

# How many people do you think it takes?

activism beyond the web & blogging

S@mSmith.net - a mySociety volunteer

[twitter.com/smithsam](https://twitter.com/smithsam) (slides are here)\*

mySociety exists to build websites that give people simple, tangible benefits in the civic and community aspects of their lives.



We don't tell you what to care about.  
If you have passion for an idea, then our free services might help.



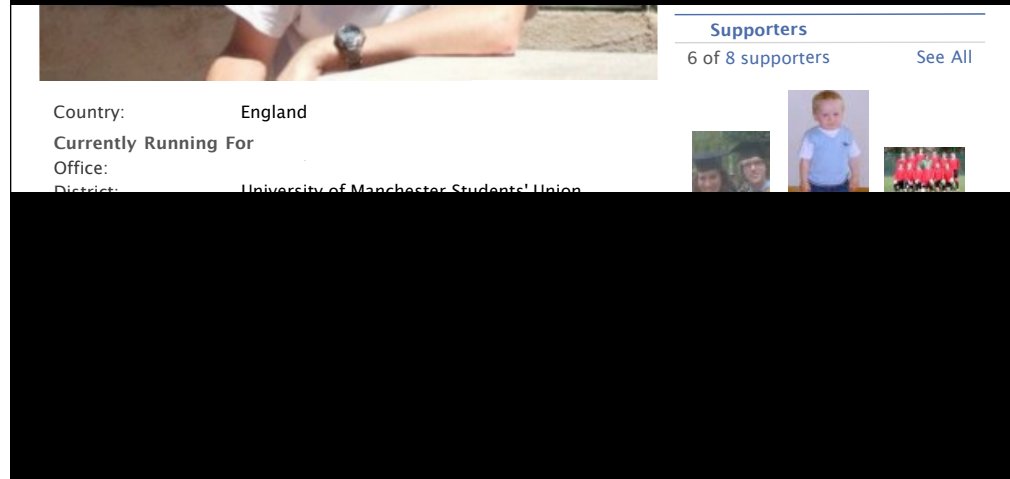
with friends and others, you can start to persuade and make a difference.

But offline matters as much as online.



Fancy technology will get you some way and sometimes that's enough;  
but using it with effective campaigning will get you far further.  
It's all too easy to forget that most people don't read blogs, and most people aren't like us.

facebook done badly



Facebook's main benefit is to make success possible despite no organisation. You can do facebook badly, and have fan page showing all of 8 supporters.

Blogging & facebook are 2 weapons in an integrated arsenal.



You need to connect to something that matters in the real world.  
I'm not sure that twitter has yet had a huge real world impact on campaigning - but it will.  
Plane stupid did a banner drop; and got massive impact because it was Parliament's roof.

# 3 steps

1. Change the rules on MPs expenses
2. ....
3. Profit!

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Recently, MPs had an idea to hide their expenses from Heather.

They snuck the that out in the same day as the Heathrow third runway announcement.



Tom has been saying for a few years now, that there's no longer such a thing as a good day to bury bad news.

Someone's is always watching. Much of the time, it's people like you.

So Tom and friends, in a weekend, came up with an alternative 3 step proposal.



# 3 Steps

1. Write to your MP
2. Join the facebook group
3. Tell your friends.

He, and 8,000 other people like you, did that, and won in less than a week.



[http://www.moo.com/designs/designers/marc\\_johns/yay/](http://www.moo.com/designs/designers/marc_johns/yay/)

It wasn't complicated. It wasn't very technical. It was very simple, and equally effective. Devastatingly effective.

Joining a facebook group alone wasn't enough; but as the second action, it was huge. With 7000 people in the group, over 4000 contacts were made to MPs.



For some issues, it is simply enough to try, and have an eye on the longer term  
And sometimes, in failure, comes the idea for future success – the atheist bus campaign that initially didn't succeed on pledgebank; but in so doing, created the vision of something much bigger.

## Britain faces summer of rage - police

Middle-class anger at economic crisis could erupt into violence on streets

Paul Lewis

The Guardian, Monday 23 February 2009

[Article history](#)



Protesters clash with police in London in January over bank bailouts in G20. Such

Traditional media still matters a lot. And that's hard.

A friend says that success is being mentioned on the Today programme. He's only partially joking.

It's the real world that matters whether you'll be successful.

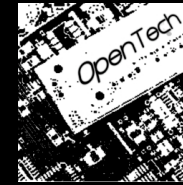
But a small group of people now has enough resources to compete, and often beat, the largest of organisations.

I wonder whether the G20 demonstrations in April will be when live video streaming from mobiles to the internet will hit the collective awareness. That will change behaviours.



