

Donald Trump – Who Needs the Media?



*By Neil Foote, President & Founder,
Foote Communications*



(Source: Twitter)

Donald Trump's "boycott" of the [GOP presidential](#) debate validated one key point during this era of digital and social media: You don't need the "mainstream media" to reach your audience. All you need is a rabid group of followers who will do anything you say wherever you say it, whenever you say it via any form of media you say it. Who needs a national TV network when you could tweet it to your supporters and have the true network multiplier effect kick in. You might say Trump and Bernie Sanders borrowed some tricks from the current president Barack Obama. He defied conventional campaigning standards to rally an angry, disenfranchised electorate to

organize, donate, and vote. He built his campaign on a message of “hope and change” via social media and built on that to brand himself as the new guy on the block – in more ways than one.

Now, enter Donald Trump, the billionaire reality TV star. His in-your-face message of “change” is reinforced by everyone of his actions. So why should anyone be surprised that he creates his own event to redirect attention away from the “mainstream” candidates to him? He has been able to use his Twitter account to instantly talk to his 5.9 million followers. He’s proven that he can promote his own positions, lash out at critics and do what Obama did – defy the expectations of media and political analysts who are waiting for him to implode.

Trump’s success using social media is offering marketers a perfect case study on how a strong brand with a strong, consistent targeted message can generate loyal followers who can be converted to consumers. Trump has even proven that these followers ignore negative attributes, focusing only on a narrow set of positive attributes that reinforce their beliefs. Trump is sending a message that offers other political candidates – and major brands – an opportunity to avoid “mainstream media” and still create buzz.

About the Author: Neil Foote, a veteran journalist and media executive, is a media and political junky, keeping abreast of the latest trends impacting the business of journalism, media, politics and public relations. He draws from his experience at the Miami Herald, Washington Post, Belo Corporation and Tom Joyner’s Reach Media. He also teaches media convergence, media management and public affairs at the University of North Texas’ Frank W. & Sue Mayborn School of Journalism and runs Foote Communications, a media consulting firm. The native of Brooklyn, NY also is a member of the board for the National Black Public Relations Society and founder of PoliticsInColor.com.