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E-whanaungatanga:
The role of social media in
Māori political engagement

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy
in
Development Studies

at Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa: Massey University,
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

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2013
Abstract

Social media are used increasingly worldwide to connect people and points of view. This thesis explores the role social media can play in enhancing Māori development via political engagement. It investigates the efficacy of using social media to increase Māori political awareness and participation using the Mana Party Facebook pages as a case study. It also examines the opportunities and implications of social media for indigenous development in general. Themes in the literature on social media and indigenous development include: identity politics; language revitalisation and cultural preservation; activism; knowledge management; networking and collaboration; and business and marketing.

This qualitative study was informed by Kaupapa Māori and empowerment theories. It involves interviews with the Mana Party president, Mana Party Facebook page moderators, and users of the Mana Party Facebook pages. The interviews explored the objectives and outcomes of using social media to raise political awareness of Māori, finding that Mana Party objectives were met to varying degrees. It also found that social media has both positive and negative implications for indigenous development.

Social media aligns with tikanga Māori through Tino Rangatiratanga and whanaungatanga. However, it can conflict with tikanga Māori due to lack of respect, cultural misappropriation, sharing sacred information, subversion of traditional hierarchy and absence of a ‘seen face’. There are thus tensions in the use of social media for political engagement among indigenous peoples. Finally, the thesis offers a framework of how to use social media with indigenous groups that emphasises the positive and mitigates the negative aspects of the platform.
Mihimihi/Acknowledgements

Whāia te iti kahurangi
Ki te ūohu koe, me he maunga teitei

Pursue excellence – should you stumble, let it be to a lofty mountain

Ko Horouta te waka
Ko Hikurangi te maunga
Ko Waiapu te awa
Ko Ngāti Porou te iwi
Ko Ngāti Putaanga te hapū
Ko Putaanga te marae
Ko Murray rāua ko Jeanette ōku mātua
Ko Thomas tōku tūngāne
Ko Alex tōku tāne
Ko Aislin tōku tamāhine
Ko Kahutiaterangi tōku tama

This is for Mum. Who helped out such a huge amount throughout this thesis process. But also just for always being there to help me, with anything, whenever I needed it.

This is for Dad. Who always reminded me that Koro said how important it was for us to be educated. Those words have always stayed with me and led me to seek higher learning.

This is for Aislin. When I began university life as a solo parent, she is the reason I could never give up. Without that determination to finish my undergraduate degree I could never have continued on to my masters.

This is for Kahutiaterangi. Who came along in the middle of the thesis journey and now that it is finished I can give him all the attention he needs and more.

This is for Alex. Who supported me constantly and believed in me even when I didn’t believe in myself.

To my supervisors Regina and Te Rina, thank you for all your wisdom and encouragement.
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Chapter 5: Hei oranga

Conscientise, politicise, organise, mobilise

Te Mana national social media strategy

Mana ki Manawatū moderators’ objectives

Objective 1: Facilitate rangatahi engagement
Objective 2: Facilitate free and open access to information
Objective 3: Conscientise and politicise
Objective 4: Organise and mobilise
Objective 5: Provide a platform for alternative/Māori views

Moderators’ views of success

Kōrero from users of Mana Facebook pages

Facebook users views on objectives

Tikanga Māori and social media

Negative implications

Kaua e takahia te mana o te Tāngata
Kanohi ki te kanohi
Tapu images
Authenticity
Cultural misappropriation
List of illustrations

