

SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION

With Robin Catalano
*Creative content crafter
& consultant*
robinwriter.com

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WHO IS ROBIN?

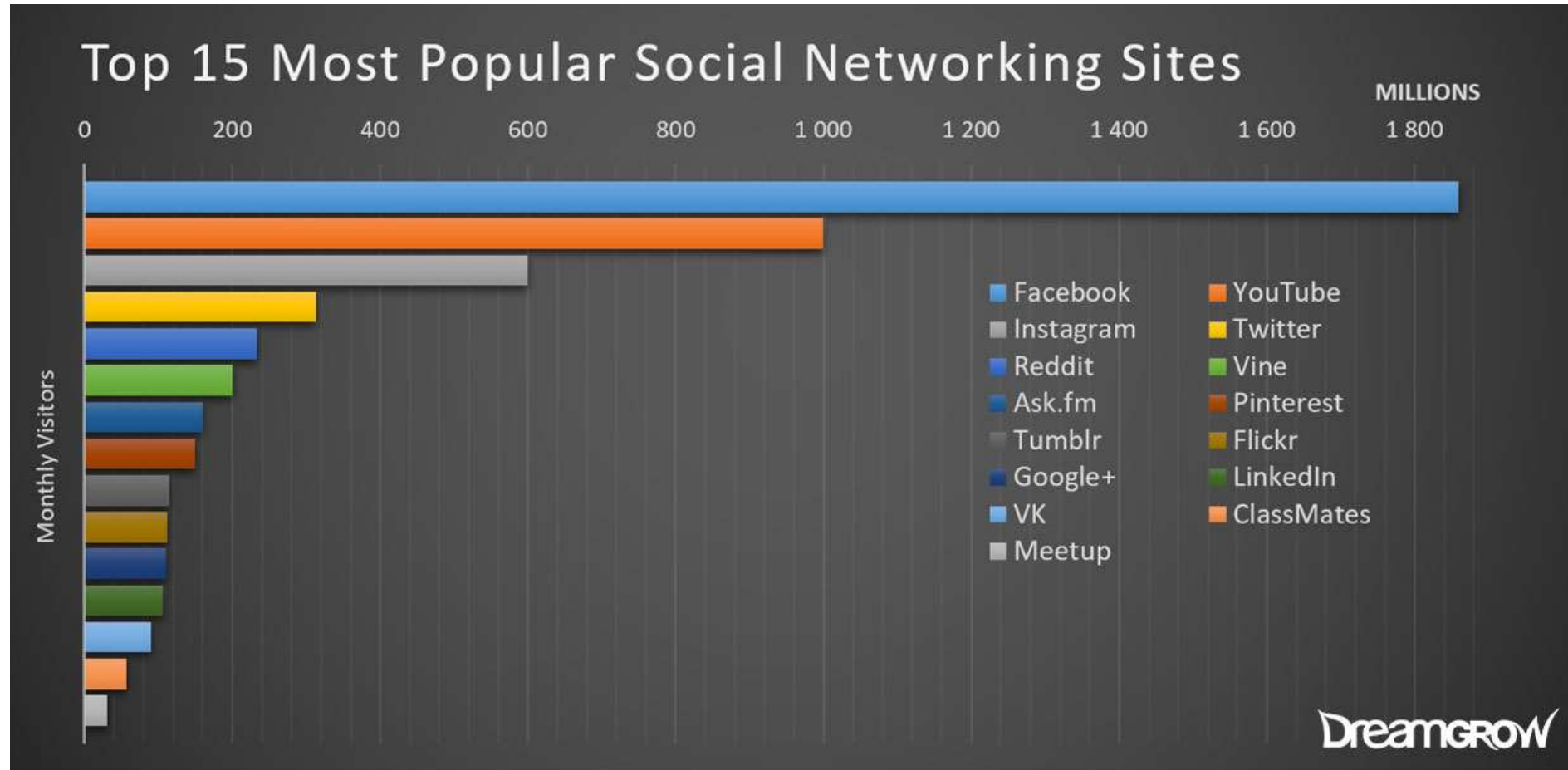
- ❖ Freelance content crafter/consultant with more than 20 years' experience in creative copywriting and content strategy for blogs, websites, e-commerce, social media, and traditional print
- ❖ Design, culture, food, and human interest journalist—75+ published articles
- ❖ Book author
- ❖ Ghostwriter for books, magazines, and commercial projects
- ❖ Developmental editor, copyeditor, and proofreader for more than 350 fiction and nonfiction books
- ❖ Teacher and conference/seminar speaker on a variety of writing, blogging, and social media topics: Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York City, Milwaukee & more
- ❖ Former Managing Editor of Digital & Social Media for The Annie Selke Companies and founding editor of the Fresh American Style blog

