

Union and Social Media: Cost effective medium for union campaign



What is social media?

Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking¹

Forms of electronic communication (as websites for social networking and micro blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)²

The first part uses the word “**social**,” which in this case refers to the act of being social, or socializing. It is about interacting and engaging people, treating people with respect, liking people so they will like you back, and communicating “with” them, rather than “at” them. The second part of the term is “**media**,” which refers to a means of mass communication such as a newspaper, magazine, radio station, TV network, or website. In essence, “social media” means you are socializing, or being social over a means of mass communication, or a form of media³.

Social media appear in many forms including blogs and microblogs, forums and message boards, social networks, wikis, virtual worlds, social bookmarking, tagging and news, writing communities, digital storytelling and scrapbooking, and data, content, image and video sharing, podcast portals, and collective intelligence.

There are lots of well-known sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, Path, YouTube, Flickr, WordPress, Blogger, Typepad, LiveJournal, Wikipedia, Wetpaint, Wikidot, Second Life, Del.icio.us, Digg, Reddit, Lulu and many others.

Why unions should embrace social media?

The new social media is very powerful thing. It allows unions to have intimate, personal conversations with hundreds, if not thousands of members, potential members and supporters.

Social media allows for unmediated communications and dialogue across vast distances, and at any time of the day or night.

Using social-media tools, unions can create a virtual ‘face’ for their organizations. When used to disseminate information about operating policies, initiatives and progress, social media helps to establish executive transparency. When used to connect and promote dialogue with the public, social media tools can help to galvanize your community and develop trusting relationships.

Social media tools have many advantages over traditional media that union organizations need to understand in order to use them to their fullest.

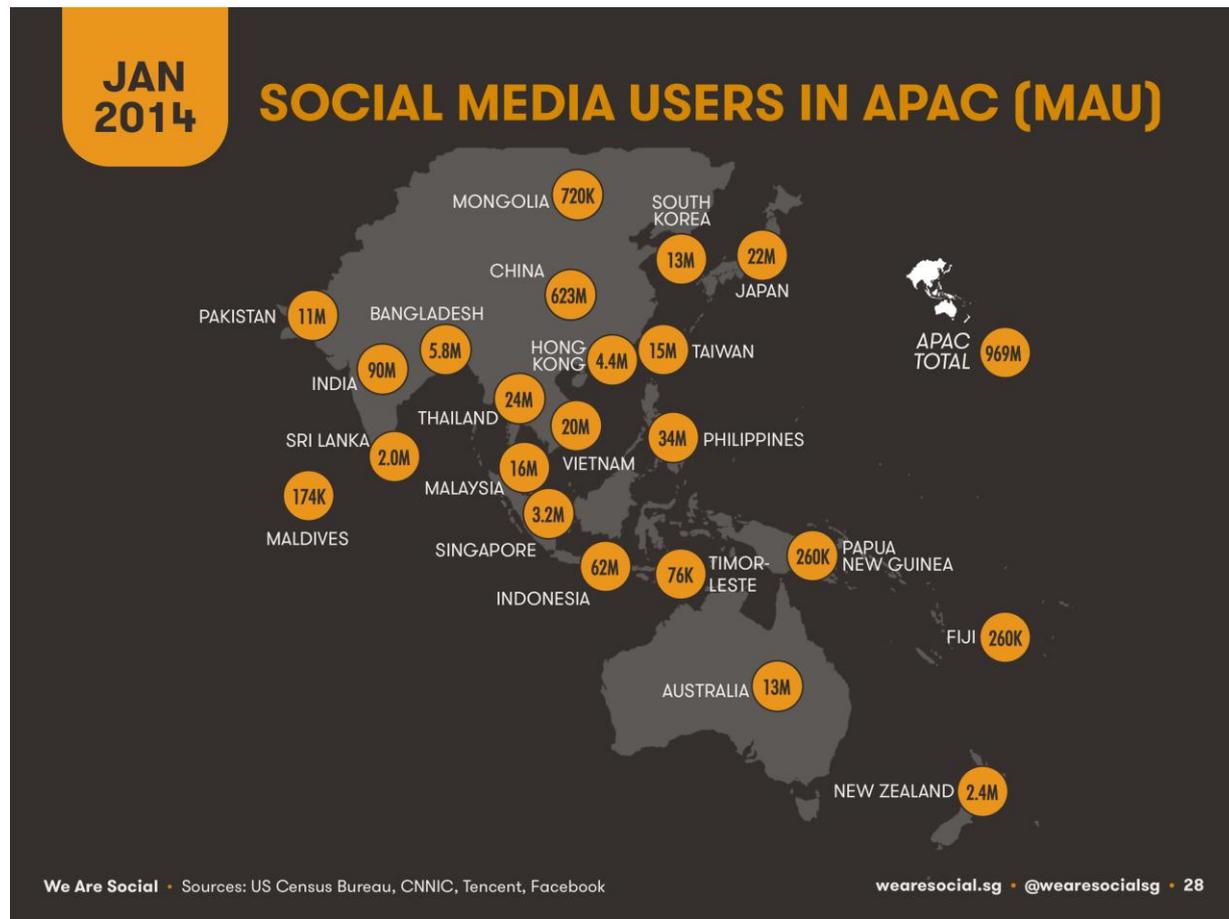
¹ Refer to the definition of Oxford dictionary

² Refer to the definition of Merriam-Webster

³ Source: Forbes online - <http://www.forbes.com/sites/scottlevy/2013/11/22/do-you-really-know-what-social-media-is/>

Social media can be used for:

Information	The provision of resources, background information, media partnerships and general information for the members and public. This includes sharing and promoting information about union activities, such as campaign, strike, meetings, events, etc
Education	Activities, training materials and other resources for members. This includes providing easy, timely access to research and other union publications
Outreach	Links to and partnerships with national centre, international trade union movement, civil society and other friendly organisations
Engagement	Active channels to inform and connect (communication) with members and potential members, to solicit submission and build interest in union. This includes direct consultation with the members on membership matters, grievance handling, regulation, policy, collective bargaining, etc



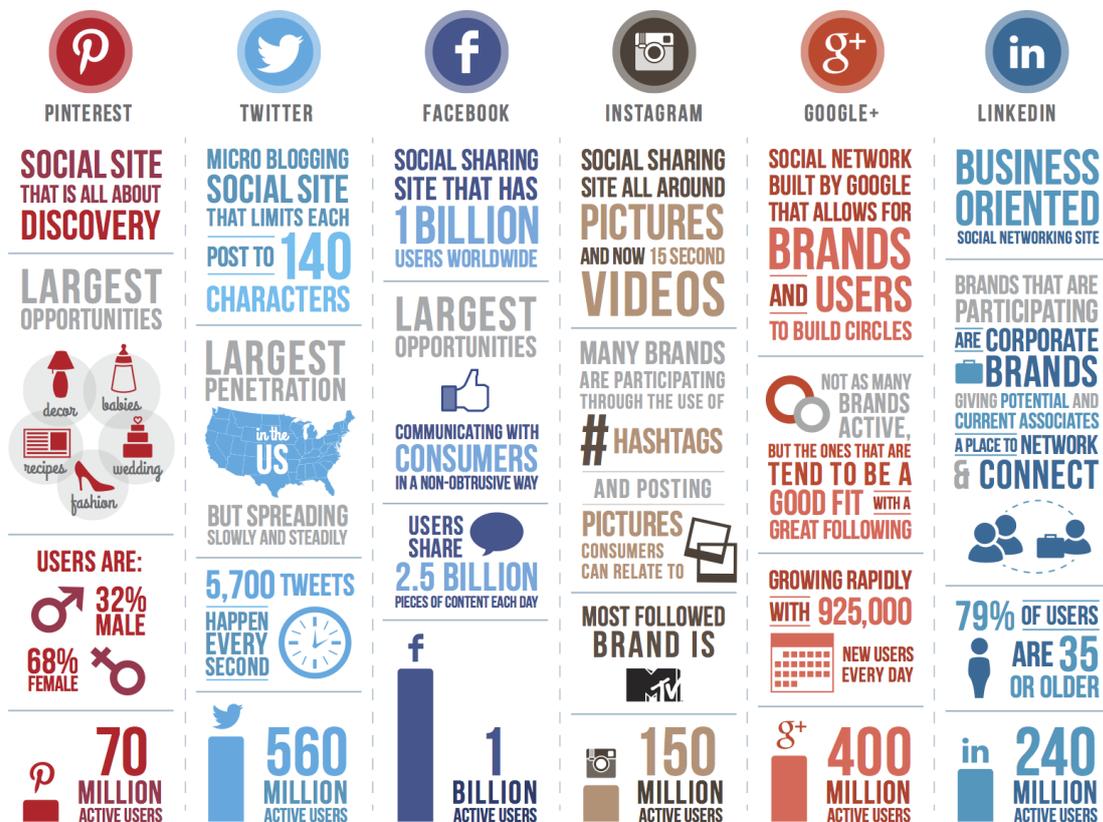
Source: <http://was-sg.wascdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Slide028.png>

