



# **Listening**

## *What's the Buzz?*

CADCA National Coalition Institute  
Social Media Webinar Series

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[www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org)

# Listening: What's the Buzz

## The Power of Listening

- \* What do we mean listening?
- \* Why do we listen?
- \* Where do we listen?
- \* What's important about listening?

## For What Are We Listening?

- \* How my community thinks
- \* What my community values
- \* How my community learns about issues
- \* What is being said about us: our issues, our topics or our organization
- \* Where are the conversations happening: online vs. offline

## Why do we Listen?

- \* To be informed about issues and norms
- \* To understand perspectives
- \* To engage in conversations that matter
- \* For opportunities to interact with the community
- \* To learn with and from our community

## How Listening Fits?

Listening is the very first action step to engaging in social networks or online communities. Just like moving into a new neighborhood, it takes time to get familiar with the neighbors. Begin with connecting and listening to the pulse and culture of the neighborhood. Once you get started it is much easier to network, communicate, contribute from your experiences.

## Listening Facing In

Listening facing in is the work you do to understand the community and develop coalition relationships inside your coalition. This allows you to take a good look at how your organization operates, how you communicate, and the message you are sending.

## Listening Facing Out

Facing out is the image your community has of your coalition, and how authentic and transparent you can be while engaging them.

# Listening Tools

## **Google Alerts** <http://alerts.google.com>

Google Alerts is a free tool that allows you to have alerts emailed to you or have them directed into an RSS reader. This tool allows you to search for key words or phrases that you would like to receive regular updates on. This tool allows you to control what you receive, how you receive it, and how often you would like to receive the updates. This is a highly recommended tool for listening, as it has a high level of custom control, and provides updates from the web, news, blogs, and social media sites.

## **Yahoo Alerts**

Similar to Google Alerts, Yahoo gives you an alert tool option. If you prefer yahoo to google, check out this tool.

## **Twitter Search** <http://search.twitter.com>

Twitter search allows you to search twitter for users, topics, keywords and hashtags. This is a great tool to help you see what people are talking about, what is happening now, and to help gain contacts in connections with people to learn from, provoke thought, and interact with.

## **Facebook** <http://www.facebook.com>

Facebook allows you to search for people, organizations, causes, groups, etc. This is another tool that will allow you to listen in on what people are doing, saying, and feeling. By liking an organization or friending people in you community, you will receive updates in your newsfeed, and be able to stay in touch with what they are doing.

## **Myspace** <http://www.myspcae.com>

Similar to facebook, Myspace allows you to connect and search with people, organizations, bands, causes, etc. This tool is useful if you are looking to interact with younger youth, or are conducting projects that a heavily based in music and bands.

## **YouTube** <http://www.yoututbe.com>

YouTube allows you to search for videos by topic, user, keywords, etc. This is a great tool to see what is being produced, what kind of feedback is being said about the videos, and to provide ideas and inspiration to your coalition.

# Vanity Search

## Use a vanity search to see what people are saying

Vanity searches allow you to receive alerts about:

- \* You (Use your name or alias for your search term)
- \* Organization or Coalitions Name
- \* Director
- \* Project Coordinator
- \* Your Topics of Issues

## RSS (Real Simple Syndication)

RSS is the waiter delivering your information order!

Many websites and blogs offer RSS feeds. They give you the ability to subscribe to the site and have new information and posts sent directly to you.

By using a RSS reader you have the ability to organize and look through this information when and how you want. This gives you control, and allows you to never miss a post, and the ability to look at it on your time.

## Tracking

Once you begin listening, and receiving information, it is good to track it. Tracking information about your coalition, cause, name, project, etc. allows you the ability to evaluate what is being said, and determine what, if anything, needs to be done. Not all posts and/or comments need a response, use your tracking to determine if posts are positive, neutral, or negative; from here you and your organization can determine if you will respond and how to respond.