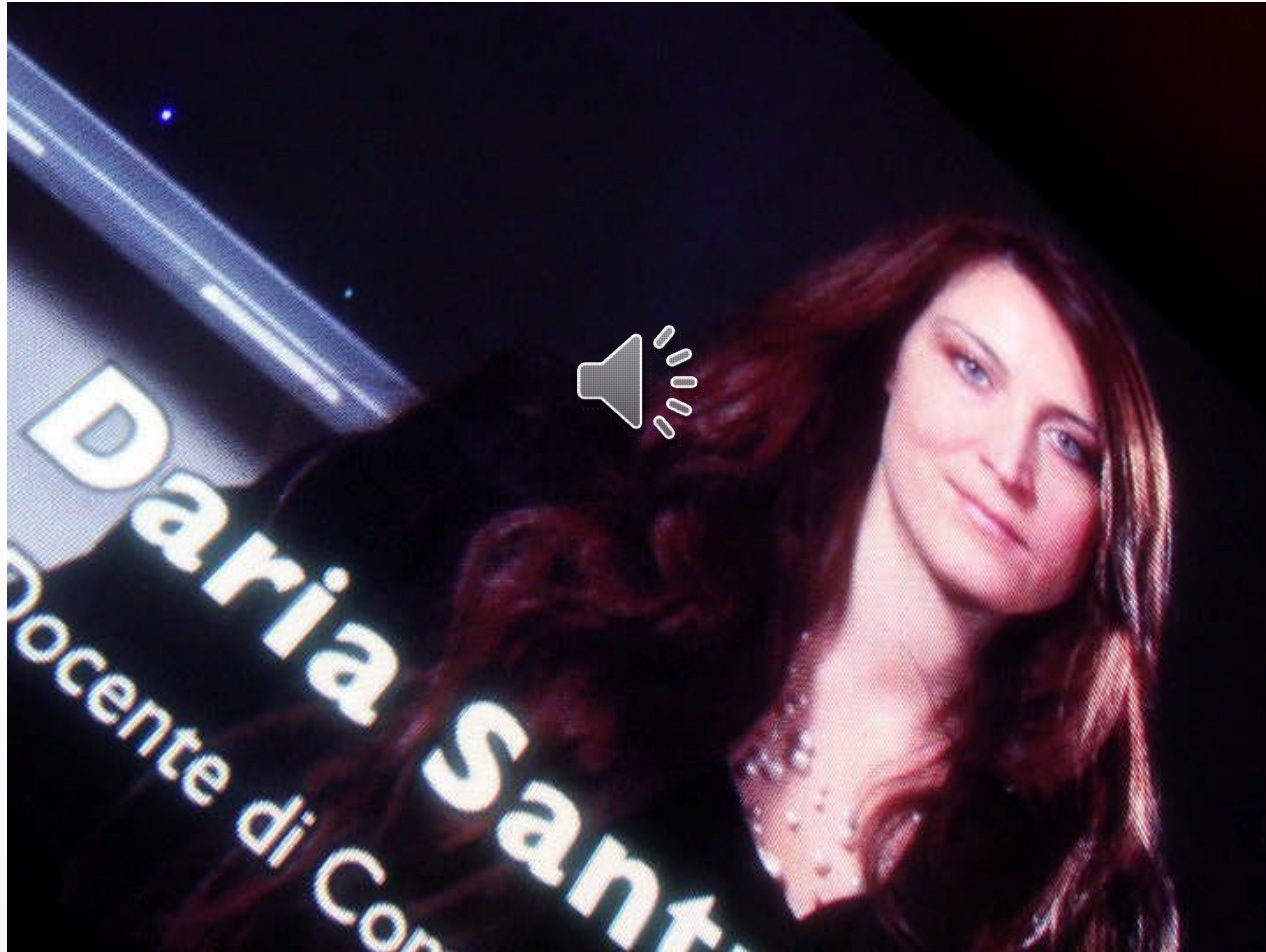


Impact of Technology

- Technology has always been important
- Technology gives tactical advantages
- But technology can also cause superficial participation
- Clicktivism



Quality of participation



What does this mean?

- Easier to initiate campaigns
- Easier and faster community building



Egypt



Egypt

- Protest repertoire
 - Demonstrations in the streets
 - But also through social media
- Colleague
- Facebook very important
- Fear wall broke

Set Maria Amelie Free

- The case of Maria Amelie, 25 years old
- Illegal immigrant
- Came to Norway when 15 years old
- Finished her M.Sc. Degree in Norway
- Expelled by the Norwegian Government

Sett Maria Amelie Free

Sett Maria Amelie fri - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Sett-Maria-Amelie-fri/100319553378865

Facebook

Sett Maria Amelie fri

Wall Info Photos Boxes Events Notes

Share: Post Photo Video

Write something...

Sett Maria Amelie fri + Others Just Sett Maria Amelie fri Just Others

Arne Sigurd Moe God morgen! Husk å spre vårt budskap med glede og medmenneskelighet til alle du møter. Vær et godt forbilde for det vi står for.
47 minutes ago · Like · Comment

3 people like this.

