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LANSNER ON REAL ESTATE



By Jonathan Lansner and Jeff Collins

3 reasons you must use Twitter

December 6th, 2009, 11:00 am · 1 Comment · posted by Jon Lansner

SOCIAL SUNDAY



David Fuelling is executive director of The 3for5

Foundation, a non-profit, social-fundraising campaign that promotes clean water, sanitation facilities, and hygiene education. The idea? Donate \$5 toward clean-water projects in the developing world and invite 3 close friends to do the same — creating a “wave” for clean water. Here’s what Fuelling thinks of one of his favorite media tools ... Use Twitter! A “must-use” web-service for anyone with a message to share. Individuals or organizations with anything to say ignore Twitter at their own peril. That’s a pretty bold statement, but three important aspects of Twitter highlight our experience related to promoting our message about clean water:

- 1. Twitter only allows messages in 140 characters or less.** That restriction might, at first, seem like a drawback when compared to the functionality on Facebook, but it is precisely what gives Twitter the edge when it comes to engaging with people who care about your cause. In our case, if a particular user starts following us on Twitter, it’s because they want interesting, concise information about what 3for5 is up to. That’s a really big deal because it helps us tailor our message in potentially more meaningful ways (e.g., a short tweet as opposed to a long blog post).
- 2. People on Twitter talk back.** Sometimes they just echo what we’re saying, and that tends to help others learn about our message. In other cases, people will actually respond directly to us via Twitter. The dialogue is authentic and concise, and generally yields incredibly helpful information for everyone involved. (Welcome Doubtters! Look carefully for value in what might otherwise be perceived as just discouraging commentary. Engage in constructive dialogue that might actually lead to significant improvements to your idea! When we started 3for5, one common concern was that our goal of uniting 20 million people for clean water was too ambitious. This feedback helped us realize the importance of setting smaller, incremental goals.)
- 3. Closely related to the second point, people on Twitter tend to be “sneezers.”** You know the type — whenever you talk to a sneezer, they just can’t wait to tell you about a new gadget or idea that they’ve come across. We don’t write about sneezers in a negative way (after all, most of us involved in 3for5 are sneezers ourselves). However, it’s vital to engage this type of person in your cause because that person will likely tell 10 friends about your idea or organization off-line. In that regard, using Twitter will help your idea or organization in the online world, but will likely yield incredible results offline as people interact face-to-face with their friends.

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