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

There are more than 50 social media platforms currently in use across the globe



THE TOP 15

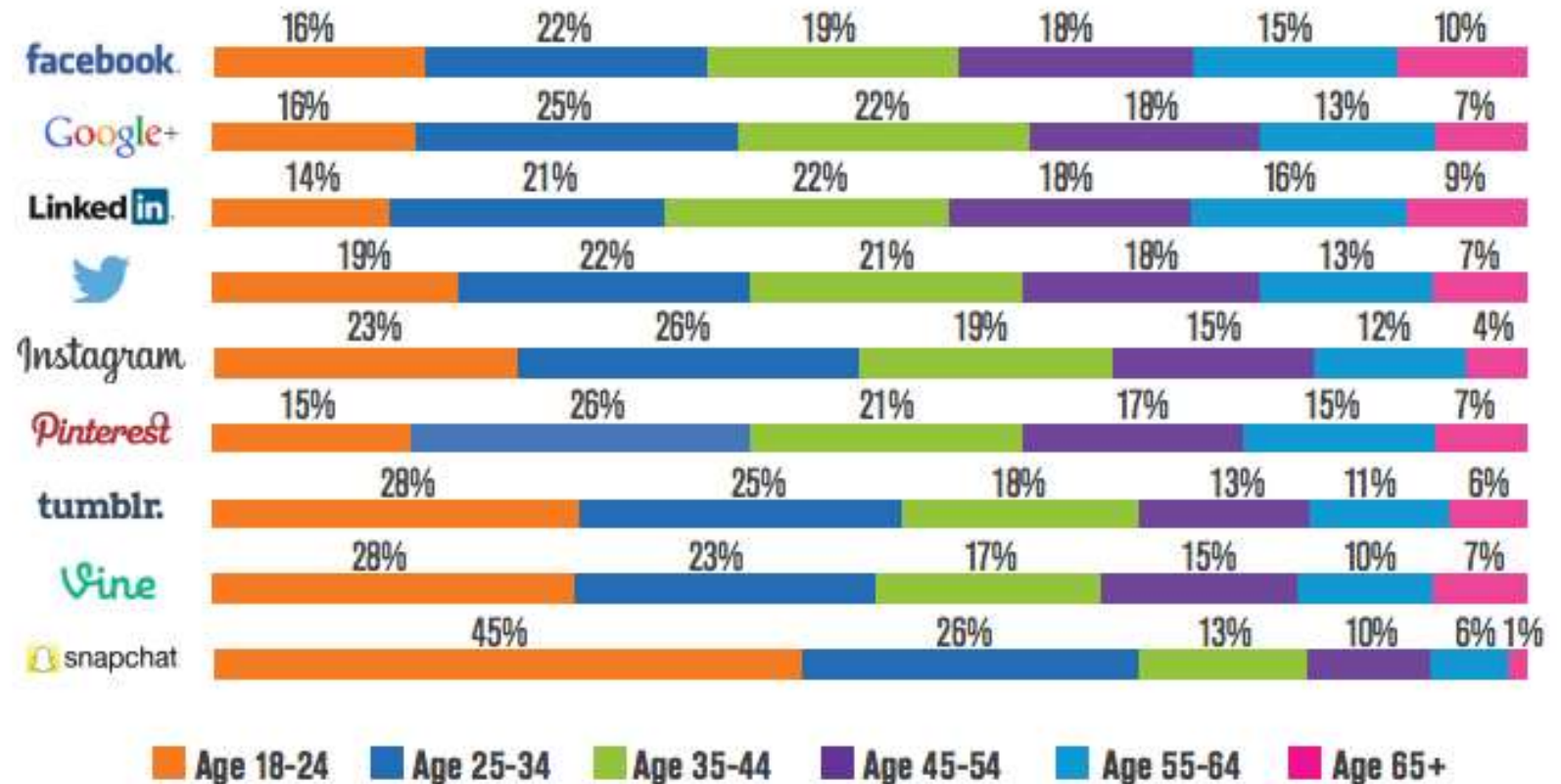


Source: Dreamgrow

SOCIAL NETWORKING DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic Composition % of Leading Social Networks

Source: comScore Media Metrix Multi-Platform, U.S., Age 18+, Dec 2014



Source: ComScore

SOCIAL PLATFORMS THAT ARE POPULAR, BUT AREN'T USEFUL FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION

LinkedIn

Pinterest

Tumblr

Google+

Snapchat

Periscope

LET'S FOCUS ON THE ONES THAT ARE MOST RELEVANT TO CIVIC PARTICIPATION



SOME QUICK TERMINOLOGY

Desktop—A desktop or laptop computer

Mobile device—A device that can be used on the go; includes cell phones and tablets

Post—An individual piece of content on a social media network; can be text, an image, a link, a video, or a combination

Tweet—An individual piece of content on Twitter; can be text, an image, a link, a video, or a combination

Like—An expression of approval or support on a social media network

Comment—A written reply to a post on social media; can sometimes include an image, link, or video

Share/repost/regram—Content that is shared from one user's page/account to another's

Hashtag—An organizing principle that allows users to search for content by keywords/search terms; type # followed by the search term: #politics