If you're in this room, you or hte person sitting next to you probably knows enough of the tech you need, if you or your friends have an idea.

# For more:



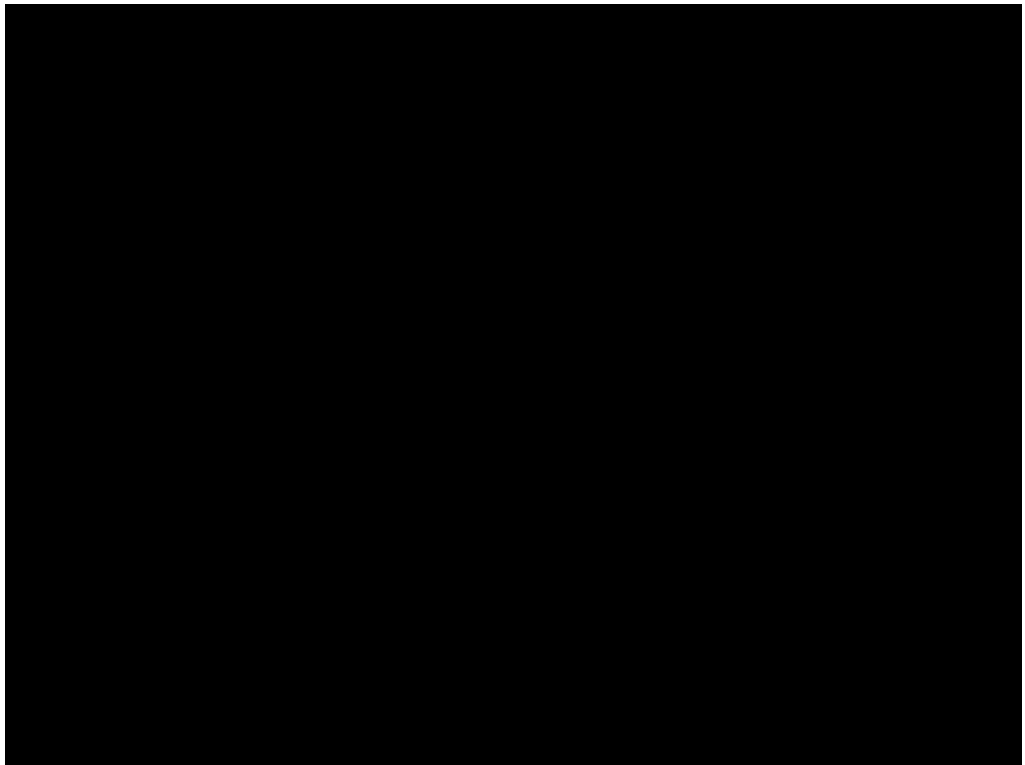
OpenTech 2009: a day of Technology, Democracy & Community: [www.ukuug.org/opentech](http://www.ukuug.org/opentech)

Internet & Activism training for Unite Against Facism: [www.MakeVotesCount.org.uk](http://www.MakeVotesCount.org.uk)

Do Lectures: [www.DoLectures.org](http://www.DoLectures.org)

Slides will be online at [www.DisruptiveProactivity.com](http://www.DisruptiveProactivity.com)

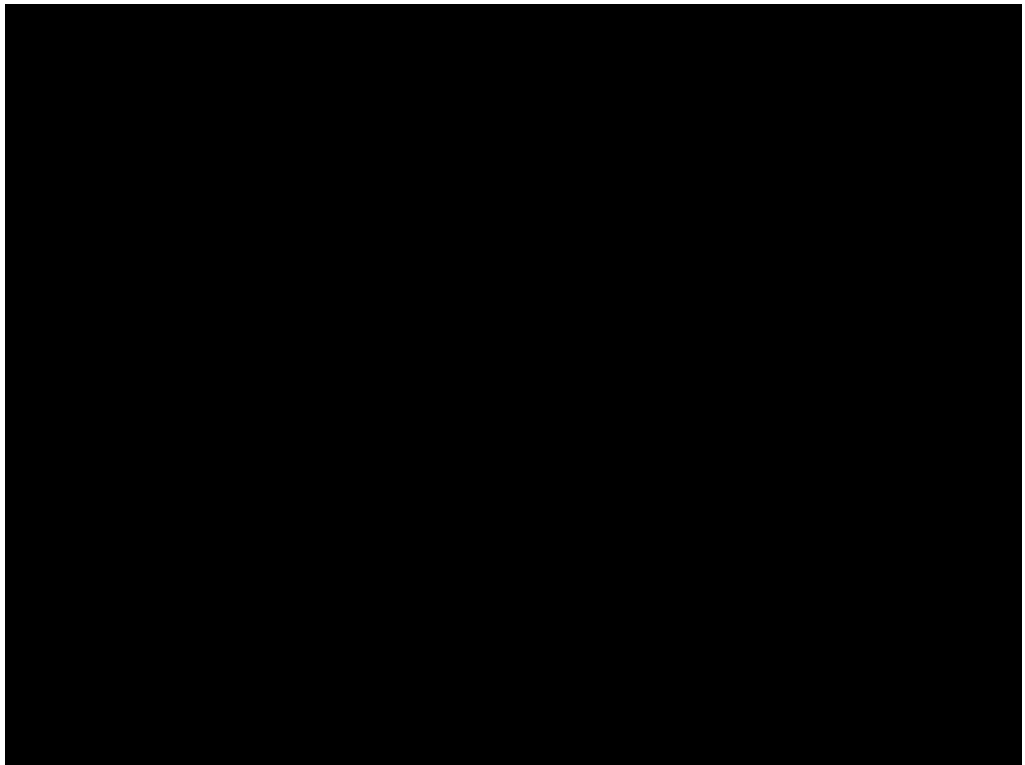
What matters is what you do with it. Good luck with that.

