



Politically-Conservative Web 2.0 Activists

Ft. Hard Knox

Why Conservatives Need to Geek-Up (Part 1)

By Jenn Sierra, [originally published](#) June 2007

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If you are not a liberal when you're 25 you have no heart, and if you're not a conservative when you're 45, you have no brain.

This saying, sometimes credited to Winston Churchill, seems to hold a bit of universal truth, as does the notion that the young people of a generation affect change, while the older folks lend stability. This certainly seems to be the case when it comes to politics online in the 21st century (allowing, of course, for exceptions such as the Young Republicans clubs and the die-hard hippies).

[Web 2.0](#) technology affects our lives online in the form of blogs, online citizen journalism sites (social news), wikis, folksonomies, social networking sites, collaborative bookmarking sites, podcasts, aggregators (e.g. RSS), semantic web, collaborative software, and other online scenarios in which users create and share content such as graphics, news, information, technology, creative writing, software, photos, and videos. The original World Wide Web gave us the opportunity to share information by posting what we had to say, and by reading what others had to say. Web 2.0 takes that concept to the next level, by giving users the opportunity to collectively influence what information is available and how the information is distributed.

Today's twenty-somethings grew up online, and generally seem to be more intuitively tech-savvy and more comfortable with online collaboration than those of us that are older ("older," in this case meaning anyone over 35!). It is no wonder, then, that there is a noticeable liberal/progressive majority in the politics discussions of any of the social networking sites, which extensively utilize the newest technologies and the art of collaboration.

Largely due to Web 2.0 technology as well as increasingly interactive search engines, there is a growing body of knowledge online that is taking on a life of its own, and it is very influential. Features such as [Google PageRank](#) assure that the majority view of any issue is likely to be the first available information on any

given topic. Anyone interested in the accuracy of the information that is being disseminated online, needs to have a voice in this increasingly important global discussion.

As conservatives, we need to understand and utilize Web 2.0 technology if we want this body of knowledge to even partially reflect our values, attitudes, respect for history, and vision for the future.

Why Conservatives Need to Geek-Up (Part 2)

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When I was growing up, if I had a question, I was often encouraged by a parent or teacher to go look for the answer in a dictionary, the encyclopedia, or in the library. Students of all ages now have it a lot easier, as they often need to go no further than their closest internet connection, so that they can [Google](#), [Yahoo](#), or [Dogpile](#), or [Ask Jeeves](#) for the answers to their questions.

It's so easy, and convenient. Just type in a few keywords, and voila! Often hundreds of pages of information is instantly available on any given topic. But we don't sort through all of those pages, do we? I personally almost never go past the first, second, or rarely the third page. So who controls what information populates those first pages?

There is an entire career field dedicated to getting websites promoted to this highly coveted location, called search engine optimization (SEO). There are directories, crawlers, and paid listings. Organizations such as [SearchEngineWatch.com](#) offer suggestions online for getting websites closer to that front page, and explaining the [hierarchy](#) of search engines.

[Google PageRank's webmaster center](#) explains, "In general, webmasters can improve the rank of their sites by increasing the number of high-quality sites that link to their pages." High quality sites, as it turns out, are pages that have a lot of traffic, and have lots of other sites linking directly them. See a pattern? The more links you have to your site, the more traffic you will get, hopefully resulting in more links. There is a compounding effect.

Why do conservatives need to understand this? As we discussed in [part one](#), there is a noticeable liberal/progressive majority in the politics discussions of any of the social networking sites, which extensively utilize the newest technologies and the art of collaboration. This is also reflected in the information that is available online through a typical search.

The compounding affect of the search engine algorithms assures that the majority view will continue to be the majority view. Want to test this theory? Try

the following searches in any of the search engines, and see if the first page leans right or left: Iraq war, immigration, or gender.

Curious about where your favorite websites rank on Google? Try this free [PageRank](#) checker.

Why Conservatives Need to Geek-Up (Part 3)

By TXPoet and Jenn Sierra, *originally published June 2007*
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This is the third and final installment* of this series explaining why Conservatives need to become more active in the Web 2.0 environment. Part One discussed the generational gap, generally between liberals and conservatives online, while Part Two discussed the how this gap is creating an imbalance of information readily available online through a typical search engine query. We will finish this series by highlighting a few of the major figures supporting Web 2.0 financially, showing how their political leaning is further compounding the imbalance in the information war.

Online social networkers are familiar with [Digg.com](#), the current [top social bookmarking site](#), which has enjoyed unprecedented success in social networking, through its use of bookmarking and syndication, with over [20 million visitors per month](#).

Where does a site like Digg get funding? Who are its investors? Primarily [Greylock Partners and the Omidyar Network](#). The [Greylock Partner](#) team is an international investor in primarily technology and medicine, with a special interest in [Israel](#). The [Omidyar Network](#) “has invested in a variety of areas, including microfinance, participatory media, open innovation, open source and transparency in government.”

In addition to investing financially, the Omidyar Network is on [mission](#):

Ultimately, we hope that people everywhere will constructively engage with each other to pursue what they care about most, resulting in a global society that is continually advancing social progress.

If the name Omidyar rings a bell, it's because Pierre Omidyar is the [founder of e-Bay](#), a philanthropist who is #43 [on Forbes' list of billionaires](#), and a benefactor of a microfinance fund at [Tufts University](#).

From April of 2002 to June of 2007, and during the formative years of Digg.com, Omidyar's COO/CEO was [Iqbal Paroo](#), a [Shia Imami Nizari Ismaili](#), whose interests involve complex healthcare and higher education. He has a long history of involvement with the [Aga Khan Foundation](#) (1977-2000), and “From 1977-1980, he served the Aga Khan Foundation as both director of commissioning for

the initial phase of the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan,” [which has](#) “teaching and research programmes in Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Afghanistan and the United Kingdom.” The university is billed as “[an agent of change](#)” and “[an important force for pluralism](#)”.

Omidyar and Paroo are champions for the left’s most sacred causes, and now their organization is one of the primary investors in the largest, most influential social-networking site on the web.

Where is the conservative counterpart?

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