The players in social media

Blogs	Blog is in short for Web log . "Blog" is an abbreviated version of "weblog," which is a term used to describe web sites that maintain an ongoing chronicle of information. A blog features diary-type commentary and links to articles on other Web sites, usually presented as a list of entries in reverse chronological order. Blogs range from the personal to the political, and can focus on one narrow subject or a whole range of subjects.	
	www.blogger.com	Free weblog publishing tool from Google
	http://wordpress.com/	WordPress is a free and open source blogging tool
	http://www.weebly.com/	Named one of TIME's 50 Best Websites, Weebly gives everyone a surprisingly easy way to create a unique and free website
	https://www.tumblr.com/	Micro-blogging platform and social networking website founded (owned by Yahoo!). The service allows users to post multimedia and other content to a short-form blog.
<p>Alex White⁴ said that union blog is very important. A blog lets you paint a picture about your union's activities, campaigns, services, and successes. They let you tell those stories in an authentic and credible way. And the best thing is that blogging about those stories is Google secret-sauce. Search engines, like Google (the most used search engine), absolutely love blogs. They provide rich, relevant and updated content for their web-crawlers. The more content you have on your blog, the easier it is for people to find it online using Google.</p> <p>Free blog are not actually free! Mean that you are not able to get your own domain; you have no control over your blog. Your blog is hosted on another site, thus you are not the "owner" of this property. If moderators decide that your blog does not fit with their policies</p>		
Forum and message board	<p>is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.voy.com/ • http://www.runboard.com/ • http://www.proboards.com/ 	
Facebook	<p>is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. The site, which is available in 37 different languages, includes public features</p>	

⁴ <http://alexwhite.org/>

	<p>such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketplace - allows members to post, read and respond to classified ads. • Groups - allows members who have common interests to find each other and interact. • Events - allows members to publicize an event, invite guests and track who plans to attend. • Pages - allows members to create and promote a public page built around a specific topic. • Presence technology - allows members to see which contacts are online and chat. <p>Visit: https://www.facebook.com/</p>
<p>Twitter⁵</p>	<p>is a social network and real-time communication service launched in 2006 and used by millions of people and organizations to quickly share and discover information. The updates of information called 'tweets' which are messages of up to 140 characters long that anyone can send or read. Visit: https://twitter.com/</p>



Designed by: Leverage - leveragewagemedia.com

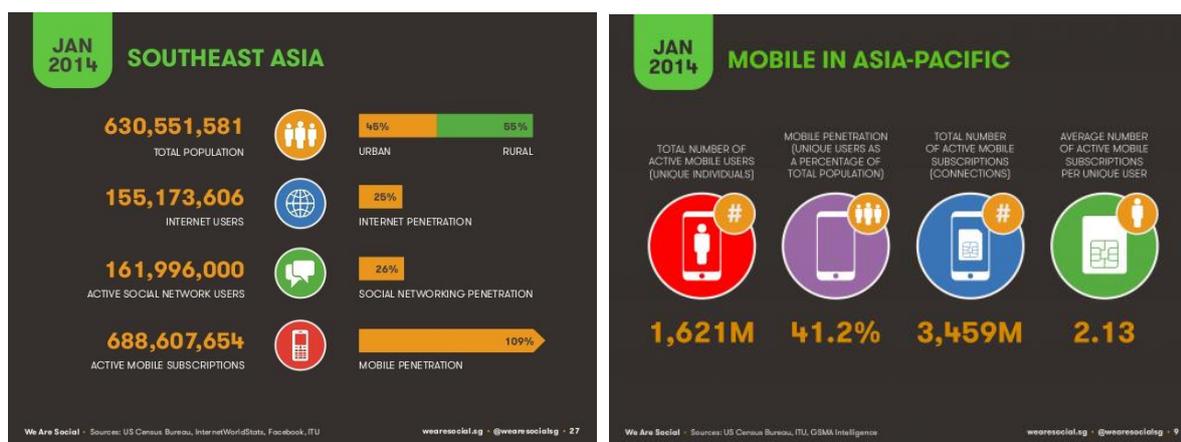
Source: http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/social-media-stats-2014_b54243

⁵ Read more: <http://dashburst.com/guide/what-is-twitter-about/>

Path	<p>is a mobile-only social network that limits you to just 150 friends! This is to encourage users to select only high-quality connections, an intimate way to share the stuff you're doing without broadcasting it to the entire world. However, you still have the option to link Path to your Facebook, Twitter, and Foursquare accounts, meaning the app can double as a great hub for all your social networks.</p> <p>Visit: https://path.com/</p>
Google+	<p>is literally Google with a plus. The "+" is the social networking it adds to all of Google's other services, including Gmail, YouTube, and Blogger. Google+ brings popular social-media features like comments, photo- and music-sharing, video-chat, etc. to your social circles.</p> <p>Visit: https://plus.google.com/</p>
Pinterest	<p>is a social media site that allows users to “pin” images and videos they find online to a virtual pinboard and share them with others. Almost 65% of pinterest users is female</p>

Mobile phone and internet

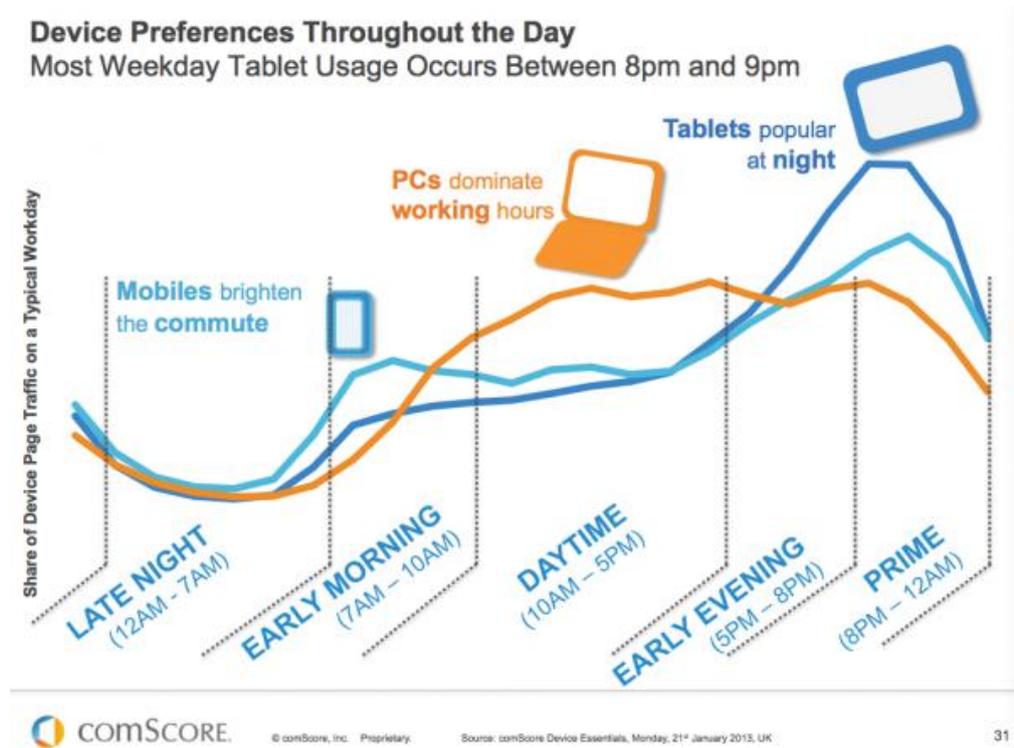
Mobile phone internet connections are increasing more rapidly therefore is now mobile devices are people’s most important devices. Connected mobile devices have already outpaced more traditional means of internet access such as laptops and PCs, while Smartphone sales now outnumber those of feature phones around the world too.



