Emerging Social Media Presence of International Organisations - Challenges and Opportunities

Authors : Laura Hervai

Abstract : One of the most significant phenomena of the 2000s was the emergence of social media sites and web 2.0 that revolutionized communication processes. Social networking platforms have fundamentally changed social and political participation of the public, which require organisations in the public and non-profit sector not only to adapt to these new trends but also to actively engage their audiences. Opportunity for interaction, freer expression of opinion and the proliferation of user generated content are major changes brought by web 2.0 technologies. Furthermore, due to the wide penetration of mobile technologies, social media sites are capable of connecting underdeveloped regions to the global flow of information. Taking advantage of these characteristics, organisations have the opportunity to engage much wider audiences, exploit new ways to raise awareness or reach out to regions that are difficult to access. The early adopters of these new communication tools soon recognized the need of developing social media guidelines for their organisations as well as the increased workload that they require. While ten years ago communication officers could handle their organisation's social media presence, today it is a separate profession. International organisations face several challenges related to their social media presence. Early adopters have contributed to the development of best practices among which the ethics of social media usage still remained problematic. Another challenge for international organisations is to adapt to country-specific social media trends while they have to comply with the requirements of their parent organisation as well. However in the 21st century social media presence can be crucial to the successful operation of international organisations, their importance is still not taken seriously enough. The measurement of the effects and influence of social networking on the organisations' productivity is an unsolved problem thus further research should focus on this matter. Research methods included primary research of major IGOs' and NGOs' social media presence and guidelines along with secondary research of social media statistics and scientific articles in the topic.
Keywords : international organisations, non-profit sector, NGO, social media, social network
Conference Title : ICSMPC 2015 : International Conference on Social Media and Political Communications
Conference Location : Copenhagen, Denmark
Conference Dates : June 11-12, 2015