

# EXTEND YOUR REACH THROUGH LIVESTREAMING



Livestreaming offers nonprofits an exciting opportunity to engage audiences online that can't be with you in person. Nonprofits such as Greenpeace, Human Rights Campaign and charity: water, as well as a growing number of other effective cause organizations, have used livestreaming successfully to share videos featuring major announcements and events.



## Should I Live-stream?

Organizations use livestreaming to invite audiences into the conversation, change perspectives, tell stories or bring the action directly to their followers with just the click of a hashtag. For example, in 2016, Greenpeace USA hosted a live video interview of their Executive Director in front of the U.S. Capitol Building just moments after being arrested at a protest calling on Congress to restore voting rights. The video attracted over 7,000 views, more than 130 shares and 500 likes. Organizers were able to interact with viewers and ask them to sign a petition and join the mobilization.

Many organizations that have livestreamed successfully identify with one or more of the following characteristics. They tend to:

- **Target a younger audience.** Livestreaming is popular with younger audiences (32 percent of Periscope's users are aged 16-24 and 49 percent of them are under 35). Seventy percent of the trial group for Facebook Live was composed of high school or college-aged users — a large portion of whom were African-American teenagers. So think about your target demographic when selecting a platform to share your content.
- **Use visual events.** Discuss internally to ensure that what you're capturing will translate well to an at-home audience. Will your audience walk away thinking that it was a meaningful experience?
- **Have a strong following on social media.** Livestreaming often is used alongside live-tweeting, so having a captive audience on Twitter helps. Build a strong social media following (we've got a Spitfire guide for that too!) or a particular hashtag in advance of livestreaming to build momentum before your live broadcast.
- **Engage a more tech-savvy audience.** Your target audience should include frequent mobile and computer users — those who are online and ready to engage with the click of a button — since some livestreaming platforms like Periscope are designed for immediate viewing only.

## What to livestream

Certain situations or events are suited for livestreaming better than others. Here are some of the ways that you can incorporate livestreaming into your digital strategy:

- **Shine a light on your everyday work.** Bring your fans to the heart of the action by giving them a peek into your organization's headquarters and creating authentic connections with your audience.
- **Big reveal.** Do you have an announcement coming up, such as a campaign launch or conference keynote? Consider promoting events ahead of time and sharing them live.
- **Show a new perspective.** If your followers are used to hearing from leaders at your organization, livestreaming could be a perfect opportunity to share the perspectives of your grantees or beneficiaries. Demonstrate your impact by presenting from this fresh viewpoint.
- **Start a conversation.** You could introduce a new executive director and invite funders, volunteers and supporters to ask questions or comment on news and trending topics in the moment. Livestreaming offers the opportunity for your organization's spokespeople to have a live conversation, mobilize supporters and engage a broader audience.
- **Launch a video series.** Consider creating an entire series that broadcasts at the same time and day each week — much like a TV show — so that your fans can count on the series to learn about the latest developments at your organization.
- **Bring supporters to your event.** Would your annual fundraiser or a special performance be fun to watch from afar if you couldn't attend? Broadcast the event to allow supporters to experience it with you.

## Plan Ahead

- **Be prepared.** There's no undo button when you're livestreaming! The content shouldn't be scripted per se, but you want to have a sense for the flow of events, particularly how you'll wrap up the livestream. Familiarize yourself with the features of the app or program that you're using to prevent snafus.
- **Call for backup.** Have another staff person ready to respond to the comments feed, so that you can handle questions appropriately. Think through the controversial points that might be raised and prepare a list of responses ready to send.
- **Schedule your livestream.** Different times of day might be better for different audiences, depending on age, income level and work schedule. Your Facebook or Twitter analytics can help you to determine when your audience is online.

## Tools

Livestreaming is a relatively new space, so there are new apps and tools entering the scene constantly. Jumping on a trendy app can be tempting, but be sure to determine which is suited best for your needs first.

### +Facebook Live

- Facebook [launched live-streaming capabilities](#) for brands and verified accounts, which organizations can access through their Facebook pages. We've got a Spitfire guide for that too!
- **Instagram** — owned by Facebook — also has live video capabilities through the “Stories” feature, which allows you to share all the moments of your day and connect with followers in real time.
- Facebook broadcasts the livestream to the organization's followers on the platform, so this is a smart option if you have an engaged Facebook audience.
- Unlike Periscope, livestreams stay on a Facebook page permanently.
- Facebook allows livestreaming for users on iOS, Android and [Facebook Creator](#), which is only available for verified users. You can use professional camera equipment to record a live-stream, but allow yourself extra time and make sure you test your setup beforehand.



### +Periscope

- This mobile app is owned by Twitter, which makes it the most compatible with the Twitter platform.
- Periscope is great if you are pairing streamed video with live-tweeting.
- Content can only be created on a smartphone or tablet, so be sure that your social media manager has access to one of those tools.
- Videos are deleted 24 hours after the initial broadcast, forcing viewers to watch content quickly.
- If you have a strong Twitter following, Periscope is likely your best option.



Other platforms that we suggest taking a look at include [Rhinobird](#) and [YouNow](#). Rhinobird has a few technical advantages over its competition (e.g., less lag time on broadcasts; group publishing of broadcasts based on hashtag; ability to broadcast to Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp). YouNow is especially popular among teens.

### +YouTube Live

- YouTube has been making a big push to extend its nonprofit program and has given all member organizations the ability to livestream from their channels.
- This platform is best suited for organizations looking to leverage their advocacy efforts.
- With the launch of [Super Chat](#), broadcasters can monetize their livestreams by allowing viewers to send donations and incentivizes creators to broadcast live on YouTube more often.
- YouTube Live's addition of mobile livestreaming serves to compete with Facebook Live's on-the-go streaming capability, giving influencers a higher capacity to engage with audiences.