Source: <http://www.slideshare.net/wearesocialsg/social-digital-mobile-around-the-world-january-2014>

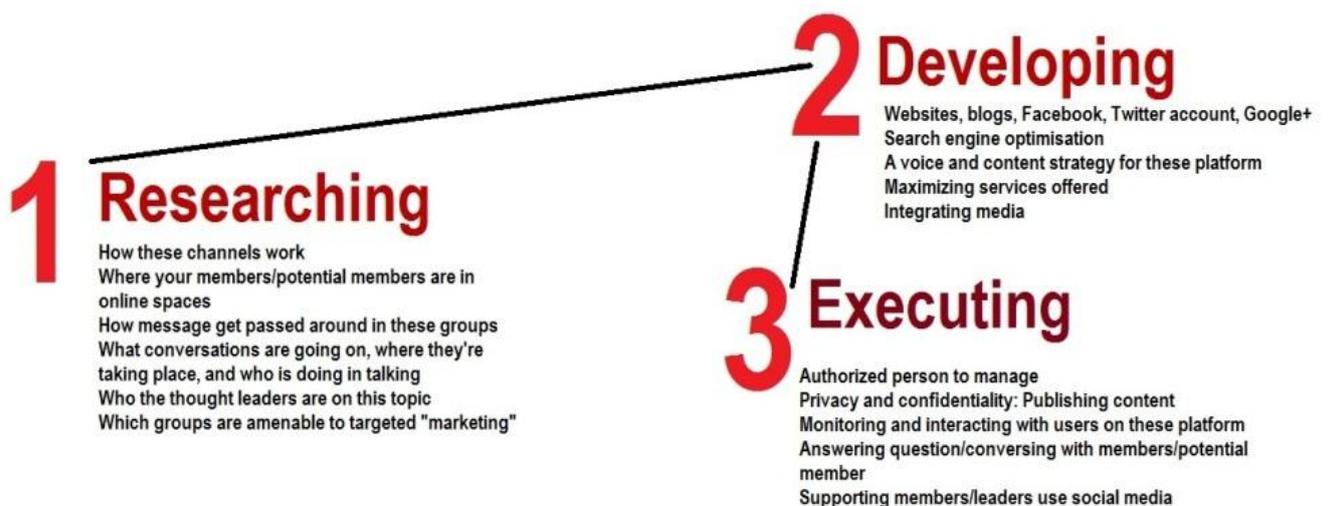
Speed is critical aspect on union campaign and advocacy work, and mobile phone allow the rapid dissemination of message to network with specific call for action. Therefore,

it's time that union started to pay very close attention to mobile as a communications, action and commerce platform. See picture below on how people behaviour using mobile phone:



Source: <http://thirdeye.com/10-eye-opening-facts-about-mobile-browsing/>

Developing an effective social media program that fits your union requires a number of steps:



Strategies for engagement

Like any endeavour, the effective use of social networking requires practice, and trial-and-error. Consumers of social media (union members, potential members and supporters) can interact with corporate and commercial users that have a high standard of professionalism. If a union is going to start using social media, it must be prepared to **invest time and (human) resources to do so properly.**

Engage in conversation	Be active and involved in online communities	Choose your social media network carefully
Open up the union to socialising	ownership	Keep at it, be consistent
Trust is essential	Communicate, don't sell	Design is important
Think before you post	Governance and oversight: (1) Authorizing the use of social media (2) Authorized to disclose	Supporting members' use of social media
Copyright, intellectual property and licensing	Privacy and confidentiality	Language, accessibility and balance
Constant improvement	Control	Using photos is important (use your union/members own photos)

Examples of using social media

FACEBOOK



- Most popular social networking sites, 1.25 billion users
- Effectively make friends for a living. Besides which, work-related networking
- Full of professional activists and organizers playing their trade openly.
- Corporate oriented but Facebook hosts thousands of politically-oriented groups including union

(1) “Advertising” Your Union: Create Page

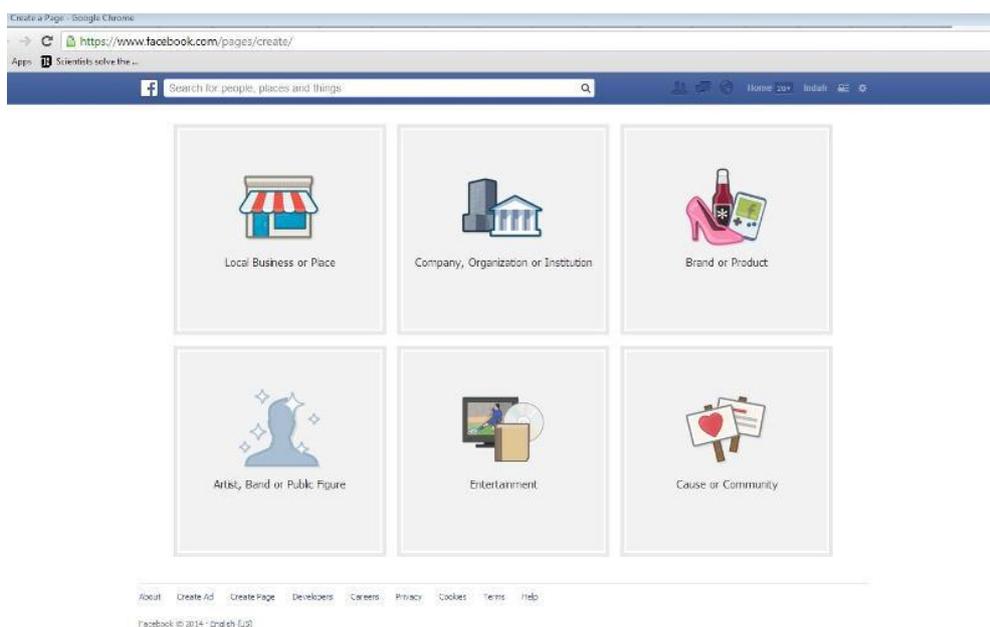
- Facebook Pages give you a more dynamic relationship with the public figures and organizations you are interested in (released in 2007)
- You can updates directly to your fans home page (**add to interests list or like as your page**)
- Facebook page and Twitter - *to share updates with their Twitter followers, status updates, links, photos, notes, events or all of them.*
- *Allows to attract more friends (fan) that facebook account which only limited to 5000 friends*





How to create Facebook Page?

- Go to facebook.com/pages/create
- Click a Page category
- Select a more specific category from the dropdown menu and fill out the required information
- Click to check the box next to **I agree to Facebook Pages Terms**
- Click **Get Started**



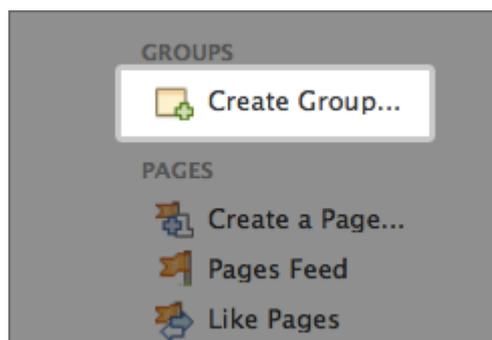
(2) Facebook Group

- More easy to add friends (unlimited), WITHOUT permission
- can privately share content such as photos, opinions, events, and text documents with others – received the notice without your consent
- edit setting: open or control (ask for join the group), edit notify if you don't want your inbox quickly fill up with message notification
- update sent directly to your email inbox
- As long as a group is under 5,000 members, group admins can send messages to the group members that will appear in their inboxes.
- Groups offer far more control over who gets to participate. Permissions settings make it possible for group admins to restrict access to a group

How do I create a group?⁶

To create a group:

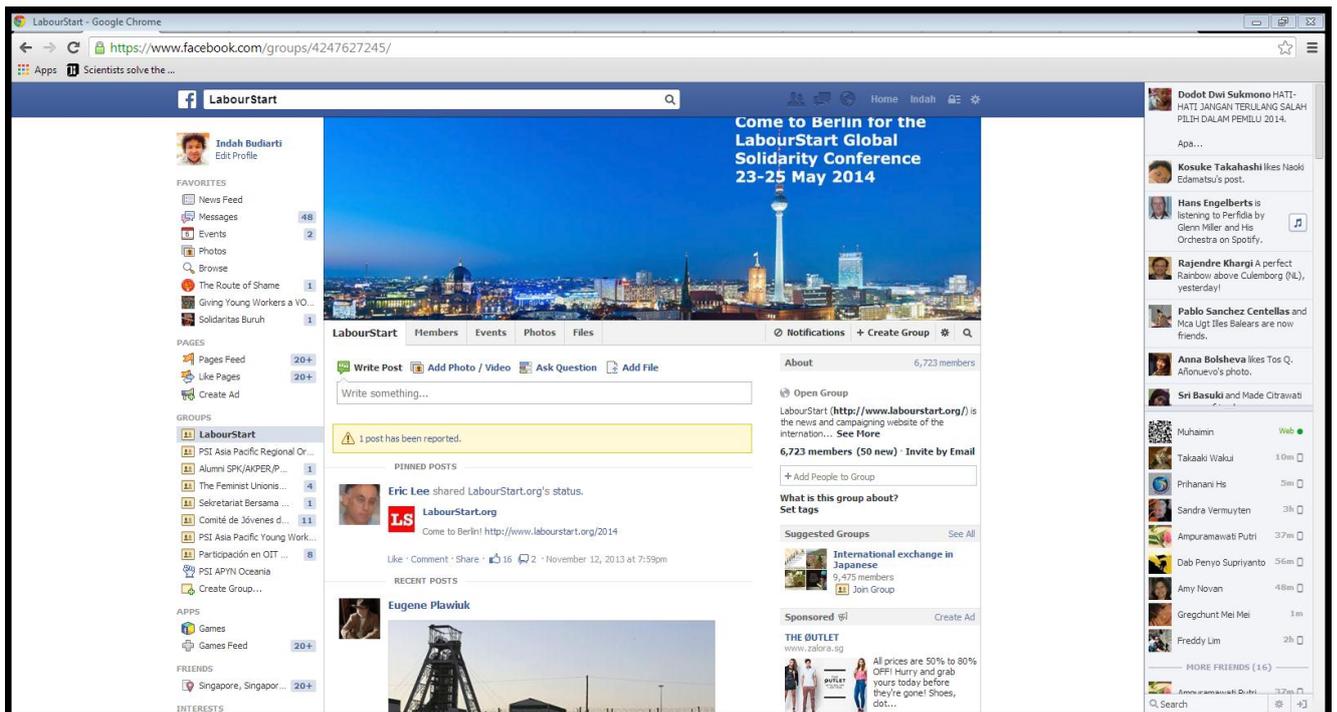
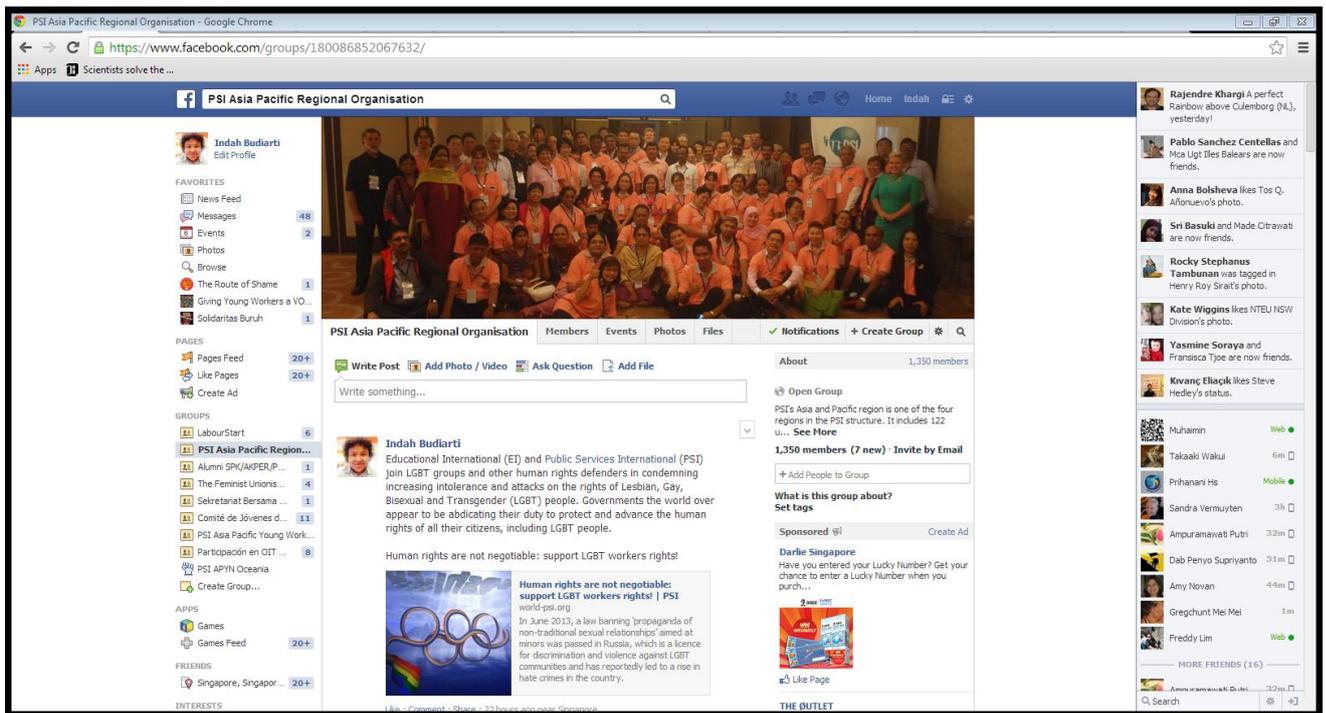
- (1) From your home page, go to the **Groups** section on the left side menu and click **Create Group**.



- (2) A window will appear where you'll be able to add a group name, add members and select the privacy setting for your group. Click **Create** when you're done.

Once the group is created, you'll be taken to the group. To get started, click * at the top right of the group and select **Edit Group Settings**. From here you can add a group description, tags, set a group email address, add a group picture and manage members.

⁶ Source: <https://www.facebook.com/help/>



PSI's facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PSIglobalunion>

PSI's Route of Shame page: <https://www.facebook.com/TheRouteOfShame>

PSI APRO's Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/180086852067632/>

REMEMBER: Though is free, Facebook is business orientation and union should never forget that. Therefore, we must aware of the severe constraints that are present when using Facebook:

- Intervene to shut down the account;

- Advertising that display on the pages of individuals and groups they found controversial;
- The content of some user pages, groups, blogs, and forums has been criticized for promoting or dwelling upon controversial and often divisive topics;
- In the lifespan of its service, Facebook has made many changes that directly impact its users, and their changes often result in criticism.

TWITTER⁷



Micro-blogging that allows you to express yourself in ONLY 140 characters! <http://twitter.com>

Micro blogging means blogging with limited words. You can share your website's or blog's URL and there are many ways of shorten up URL.

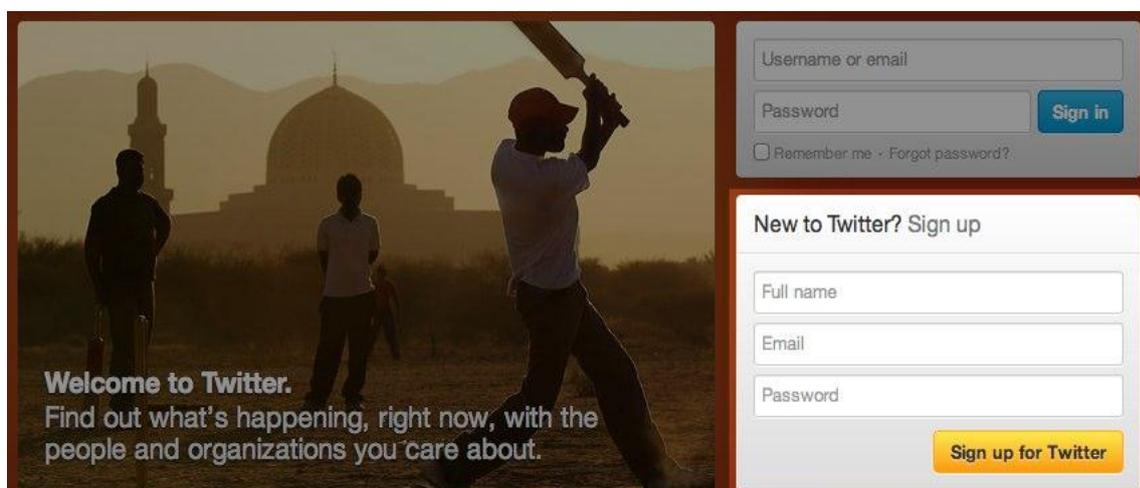
It is like SMS service on the internet, which you use in cell phones.

Twitter is a powerful communication platform providing social networkers the opportunity to post updates in real-real time.