Emoji—A small digital image used to express emotion

FACEBOOK



What it is: The largest, and one of the oldest, of all social networks

Active daily users: 1.6 billion

Where to find it: Facebook.com

Use it on: Desktop, phone, tablet

You'll need: A personal page

Actions: Likes & emoji expressions, comments, shares

Hashtags: Can be used, but are not especially helpful

FACEBOOK

The screenshot displays the News And Guts Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar shows the user 'Robin' and the page name 'News And Guts'. The profile picture is a black square with the white 'N&G' logo. The cover photo is a cityscape with the text 'NEWS AND GUTS' overlaid in a white box. Below the cover photo, there are buttons for 'Liked', 'Following', 'Share', and 'Send Message'. The main content area features a post from News And Guts, 20 hours old, with the text: 'The Democratic National Committee (DNC) is going through lots of changes under new chairman Tom Perez. First up... cleaning house. <http://www.nbcnews.com/.../embattled-dnc-asks-all-staffers-re-...>'. The post includes a video of Tom Perez speaking at a podium. Below the video, the text reads: 'Embattled DNC asks all staffers for resignation letters. Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez has launched a major reorganization of the party, which has been battered by recent crises, and the DNC has requested that resignation letters of all current staffers be submitted by next...'. The post has 1,146,791 likes and 447 shares. The page also features a 'Featured For You' section with two cards: 'Get in touch with News And Guts' and 'Save News And Guts to visit'. The 'About' section includes the text: 'A news, media, and production company created by journalism icon Dan Rather and dedicated to insightful coverage and conversation.' and '1,146,791 Likes Megan Whilden and 44 other friends like this'. The website 'www.newsandgutsmedia.com/' is listed at the bottom.

FACEBOOK



Pros

- Large network
- Demographic skews 35+
- Like-minded individuals can form private and public Groups
- Can save favorite posts for later
- Greater opportunity for viral content, especially video
- FB Messenger makes it easy to chat with/text other users
- Now offers FB Live and FB Stories

Cons

- Newsfeed is heavily edited
- Drew criticism for allowing the spread of fake news during 2016 election; they're trying to correct this
- Many ads in the newsfeed and sidebar
- FB will suggest trending news stories for you; the choices can sometimes be overwhelming

FACEBOOK



Where to get started:

- News and Guts
- Humans of New York
- Huffington Post/Huffington Post Politics
- Politico
- New York Times
- Wall Street Journal
- BBC News
- Bard Center for Civic Engagement
- Many local and national politicians have their own FB pages
- Ask friends and others in the community about private/secret Groups; you'll need to be invited to these

TWITTER



What it is: An online news, microblogging, and social networking site

Active daily users: 140 million

Where to find it: twitter.com

Use it on: Phone, tablet; there's an app for Windows, but it's buggy

You'll need: A personal account

Actions: Likes (favorites), hearts (loves), retweets (shares)

Hashtags: Very important

TWITTER



USA TODAY
@USATODAY

Follow

N.Y. law cracking down on credit card surcharges must not violate merchants' free speech rights, Supreme Court rules



Supreme Court dubious of credit card surcharge ban

The justices said New York's effort to block surcharges may violate the First Amendment. They sent the challenge brought by merchants back to a federal ap...
usatoday.com

RETWEETS 8 LIKES 14

10:58 AM - 29 Mar 2017

Reply Retweet Like

Huey Krueger @HueyKAU - 28m
@USATODAY Huh? Bananas?

Home Moments

Search Twitter Have an account? Log in

USA TODAY
@USATODAY

202K TWEETS 926 FOLLOWING 3.25M FOLLOWERS 1,724 LIKES 69 LISTS 14 MOMENTS

Follow

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

USA TODAY @USATODAY · 6m
8 takeaways from the Windows 10 Creators Update

where we can get a cab to carry your Highne the police station!"
"That is better," said John Clay serenet made a sweeping bow to the three of us walked quietly off in the custody of the d tive.
"Really, Mr. Holman," said Mr. Merrywe as we followed them from the cellar, "I d know how the bank can thank you or repay

New to Twitter?
Sign up now to get your own personalized timeline!
Sign up

You may also like - Refresh

CNN @CNN
The New York Times @nytimes

TWITTER



Pros

- Can be a good source of breaking news
- Many politicians and journalists are active on Twitter
- Has been used as an organizing point for several “Twitter Revolutions” (e.g., Iranian election protests in 2009)

Cons

- If you want your own content to be seen, you must post frequently
- The feed updates very quickly
- Novice users frequently get frustrated and give up on it
- 140-character limit for text (links not included); shorter posts perform better
- This network’s growth has stalled, and some experts have suggested that it’s in decline

TWITTER



Where to get started:

- @realDonaldTrump
- @CivEngagement
- @WAG_Activism
- @TheCaucus (NY Times blog)
- @BuzzFeedAndrew
- @EliStokols (Politico)
- @JOSreports (Jim O'Sullivan of *Boston Globe*)
- Many local and national politicians are on Twitter