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Glossary of Māori terms

ako to learn, study, instruct, teach, advise
Aotearoa North Island. Used as the Māori name for New Zealand
aroha affection, sympathy, charity, compassion, love, empathy
awhi to embrace, cherish, sit on eggs, brood, besiege
haka vigorous dances with actions and rhythmically shouted words
hapū kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe
hīkoi step, march. Has come to refer to protest march
iwi tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large
group of people descended from a common ancestor
kanohi ki te kanohi face to face, in person, in the flesh
kapa haka Māori cultural group, Māori performing group
kaumātua adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman, old man
kaupapa topic, policy, plan, scheme, proposal, subject, theme
kawa marae protocol - customs of the marae and wharenui,
particularly those related to formal activities such as pōwhiri,
speeches and mihimihi
kete basket, kit
Kōhanga Reo Māori language preschool
kōrero speech, narrative, story, conversation, discourse
Kotahitanga a movement for self-government and national unity among
Māori during the 19th Century
kuia elderly woman, grandmother, female elder
kūmara sweet potato
Kura Kaupapa primary school operating under Māori custom and using Māori
as the medium of instruction
Māoritanga Māori culture
mana prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status
Mana Motuhake separate identity, autonomy - mana through self-determination
and control over one's own destiny
Mana Tāngata power and status accrued through one's leadership talents,
human rights, mana of people
marae courtyard - the open area in front of the wharenui, where formal
greetings and discussions take place
mātauranga  education, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill
mihimihī  (v) to greet, pay tribute, thank. (n) speech
Ngāi Tahu  Or Kāi Tahu, is the principal tribal group of the South Island
Ngāpuhi  Northland tribal group
Ngāti Porou  tribal group of East Coast area north of Gisborne to Tihirau
Pākehā  New Zealander of European descent
pākeke  be grown up, adult, mature
Papawai  location of Kotahitanga Māori parliament in Wairarapa
pōwhiri  invitation, rituals of encounter, marae welcome ceremony
pūkana  to stare wildly– done when performing haka and waiata to emphasise particular words
rangatahi  younger generation, youth
rohe  boundary, district, region, territory, area, border
Tā  Sir, knight
taiāha  a long weapon of hard wood with one end carved
takatāpui  intimate friend of same gender. Homosexual in modern usage
tā moko  tattooing
Tānenuiarangi  god of forests and of birds
tangata  person, man, human being
tāngata  people, men, persons, human beings
tāngata whenua  local people, hosts, indigenous people of the land
taonga  property, goods, possessions, effects; treasure
taonga tuku iho  heirloom, something handed down
tapu  sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden
tau iwi  European, non-Māori, foreigners, immigrants
tautoko  to support, prop up, verify, advocate
te Ao Māori  the Māori world
teina  younger brother (of a male), younger sister (of a female), junior line
Te Tai Tokerau  Northland, North Auckland
tikanga  correct procedure, custom, code, plan, practice
Tino Rangatiratanga  self-determination, sovereignty, rule, control, power
tīpuna  ancestors, grandparents
titiro  to look at, inspect, examine, observe, survey, view
tohunga  skilled person, chosen expert, priest
tuakana  elder brothers (of a male), elder sisters (of a female), senior branch of the family
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<td>wāhine</td>
<td>(plural) women, females, ladies, wives</td>
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<tr>
<td>waiata</td>
<td>song, chant, psalm</td>
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<tr>
<td>waka</td>
<td>canoe, vehicle, conveyance, spirit medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakapapa</td>
<td>genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakarongo</td>
<td>to listen, hear, obey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whakataukī</td>
<td>proverb, saying, cryptic saying, aphorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>whakawhanaungatanga</td>
<td>process of establishing relationships, relating well to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whānau</td>
<td>extended family, family group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whanaungatanga</td>
<td>relationship, kinship, sense of family connection - a relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wharenui</td>
<td>meeting house, large house - main building of a marae where guests are accommodated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whenua</td>
<td>country, land, nation, state</td>
</tr>
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Glossary of Information Technology terms

Android an operating system owned by Google designed primarily for touch screen mobile devices such as smartphones and tablet computers

cyber-terrorism the use of Internet based attacks in terrorist activities
Denial of Service (DoS) an attempt to make a machine or network resource unavailable to its intended users

Facebook an online social networking service
Flickr a photosharing social network site

Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) a space-based satellite navigation system that provides location and time information

Geographic Information System (GIS) a system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyse, manage, and present all types of geographical data

hacktivism the use of computers and computer networks to promote political ends

hashtag a word or a phrase prefixed with the symbol #. A form of metadata tag

Internet Communication Technology (ICT) is often used as an extended synonym for information technology (IT), but is a more specific term that stresses the role of unified communications

internet meme an idea, style or action which spreads, often as mimicry, from person to person via the Internet. Often videos or captioned photos

IP Internet Protocol
internet troll a person who causes trouble on the Internet by starting arguments or upsetting people

listserv electronic mailing list software applications
metadata data about data. For example, purpose, time and date of creation, author, location

mobile application (app) computer software for useful tasks designed to run on smart phones, tablet computers and other mobile devices

Skype Voice over Internet Protocol service and instant messaging client

slacktivism pejorative term that describes support of an issue that is
perceived as having no practical effect. For example signing an online petition

smart phone a mobile phone built on a mobile operating system.

short message service (SMS) a text messaging service component of phone, web, or mobile communication systems

social media interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual networks

tweet Twitter text message limited to 140 characters

Twitter online social networking and micro-blogging service

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technologies for the delivery of voice communications and multimedia sessions over Internet Protocol networks, such as the Internet

Web 2.0 web sites that use technology beyond the static pages of earlier Web 1.0 sites

weblog a discussion or informational site published on the World Wide Web

wiki a web application which allows people to add, modify, or delete content in a collaboration with others

YouTube a website on which users can upload, view and share videos