How you can use your twitter:

- Share media on twitter in real-time (photo or video) – you can upload directly of use twitpic (<http://twitpic.com/>)
- Share documents: use TwitDoc - <http://twitdoc.com/>

Signing up with twitter⁸

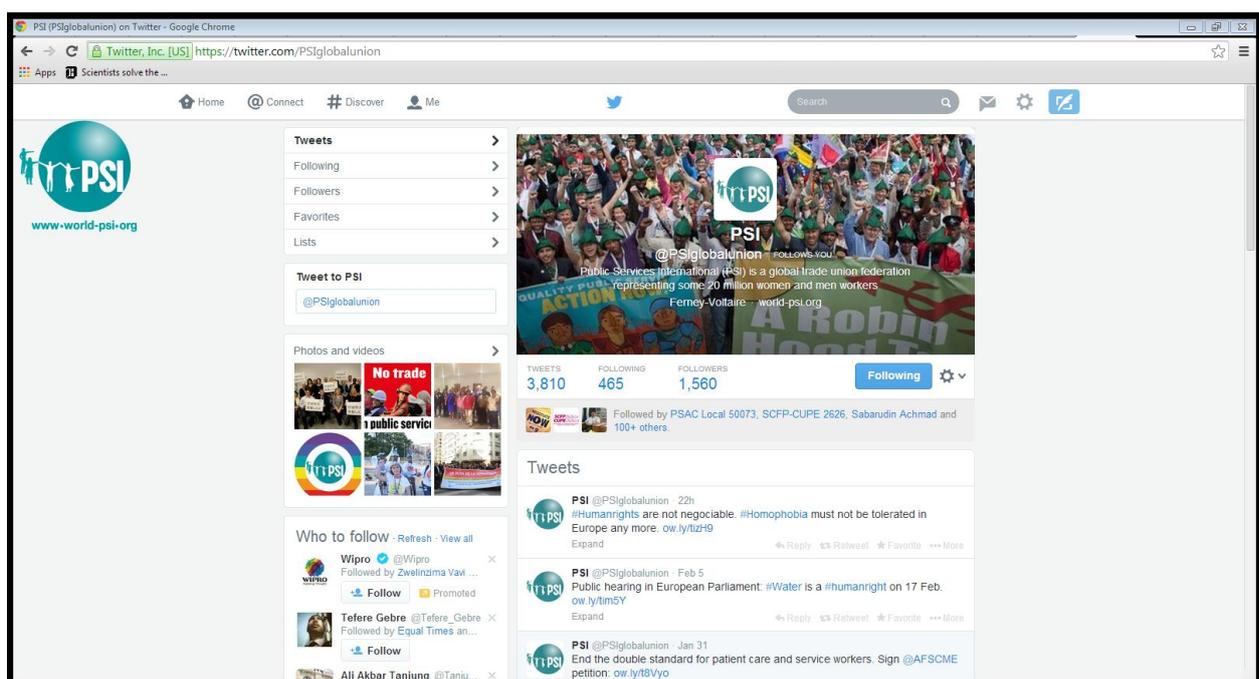


⁷ To learn and get support from Twitter about what do you want to know, please visit: <https://support.twitter.com/>

⁸ Source: <https://support.twitter.com/articles/100990-signing-up-with-twitter>

- (1) Go to <http://twitter.com> and find the sign up box, or go directly to <https://twitter.com/signup>
- (2) Enter your **full name (or your union name), email address,** and a **password.**
- (3) Click **Sign up for Twitter.**
- (4) On the next page, you can select a **username** (usernames are unique identifiers on Twitter) — type your own or choose one we've suggested. We'll tell you if the username you want is available.
- (5) **Double-check** your name, email address, password, and username.
- (6) Click **Create my account.** You may be asked to complete a Captcha to let us know that you're human.
- (7) Twitter will send a **confirmation email** to the address you entered on sign up, click the link in that email to confirm your email address and account.

See below example, PSI's twitter account: [@PSIglobalunion](https://twitter.com/PSIglobalunion)



Familiarisation with Twitter

You've signed up and tweeted your first thought into the beyond, but what do you do now? Well, it's time to learn the finer points about how to connect with your audience and join the global conversation.

- **Reply to a Tweet:** A Retweet is a re-posting of someone else's Tweet. Twitter's Retweet feature helps you and others quickly share that Tweet with all of your followers.



- **Mention** – Include others (other person @username) in your content (of your 140 characters) – see example @radiolabour @PSIglobalunion
- **Hashtag** - People use the hashtag symbol # before a relevant keyword or phrase (no spaces) in their Tweet to categorize those Tweets and help them show more easily in Twitter Search, see example: **#QualityPublicServices**. *By Clicking on a hashtagged word in any message shows you all other Tweets marked with that keyword*

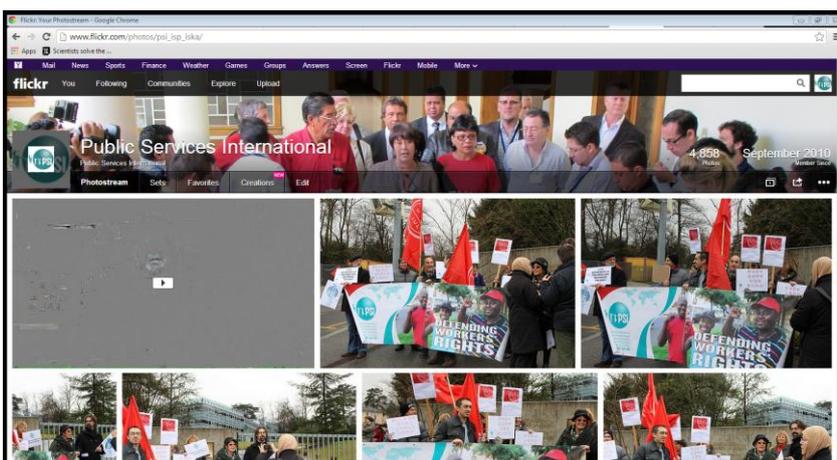
Seven ideas for unions to use Twitter⁹

- (1) **Put up original, personal ideas on your union's sector or industry.** Include reflections or opinions on your union's industry. This is designed at making your union an authoritative commentator on your industry, and builds your relationship with your followers.

⁹ Source: Alex White "Social Media for Unions": <http://alexwhite.org/shop/social-media-unions/>

- (2) **Share photos of events quickly.** Tools such as Twitpic and similar allow immediate sharing of photos with followers. For members or supporters who can't attend a rally or delegates meeting, putting up a photo on Twitter can make them feel part of the action
- (3) **Follow Twitter trends.** Look up what people are saying about your union, and the employers of your members. There are some great tools for searching Twitter and following trends. You can get a good idea of whether people are speaking positively or negatively about your union or an employer, and get up to the minute news from your industry.
- (4) **Interact.** Ask questions and answer them. Get involved in conversations, especially those in your industry or sector. This builds good will, and develops your relationships - this is especially good if you have lots of members as followers
- (5) **Build your followers carefully.** Ignore the “follower builder” offers (spammers offering to increase your follower count for payment). You want to have followers who are following you because they are genuinely interested in your union and what you have to say. Don't blindly follow people back - check to make sure they aren't spammers or p*rn. Don't just follow union Twitter accounts. If you can, cross-check your membership list with those already on Twitter.
- (6) **Use a Twitter application.** The Twitter website is ok, but has limitations. There are some very powerful Twitter applications. I personally recommend Twitterfox- an addon for Firefox. Some applications install into your web browser, and some are used on the desktop. Tweetdeck is a very popular desktop application, although I don't use it. Both Twitterfox and Tweetdeck are free.
- (7) **Finally, don't be ignorant of the basics.** There are some great 101 Guides to Twitter. Twitter's own guide is a good start: <https://support.twitter.com/>

FLICKR



Flickr is a photo-sharing website where anyone can upload and tag photos, browse others' photos, and add comments and annotations. Users can create photo sets and collections to manage content and participate in topical groups to cultivate a sense of community: <http://www.flickr.com/>

You can sign up for a free Flickr account, which allows you to upload up to 1 terabyte of photos and videos, edit and organize your photos, set them for private or public viewing, and then share with your members through link address.