INSTAGRAM



What it is: A mobile photo-sharing app; fastest-growing social network

Active daily users: 300 million

Where to find it: Instagram.com

Use it on: Phone, tablet (you can view, but not create, content on desktop)

You'll need: A personal account

Actions: Likes, comments, shares, regrams

Hashtags: Very important

INSTAGRAM



usinterior

Follow



2,974 posts

1.3m followers

6,723 following

U.S. Department of the Interior Protecting America's Great Outdoors and Powering Our Future. This is the official account for the Department. www.doi.gov



usinterior

Follow

41,178 likes

19h

usinterior Located about 8 miles north of I-10 at Desert Center, #DesertLily Preserve Natural Area in #California was established in 1968 to protect 2,000 acres of prime #wildflower habitat. Popping up in patches of purple desert verberna, yellow desert dandelion, bright evening primrose and white desert lilies, these gorgeous wildflowers carpet the floor of the Chuckwalla Valley as far as the eye can see. The hike to the most dense bloom is a half mile from the Bureau of Land Management parking area, so be prepared for a short walk. Photo by Bob Wick, #mypubliclands, #usinterior

view all 230 comments

ryanconrad @lina_nelson
laineychang @naveent81
vbequee @dearmas_camy

👍 Add a comment...



INSTAGRAM



Pros

- Fastest-growing network, with a fairly equal mix of men and women and different age groups
- Image-based, for those who prefer visuals to text
- Great platform for artist-activists, photojournalists, and documentary filmmakers
- Videos and Instagram Stories are short and very easy to create

Cons

- Lesser-known network for civic participation
- Engagement tends not to be as in-depth as with some of the other platforms
- Mobile only
- No ability to schedule posts without a third-party app

INSTAGRAM



Where to get started:

- @usinterior (US Dept. of the Interior)
- @energy (US Dept. of Energy)
- @gloriasteinem
- @womensmarch
- @humansofnewyork
- @happyhippiefdn
- @berniesanders
- There are fewer politicians on Instagram, and their feeds tend to be full of travel and happy-handshake shots, but it's worth exploring accounts of those you admire

YOUTUBE



What it is: A video-sharing network and website

Active daily users: 1 billion

Where to find it: youtube.com

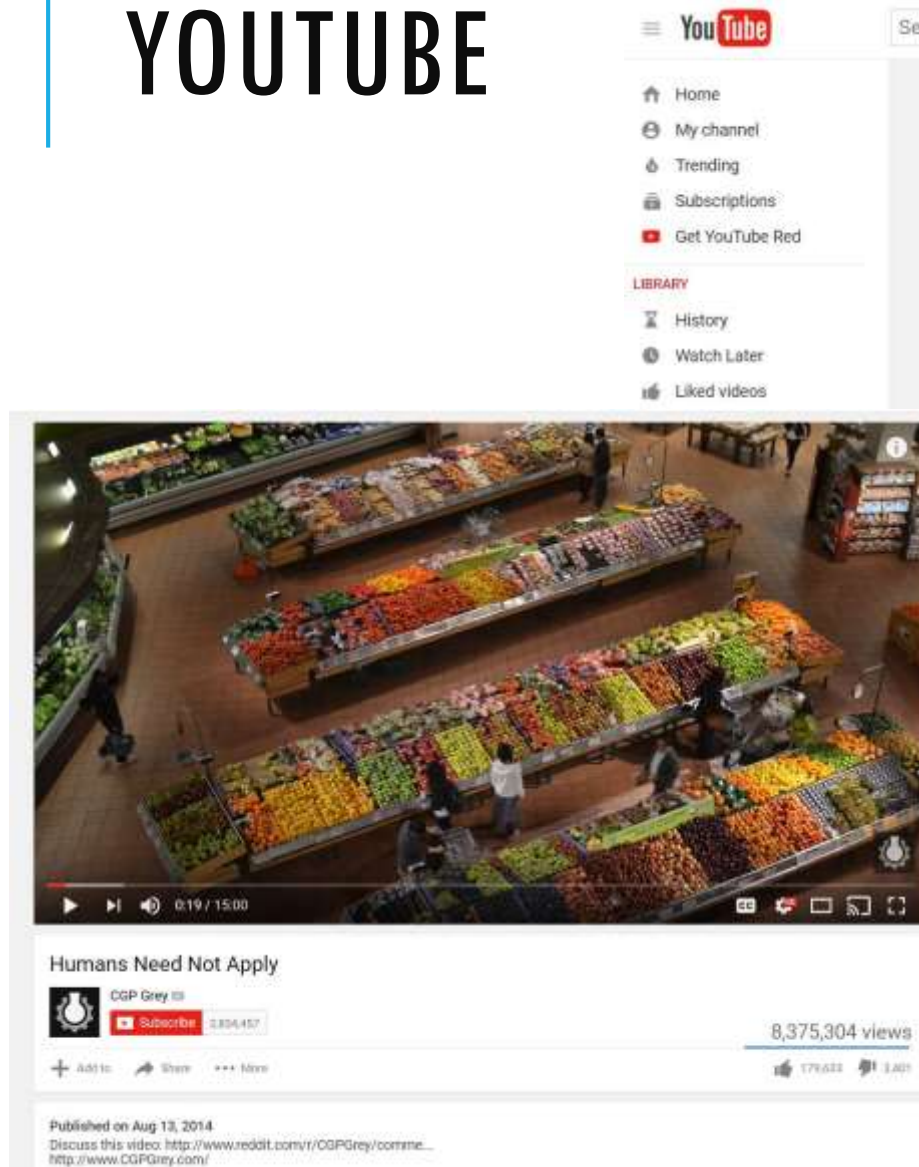
Use it on: Desktop, phone, tablet

You'll need: A Google account (there are ways around this, but they require several steps)