Liisa Tellervo Helander Tusen takk for at du minnet oss på det. Når 91000 smilefjes er ut i samfunnet så må da det synes:-)
25 minutes ago · Like · 1 person · Flag

Write a comment...

Ansten Stabell God morgen alle Maria venner her inne. I nå e det atter en ny uke som står foran oss. Og derfor håper æ at den kan over våre alle kjære Maria. Og at hun snart e heime her

Amy Cecilie Berntzen 0 Chat (27)

36 Friends Like This
6 of 36 Friends See All

Create an Ad

Connect With More Friends

Share the Facebook experience with more of your friends. Use our simple invite tools to start connecting.

More Ads

8:32 AM 2/7/2011

Set Maria Amelie Free

- Facebook
- More than 60.000 «likes» in two days
- More than 90.000 «likes» in one week



Set Maria Amelie Free

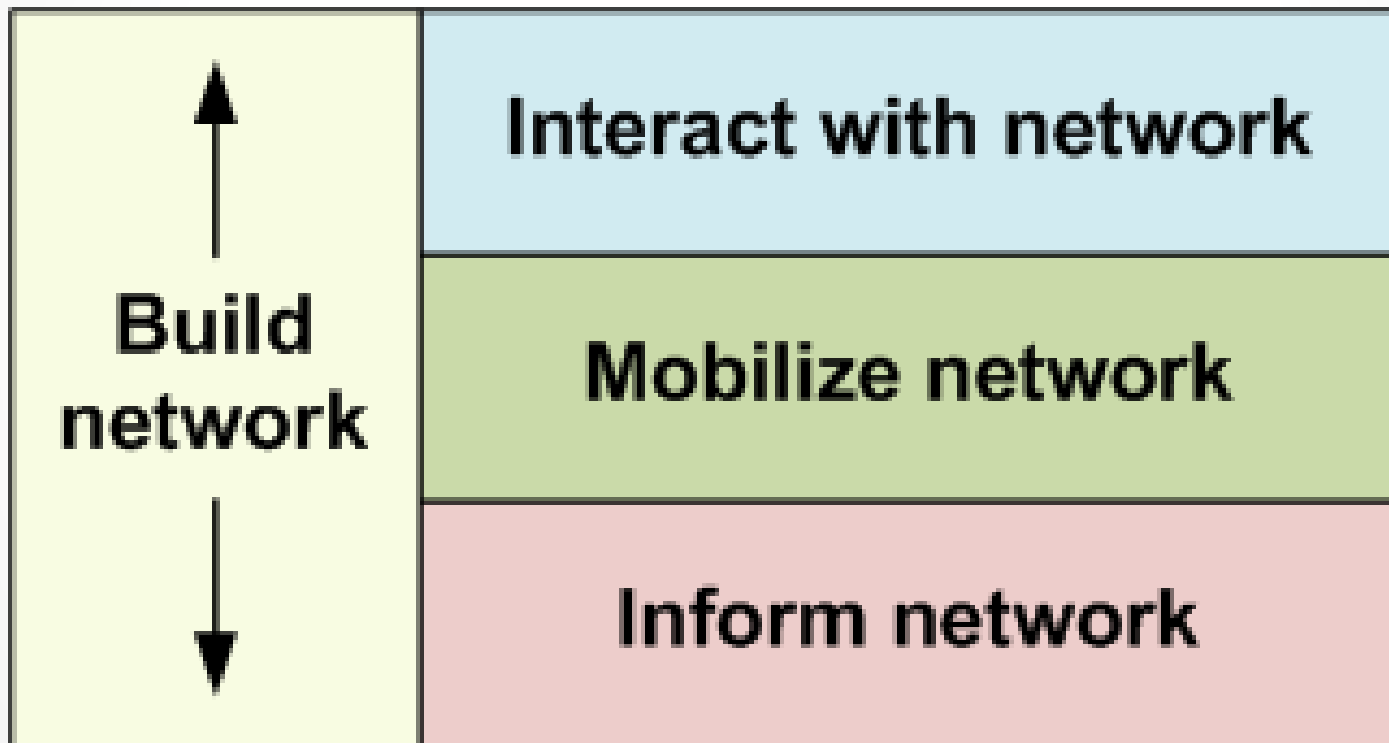
- She was sent back to Russia,
- But government was pressured into changing the rules
- She is now arranging documents to get ready for applying for a work permit in Norway.
- Gave a lot of focus on how illegal immigrants are treated

Observations

- Interrelationship between media and social media
- New ways of utilizing social media



Steps in utilizing social media



Interrelationship

- No social media campaign lives its own life!
- The interrelationship of traditional media and social media
- Result is often upward spiral



New ways

- Background information, fact finding
- Real time updates
 - «She is now put in the police car»
 - «Watch TV2 now»
- Mobilization for other activities
 - Demonstrations
 - Amnesty online campaign
 - Recurring
- New phenomen: Like, comment, unlike
- Upward spiral effect



Thanks

The presenter wants to thank:

- Prof. James Godbolt, Vestfold University College, Norway
- Prof. Daria Santucci, University of Turin, Italy

For their contributions to this presentation (through video and audio interviews)

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