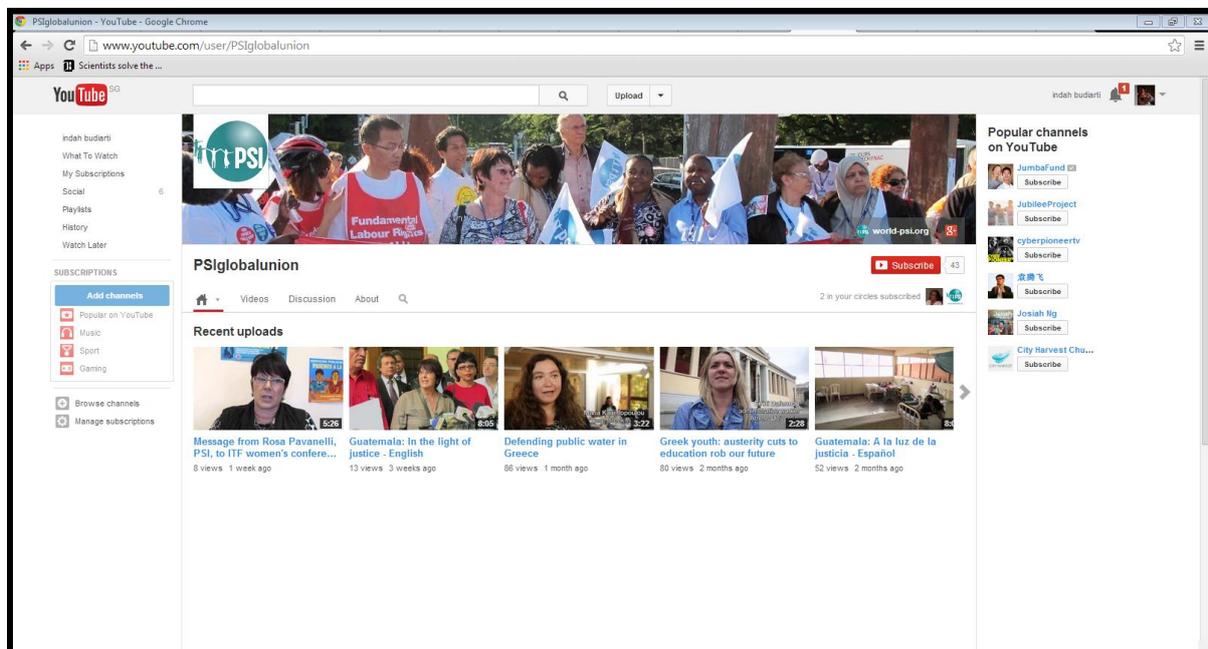
YOUTUBE¹⁰



YouTube is a website designed for sharing video. Millions of users around the world have created accounts on the site that allow them to upload videos that anyone can watch.

Video files can be very large and are often too big to send to someone else by email. By posting a video on YouTube, you can share a video simply by sending the other person a url 'link' – that is, the 'address' of the relevant internet page.

Visit PSI's YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/PSIglobalunion>



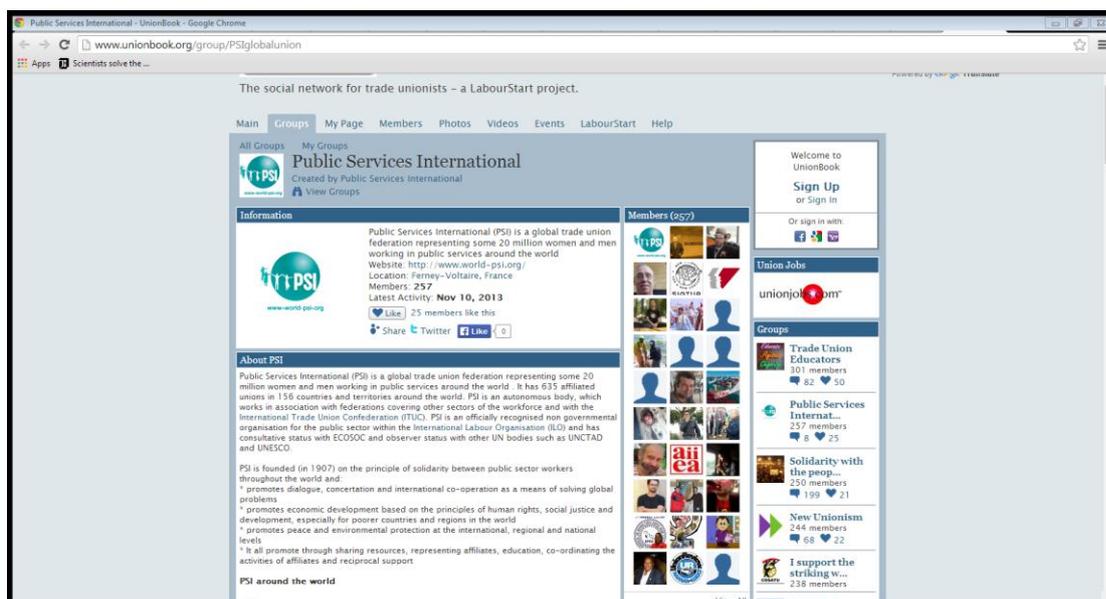
¹⁰ For more information, please visit YouTube help center: <https://www.youtube.com/yt/about/>

UNIONBOOK

UnionBook is the social networking website for trade unionists created by Labourstart (<http://www.labourstart.org/>). Unlike other social networking sites, UnionBook is advertising-free, respects your privacy, and is specifically designed to serve trade unionists. UnionBook offers many features that you and your union will find useful. Among these are:

- **Blogs** – build your own blog today. Free, with no ads.
- **Groups** – create a group to support your union and your campaigns. Groups can have discussion forums and shared documents. They can be public or closed. They're a very powerful tool.
- **Post** your profile and sign up your friends.

Please check at: <http://www.unionbook.org/>

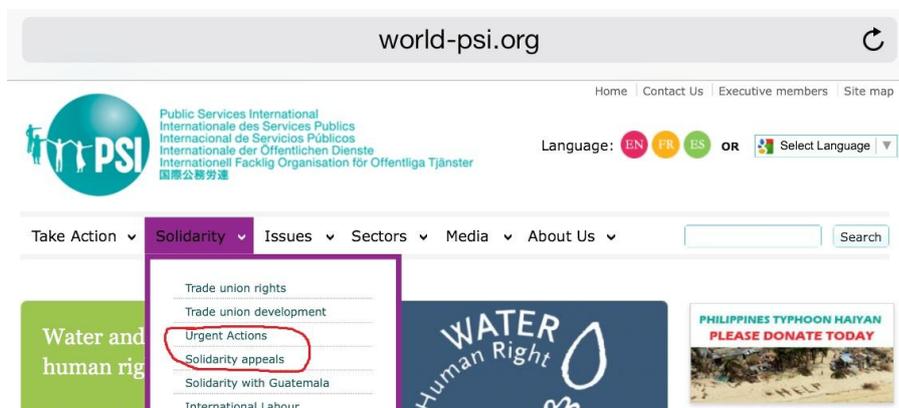


Online solidarity support: How you and your union could participate?

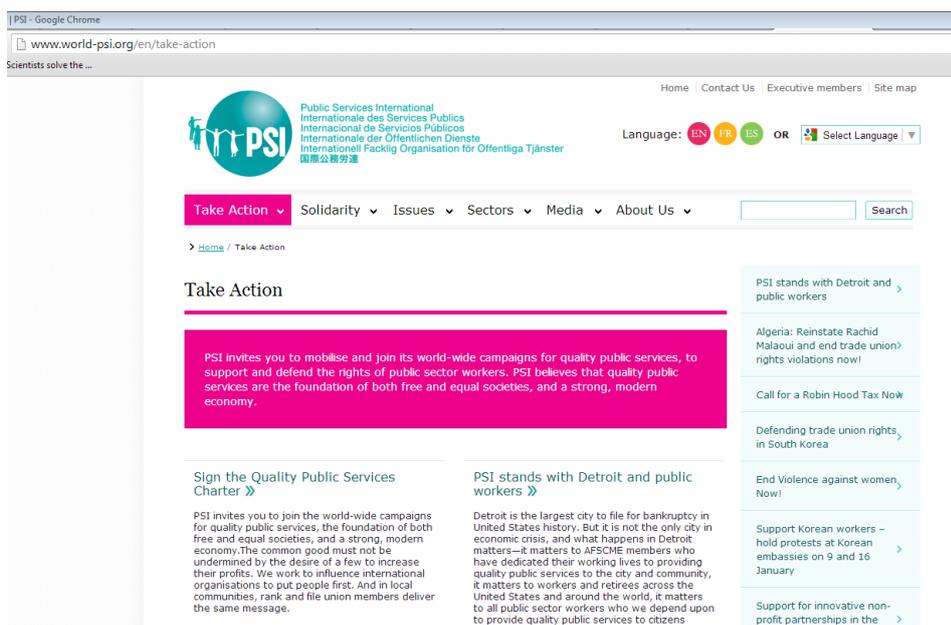
Public Services International

Public Services International provides an effective and rapid response and supports to the affiliates when they face violations of trade union rights and to the urgent situations. We organise international support, help with developing the tools to defend members, represent affiliates.