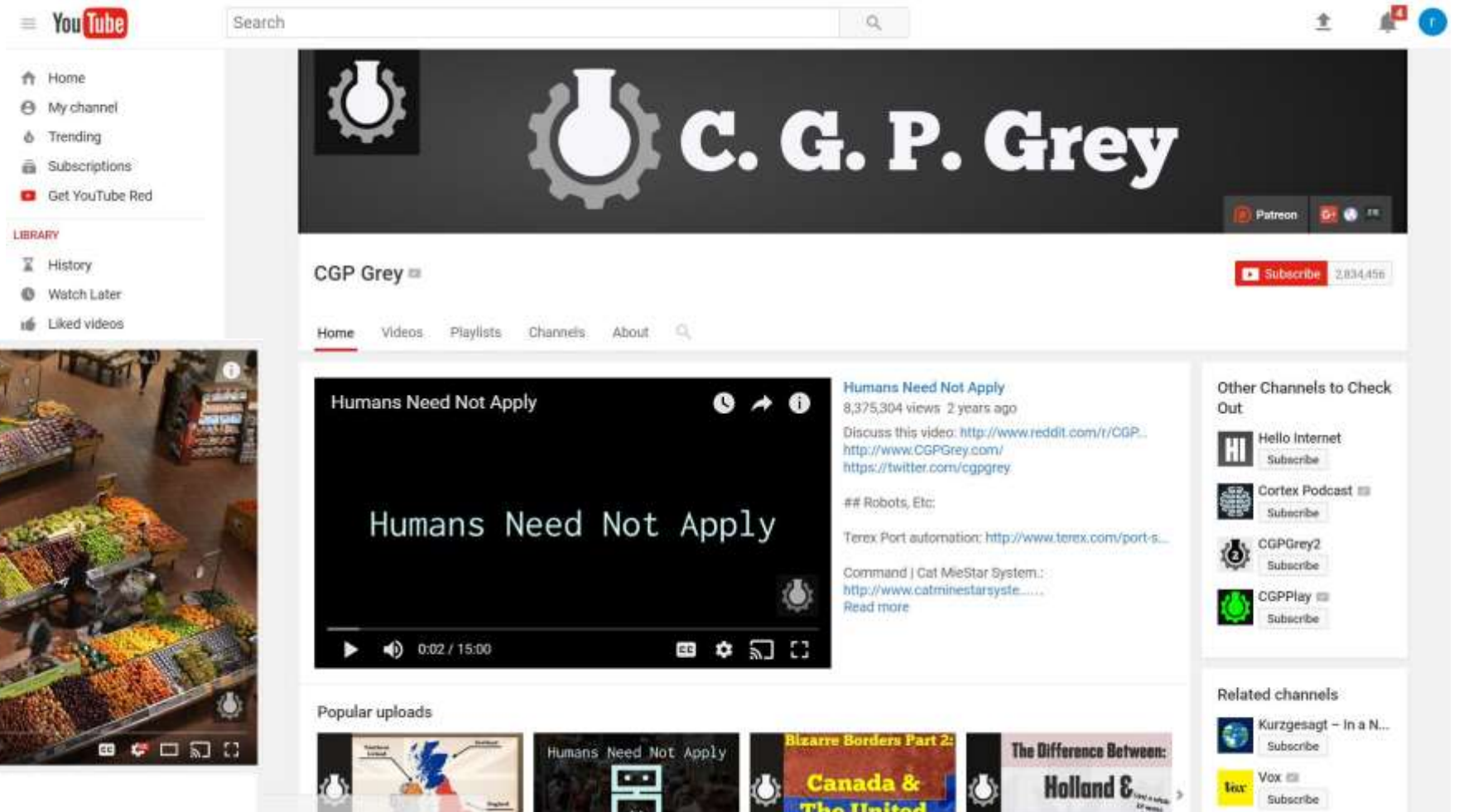
Actions: Likes, comments, shares

Hashtags: Limited importance; you can still search without hashtags

YOUTUBE



The image shows a YouTube video player for the video "Humans Need Not Apply" by CGP Grey. The video is paused at 0:19 / 15:00. The video content shows a large grocery store aisle with many people shopping. Below the video player, the video title "Humans Need Not Apply" is displayed, along with the channel name "CGP Grey" and a "Subscribe" button with 2,834,456 subscribers. The view count is 8,375,304 views. There are also buttons for "Add to", "Share", and "More". The video was published on Aug 13, 2014. Below the video player, there are social media links for Reddit and the CGP Grey website.