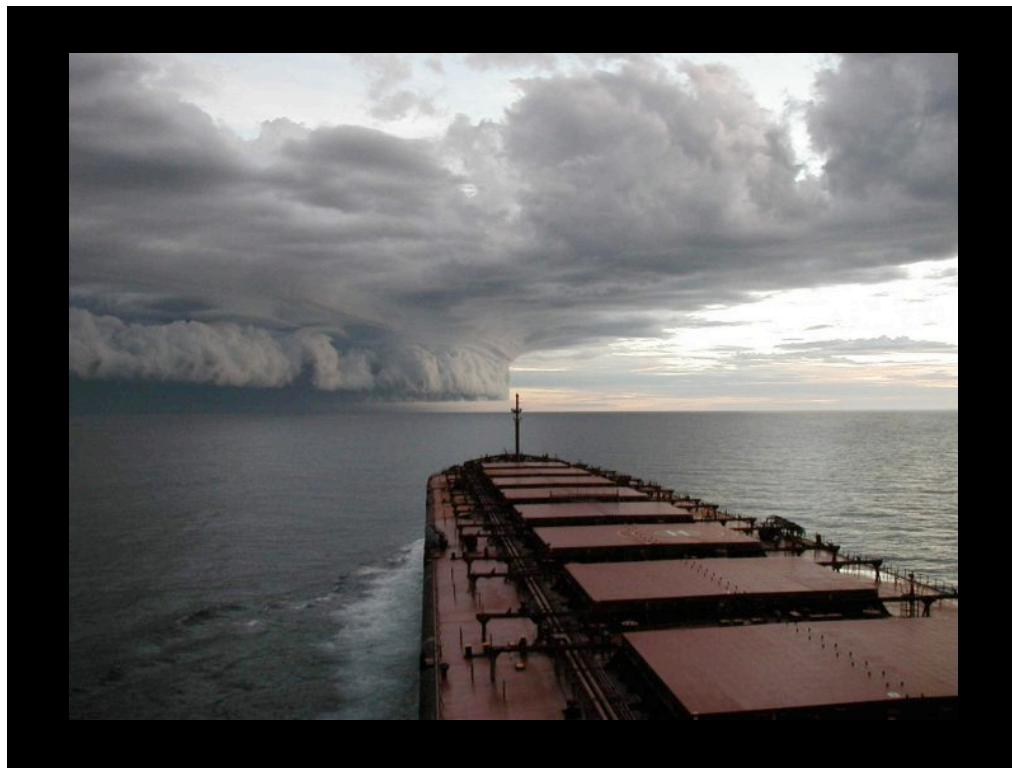


- [pledgebank.com/5000before18](http://pledgebank.com/5000before18) - creating group based conditional actions
- [petitions.pm.gov.uk/traveltax](http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/traveltax) - Petitions (sometimes useful)
- [twitter.com](http://twitter.com) - lets you make small ongoing updates on malarkey
- [qik.com](http://qik.com) - live video streaming to the internet from your mobile
- [docs.google.com](http://docs.google.com) - don't lose stuff
- [blogger.com](http://blogger.com) - simple blogs/websites.
- [publicwhip.org.uk/policies.php](http://publicwhip.org.uk/policies.php) - compare MP votes on your issues.
- Video cameras are small and cheap.

**But most importantly, do something**







But if you have knowledge, and if you have passion, you can look ahead and see what might be coming,

