

**Consumers Union Advocacy Summit
Workshop Notes
October 23, 2008**

Introduction to Online Networking: Online Advocacy

- ✿ Three goals of online advocacy:
 - Get to know people
 - Build relationships
 - Build a team towards a shared goal
- ✿ The best way to get to know people is by forwarding email.
 - Email your blog post to appropriate people – for example, council members, hospital administration. These email addresses can be found on the web.
 - Set up a ListServ – for example a Yahoo Group.
- ✿ Respect that people do not have time. When asking a favor, such as signing a petition, make it as easy as possible, especially for the first time. You may just have people take a quick email action.
- ✿ Build a team and keep them in the loop.
 - Highlight successes. Let people know when something good happens. This tells people that their work mattered.
 - Let people know what the next steps will be.
 - Provide people with things that are fun to forward.
- ✿ Blogs:
 - While emails are good for some things, they are not suited to discussing a topic in depth, vetting a proposal, editing a document, etc.
 - People can comment on blogs and let you know if an idea is bad or a proposal needs editing.
 - Blogs are editorials that people can respond to. They often thrive on controversy which can be an effective tool in its own right.
 - A blog can create relationships. Go to blogs that you don't agree with and post comments to start a discussion.
 - To start your own blog, it makes sense to begin by routinely commenting on other blogs. Contact these people when you start your blog and chances are they will link to you. This will bring attention to your blog.