The image shows the YouTube channel page for CGP Grey. The channel banner features the CGP Grey logo (a flask with a gear) and the name "C. G. P. Grey". The channel has 2,834,456 subscribers. The page shows the video "Humans Need Not Apply" with 8,375,304 views, 2 years ago. The video description includes links to discuss the video on Reddit, the CGP Grey website, and Twitter, as well as links to Terex Port automation and Command | Cat MieStar System. The page also features a "Popular uploads" section with thumbnails for "Humans Need Not Apply", "Bizarre Borders Part 2: Canada & The United", and "The Difference Between: Holland &". There are also sections for "Other Channels to Check Out" and "Related channels".

YOUTUBE



Pros

- Hosts a massive number of videos, from professionally produced newscasts to amateur protest videos & commentary
- Extremely easy to use; click and play
- You don't need to install any software/apps on desktop to use it
- Many streaming media players (Roku, Playstation, Fire, etc.) have a YouTube app, for viewing full-screen on your TV

Cons

- You need to have a Google account to make the most of YouTube's functions, and to have your own video channel
- Facebook is a competitor and has ramped up its video offerings, so expect some video content to migrate there
- "Rabbit hole" factor: it's easy to get sucked in to watching one video after another

YOUTUBE



Where to get started:

- IntelligenceSquared (UK and US channels)
- GCP Grey
- Vox
- Al Jazeera English
- The Young Turks
- Now This
- VlogBrothers
- Bloomberg TV
- Bad Lip Reading (humorous reinterpretations of political debates and speeches)

REDDIT



What it is: A social news aggregation, web-content rating, and discussion website

Active daily users: 234 million

Where to find it: reddit.com

Use it on: Desktop, phone, tablet

You'll need: A personal account

Actions: Likes, comments, shares

Hashtags: Rarely used, unless for comic effect

REDDIT

reddit MODERATEPOLITICS hot new rising controversial top gilded promoted

- 1 **33** [A right to repair: why Nebraska farmers are taking on John Deere and Apple](#) (theguardian.com)
submitted 6 hours ago by JustWhatsGoingOn
comment share pocket
- 2 **30** [Primary Care Doctor Explains: "The Problem Isn't Obamacare...It's The Insurance Companies"](#) (bluedotdaily.com)
submitted 6 hours ago by JustWhatsGoingOn
4 comments share pocket
- 3 **3** [This proposed bill would allow Texans to carry guns without a license or training](#) (communityimpact.com)
submitted 7 hours ago by JustWhatsGoingOn
1 comment share pocket
- 4 **41** [New proposed Tax Plans: Paul Ryan vs Trump. Makes it clear who they are working for, and the answer is not "the middle class](#) (self.moderatepolitics)
submitted 19 hours ago * by magnora7

reddit MODERATEPOLITICS comments

Primary Care Doctor Explains: "The Problem Isn't Obamacare...It's The Insurance Companies" (bluedotdaily.com)
submitted 6 hours ago by JustWhatsGoingOn
4 comments share pocket

all 4 comments
sorted by: best

- [-] [voicesinmyhand](#) 4 points 2 hours ago
Ignoring the article and focusing on the title - this is exactly what I hear from every doctor I talk with.
permalink embed pocket
- [-] [Siganiid](#) 1 point 22 minutes ago
There are multiple problems. Obamacare solved none of them.
permalink embed pocket
- [-] [Phillip@trandon](#) 2 points 7 minutes ago
I think many (this article included) would consider Lifetime Caps, Denials of Pre-Existing Conditions, and Retroactive Cancellation of Policies, as problems the ACA solved. Do you disagree?
permalink embed parent pocket
- [-] [Siganiid](#) 0 points 3 minutes ago
Yes. Those represent zero progress towards the goal of a sustainable long term health care system.
permalink embed parent pocket

5 comments share pocket

[...ent Puts Russian Dressing On His Salad You Say It's A Connection](#) (realclearpolitics.com)

[...with Trump, push for policy proposals not photo ops](#) (washingtonpost.com)

(m)

[...w Act, S.J. Res. 34. The resolution "enables ISPs to profit by collecting and selling
...ent or notification,"](#) (ecommercetimes.com)

[...017 NASA Authorization Act, the first complete authorization for the agency since](#)

REDDIT



Pros

- Mostly a text-based discussion forum, so if you're looking for conversation and not images, it's a good choice
- Hundreds of thousands of subreddits (discussion threads) to choose from
- Learning curve is very short; easy to use
- User base is extremely active

Cons

- Has a large fanboy/fangirl and techie population, so finding relevant subreddits can be time consuming
- Not visually pleasing; can feel very busy to look at
- “Rabbit hole” factor: it's easy to get sucked in to clicking from one subreddit to another

REDDIT



Where to get started:

- [r/Politics](#)
- [r/Ask_Politics](#)
- [r/Political_Discussion](#)
- [r/Progressive](#), [r/SocialDemocracy](#), [r/Conservative](#), [r/Libertarian](#), [r/ModeratePolitics](#)
- [r/Political_Humor](#)
- [r/ChangeMyView](#)
- [r/RedditActivism](#)
- [r/Feminism](#)

BLOGS



There are **31 million** bloggers in the U.S. alone!