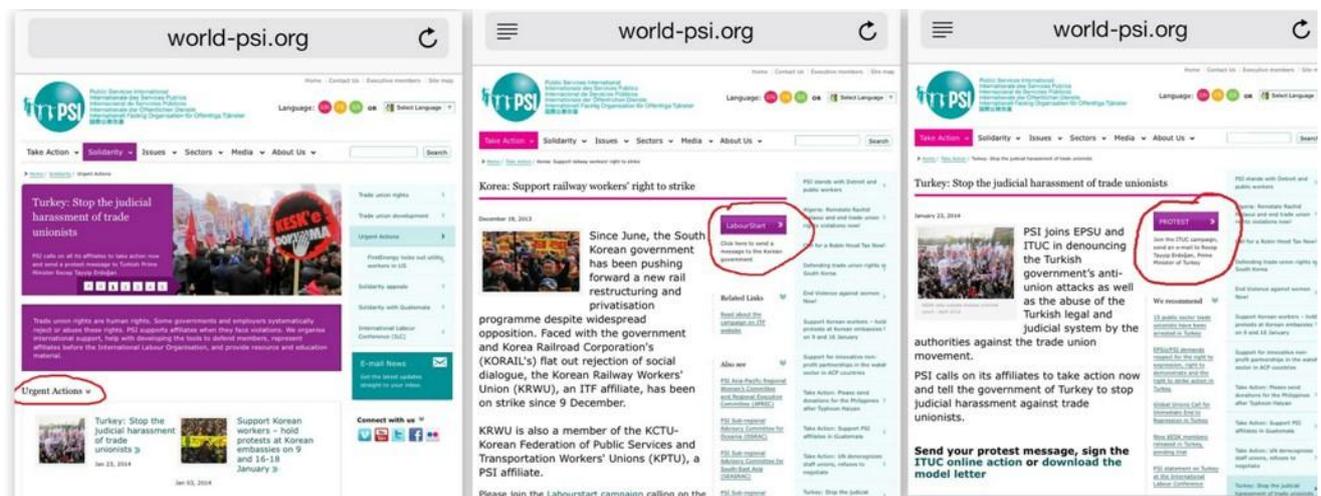
How you could join and take action? If you visit PSI's website, click "**Solidarity**", you will find out "Urgent Actions" and Solidarity appeals" (see below picture) or just click "**Take Action**"



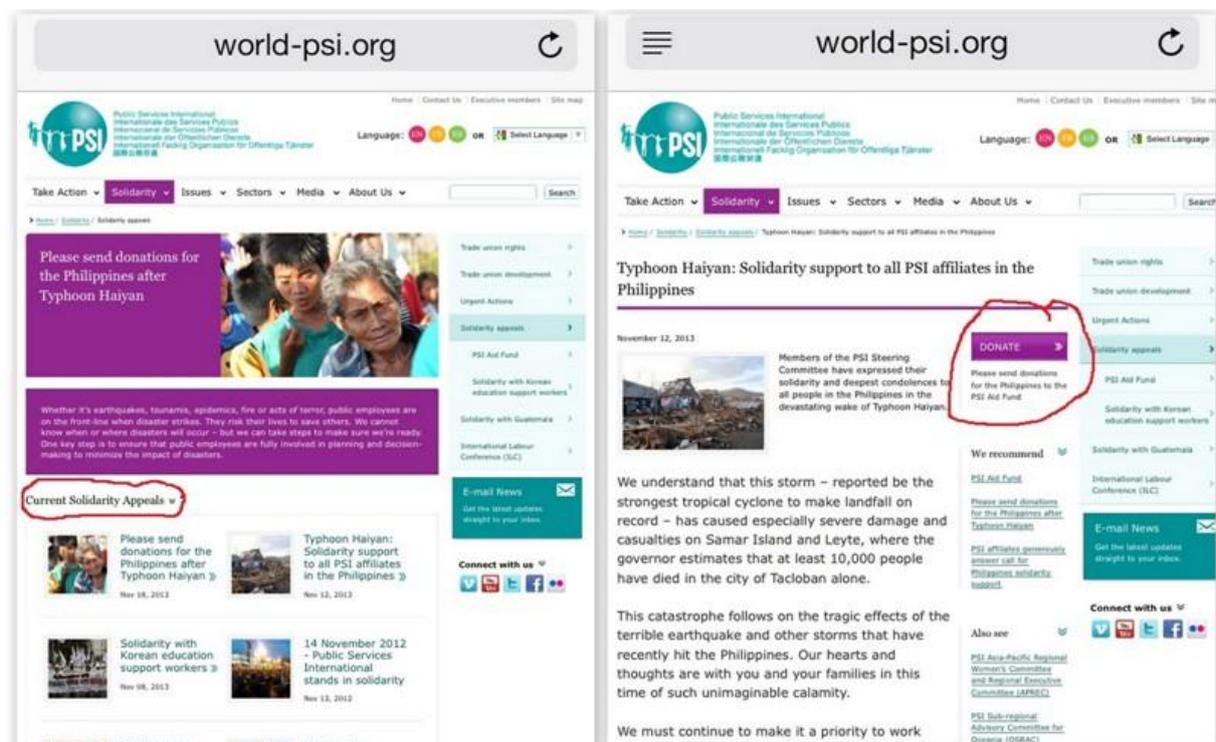
Take Action- PSI invites you to mobilise and join its world-wide campaigns for quality public services, to support and defend the rights of public sector workers. PSI believes that quality public services are the foundation of both free and equal societies, and a strong, modern economy.



(1) **Urgent Actions** - PSI calls on all its affiliates to take action now and send a protest message



(2) **Solidarity appeals** – supporting affiliates in struggle by sending message and provide much needed support and solidarity whether it's earthquakes, tsunamis, epidemics, fire or acts of terror, where public employees are on the front-line when disaster strikes.



(3) **Email campaigning (protest letter)** – Email campaigning is amongst the safest, cheapest form of mass public relations and communication out there. Therefore, PSI often send a model letter of protest to call the affiliates to support and take

join action. The model letter create out of solidarity between striking workers, fighting victimisation, union busting, freeing prisoners, etc. See below sample:

The screenshot shows the PSI website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Contact Us', 'Executive members', and 'Site map'. Below that is a language selection menu with options for EN, FR, ES, and OR. The main content area features a 'Take Action' dropdown menu and a search bar. The article title is 'Chad: Unionists sentenced to prison - send your letter of protest'. The text describes the sentencing of three trade union leaders in Chad and calls for international support. A form for sending a letter of protest is visible, with fields for 'First name', 'Last name', and 'e-mail'. On the right side, there's a sidebar with various action items like 'PSI stands with Detroit and public workers', 'Algeria: Reinstated Rachid Malaoui and end trade union rights violations now!', and 'Call for a Robin Hood Tax Now'.

The screenshot shows the PSI website interface for the article 'Violence against trade union leadership continues in Guatemala'. The article is dated October 23, 2013. It features a photo of Melvy Lizeth Camey Rojas and a text block that reads: 'We urge the Government of the Republic of Guatemala to investigate this new fact, punish the culprits and put an end to the intimidation of trade union leadership. For more information, see the [SNTSG Press Release](#) (in Spanish only).'. A red circle highlights a specific call to action: 'PSI calls on all its affiliates to write in English or Spanish to the President of Guatemala to express deep concern and call for immediate action.'. The article also includes a 'Background information' section and a 'We recommend' section with links to related reports and actions. The right sidebar contains various action items similar to the first screenshot.

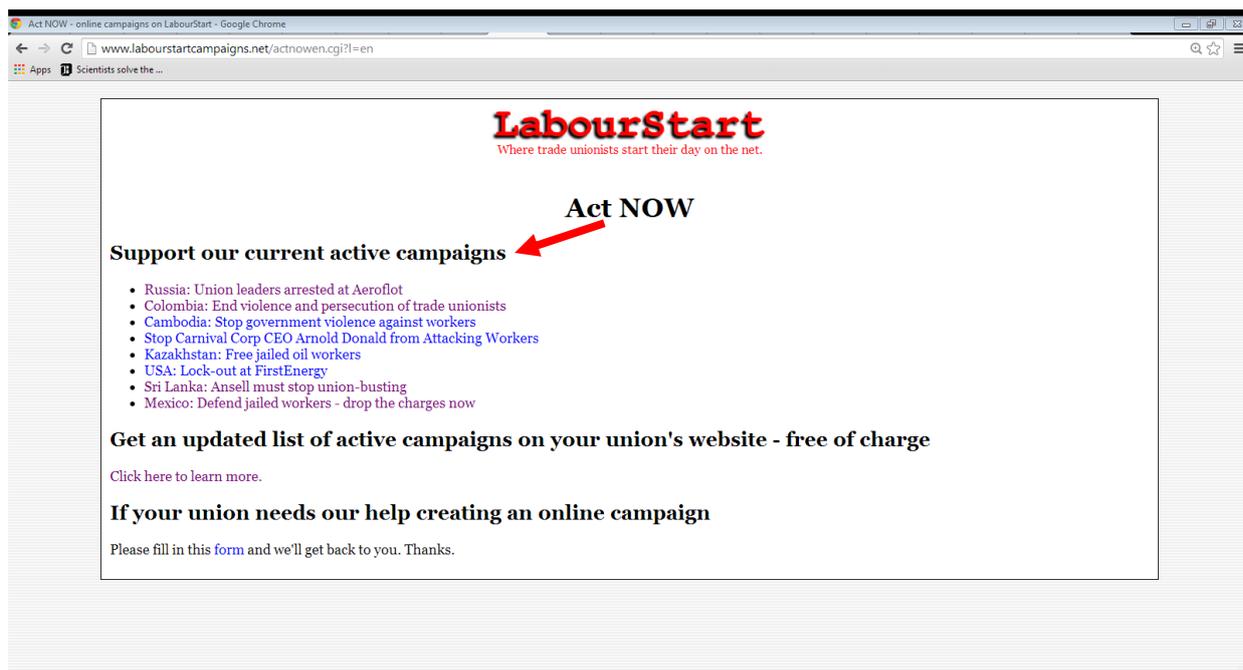
Labourstart

LabourStart is the news and campaigning website of the international trade union movement. Launched in 1998, LabourStart is now also a network of thousands of trade

union activists. Nearly 1,000 of them are volunteer correspondents - they're the ones who post the links to labour news stories every day, in dozens of languages. Another 75,000 are supporters of LabourStart's online campaigns: <http://www.labourstart.org/>