Reading a blog doesn't require any specialized knowledge or tech skill; just type the URL in the address bar or a search term in the search bar, and click a link and start reading

Many allow interaction through the comments section (you may have to sign up for an account to comment)

Where to start: Politico, Huffington Post, Daily Kos, Vox, Little Green Footballs, Migrant Integration Policy Index, Rainforest Guardians

A FEW OTHER USEFUL TOOLS

Podcasts

Audio content similar to radio shows, but each episode can be downloaded individually (or you can subscribe to a series) to a desktop, mobile device, or MP3 player

Last anywhere from 10 minutes to 1 hour

Download from the podcast's website, from iTunes, or an Android-based service like Podcast Republic

Where to start: Pod Save America, Stanford Social Innovation Review, Idealist, Big Time D*cks (from Jezebel), Intersection, Another Round

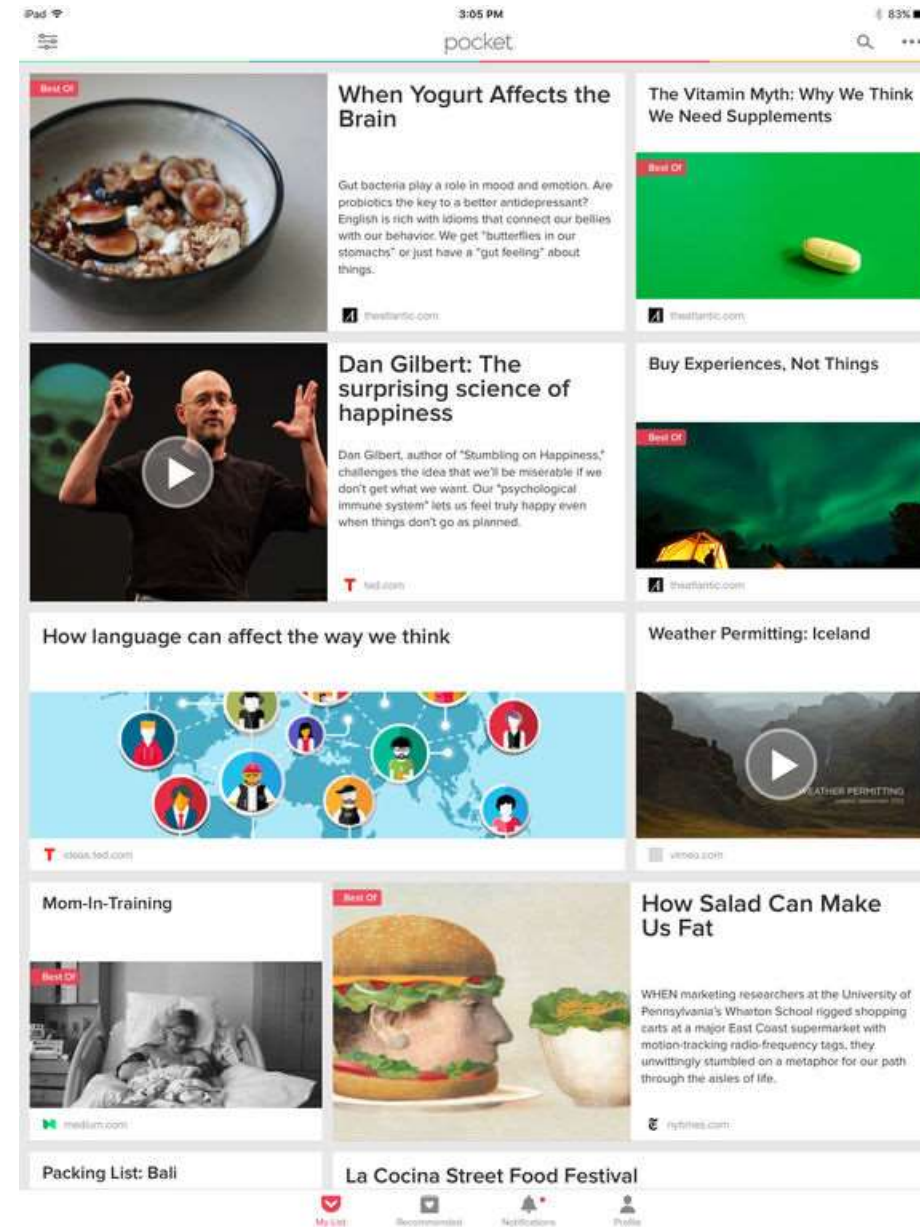
A FEW OTHER USEFUL TOOLS

Pocket

An app where you can save articles, images, and videos for later reading/viewing