Labourstart ActNow campaign! In partnership with global unions and also trade union around the world, Labourstart is running online campaign to help get union reps reinstated, get activists out of prison, give support to striking and locked-out workers, and mobilise international support to fight against the union-busting designs of governments and multinationals. Originally, the online campaign was only in English but with number of volunteers (correspondences), the online campaign has been translated in different languages.



Peru: Civil Service Act threatens trade union rights - Google Chrome
 www.labourstartcampaigns.net/show_campaign.cgi?c=1921

Act NOW!
 A LabourStart campaign

This campaign is now closed. Please take a moment to visit our active campaigns page.

This campaign is now closed.

7800 supporters

English
 Español
 Norsk
 Norsk
 Norsk
 Deutsch
 Bahasa Indonesia
 Português
 Esperanto
 český
 עברית
 slovenčina
 Italiano
 Nederlands
 Русский

Want to know more?
 Click here for more information about this campaign

RadioLabour

Peru: Civil Service Act threatens trade union rights

In partnership with **Public Services International**, representing 20 million workers who deliver vital public services in 150 countries.

Peru's proposed new Civil Service Law contains serious threats to human rights including the labour and trade union rights of over half a million Peruvians who provide public services. If

How to participate! See below active campaign to support Cambodian workers. Sign up the campaign and send the message, up to 10 February 2014, the campaign has reached 11591 supporters.

Cambodia: Stop government violence against workers - Google Chrome
 www.labourstartcampaigns.net/show_campaign.cgi?c=2129

Act NOW!
 A LabourStart campaign

Cambodia: Stop government violence against workers

11591 supporters

English
 Norsk
 Deutsch
 Bahasa Indonesia
 Nederlands
 Español
 český
 slovenčina
 Suomi
 Français
 עברית
 Русский
 Português
 Esperanto
 Italiano

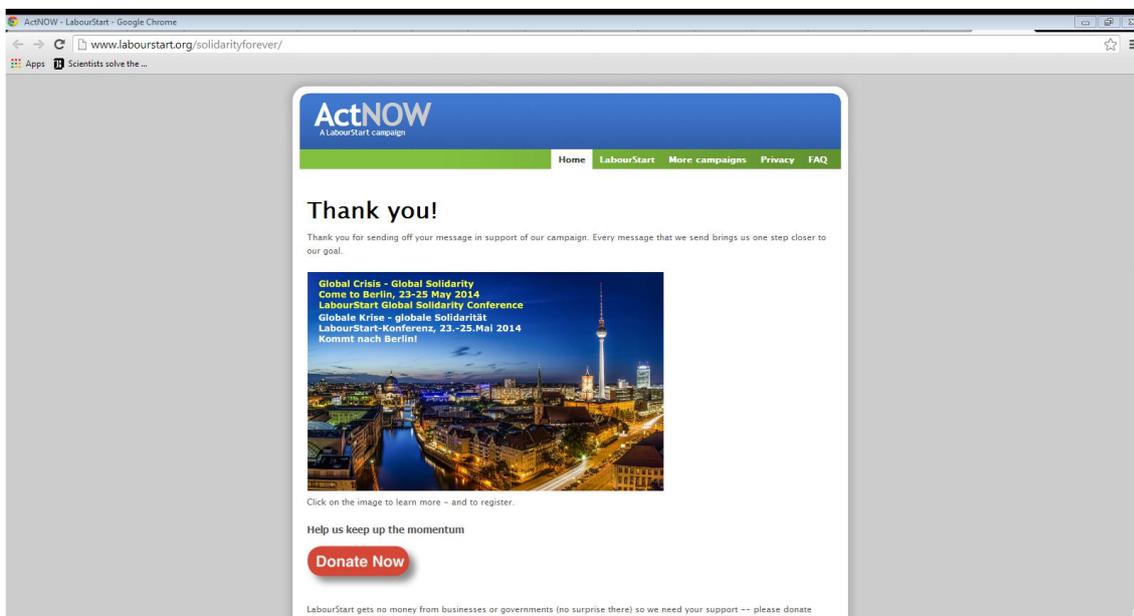
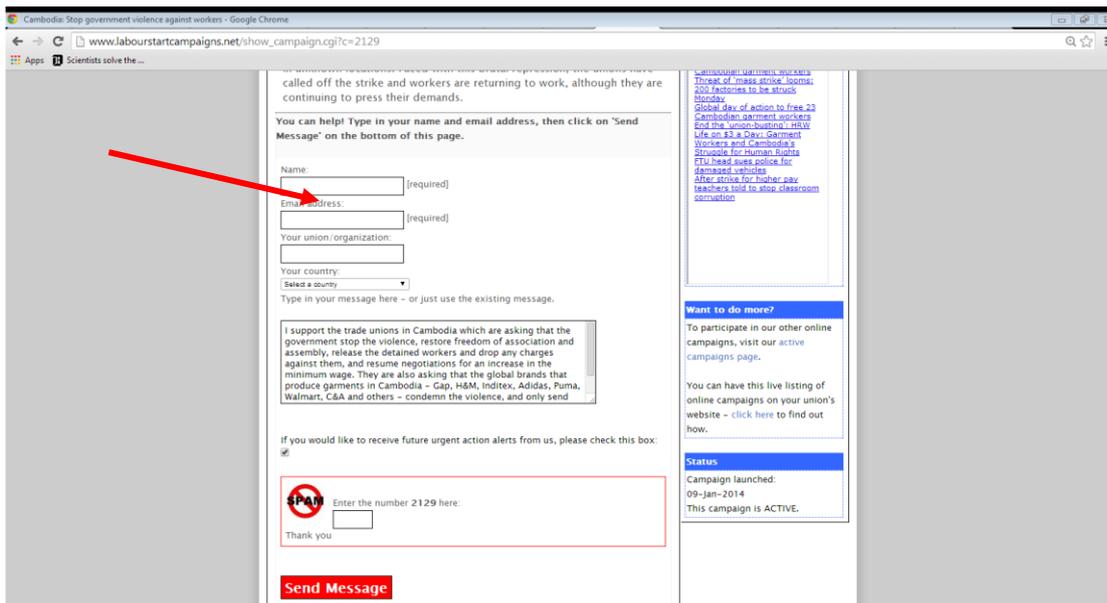
Want to know more?
 Click here for more information about this campaign

RadioLabour

Click here to listen

In Partnership with **IndustriALL**, **ITUC CSI IBS**, **UNI global union**, **CLC**, and **workers united**.

This campaign is in solidarity with Cambodian garment workers and unions, who initiated a general strike seeking an increase in minimum wage from US\$80 per month to US\$160. The strike was very effective, with many



What you can do?

- Sign up to all current Labourstart online campaigns and sign up to new ones as they appear.
- Spread the word about the campaigns and ask them to do the same
- Use social networks such as Facebook and twitter to amplify the message
- Get your union to run Labourstart ActNOW campaigns, follow this link for newswire: <http://www.labourstart.org/lnwnews.shtml>
- Help to translate the campaign into your local language
- LabourStart's campaign services are provided to unions at no charge, donate money to support Labourstart keep the campaigns going
- Maximize the Labourstart and use for your own union campaigns

References

- (1) PSI's website: <http://www.world-psi.org/>
- (2) White, Alex (2012). Guide to online "Campaigning for unions". Typeset in Whitney and Sentinel¹¹
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Website, email and social media still play a role, but there will be more human, face-to-face contact – Alex White

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¹¹ Alex White's blog: <http://alexwhite.org/blog/>, download his articles and free e-book