Desktop and mobile

Integrates with other apps and social networks

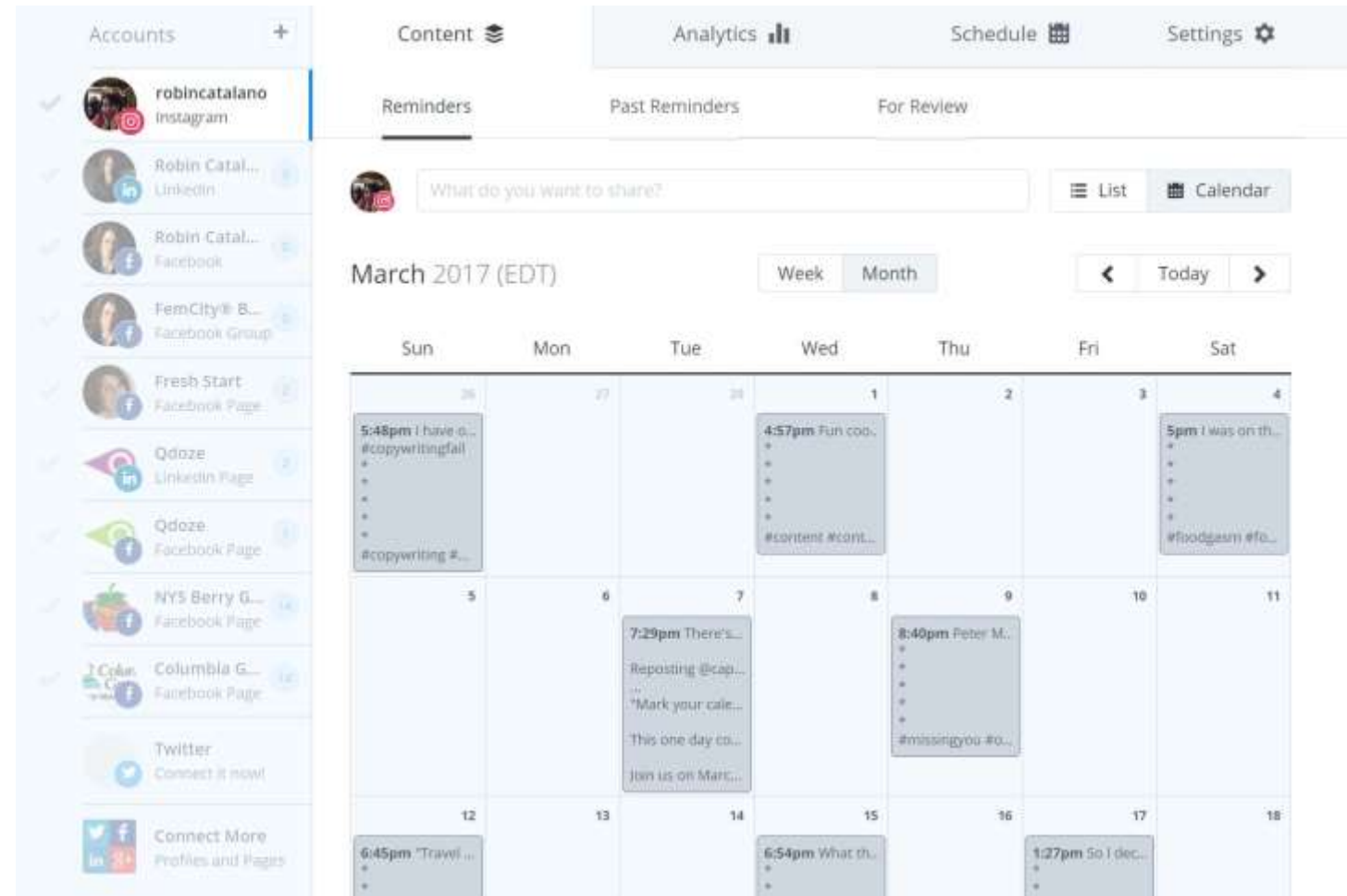


A FEW OTHER USEFUL TOOLS

Buffer

A scheduling tool that allows you to program content to be posted at a specific time to your Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts (Instagram programming is not fully automated)

Desktop and mobile



HOW CAN I HELP WITH YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA?

Visit my website for a sampling of my work, or e-mail me today to set up a meeting:

robin.catalano@gmail.com

robinwriter.com

You can also find me teaching these upcoming workshops:

4/17-5/15, Arts Center of the Capital Region (Troy, NY): Writing for Blogs & Social Media

4/21, Women in Travel Summit (Milwaukee, WI): Creating an Editorial Calendar: How to Develop Your Content Strategy & Build Early Engagement

5/30 & 6/6, Instagram for Business, BCC

6/15, Take Your Business to the Next Level with a Vision & Mission Statement, BCC

6/20, Supercharge Your Social Media Marketing with an Editorial Calendar, BCC

