

“NEW NORMAL” OF COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE FOR INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS IN THE U.S.

MAY 2022



**WHAT'S IN
HERE**

GOAL FOR TODAY



- Provide insights to help “upward manage” executive teams’ expectations regarding risks and best practices to build industrial infrastructure in U.S.
- Determine: Develop best practices alone or jointly?

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTEXT IN U.S.

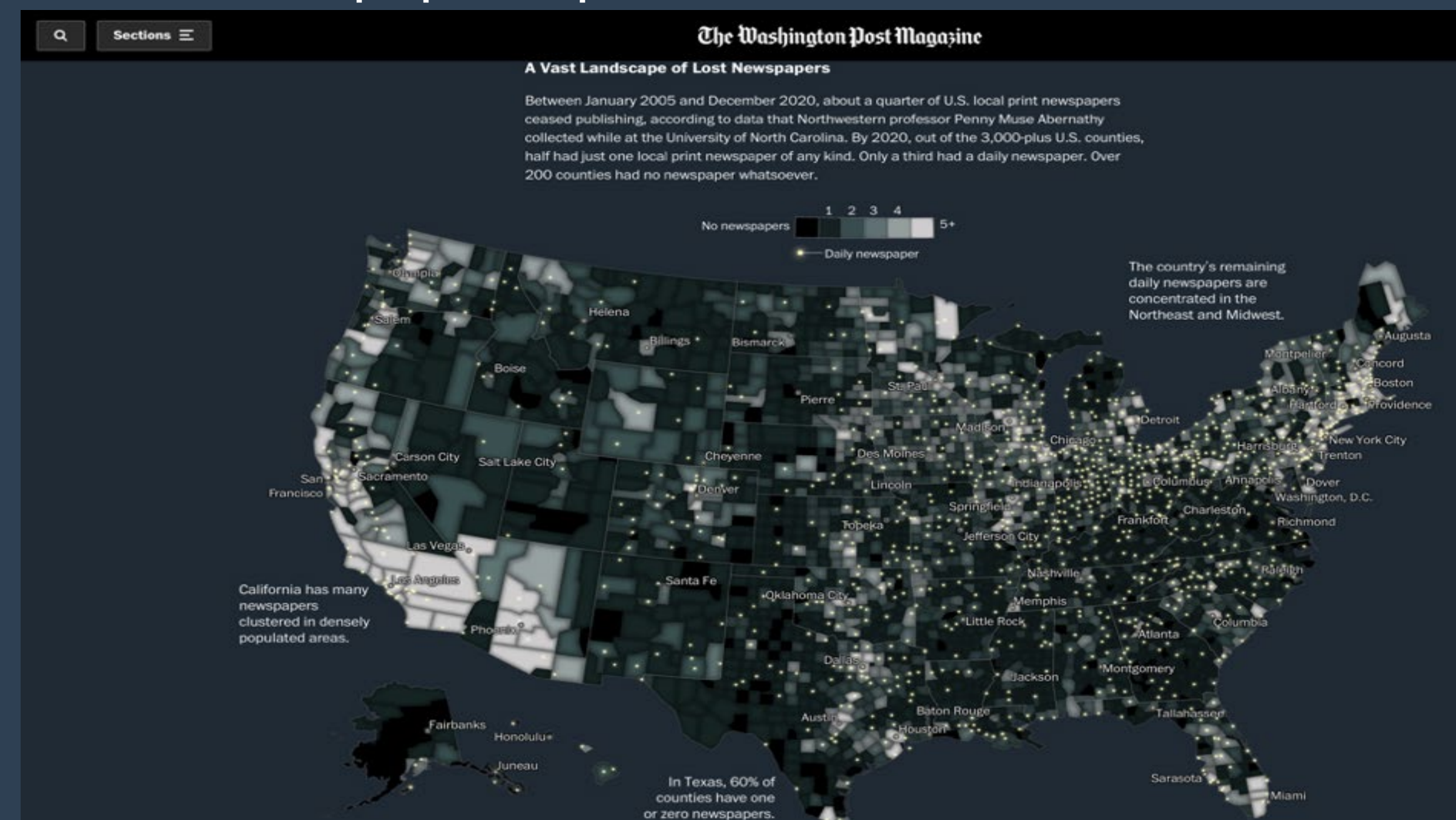


- History of skepticism and resistance to centralized authority
- Result: Multiple layers of government established as check on excessive central authority
- Creates multiple ways for local opponents to block projects
- *Highly* diverse and distinct regional cultures – recommend reading: [American Nations, A History of the 11 Rival Regional Cultures of North America](#) (2012)
- Both drive cost and complexity of community engagement

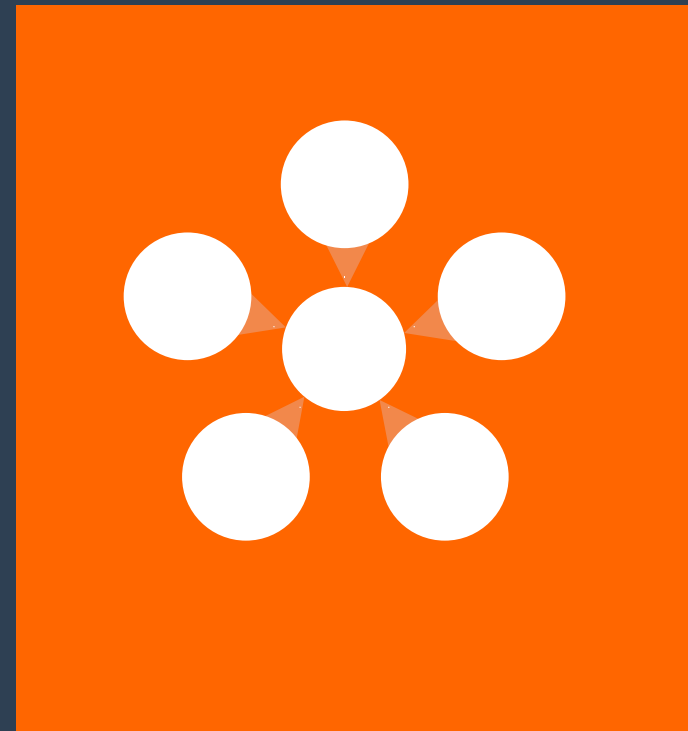
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTEXT IN U.S.



- Collapse of local news media outlets created [news deserts](#) (complete absence of local news coverage)
- 1,300 communities across 200 counties
- U.S. population 1990 vs. 2020 (248M → 331M), but 50% of the number of newspaper reporters

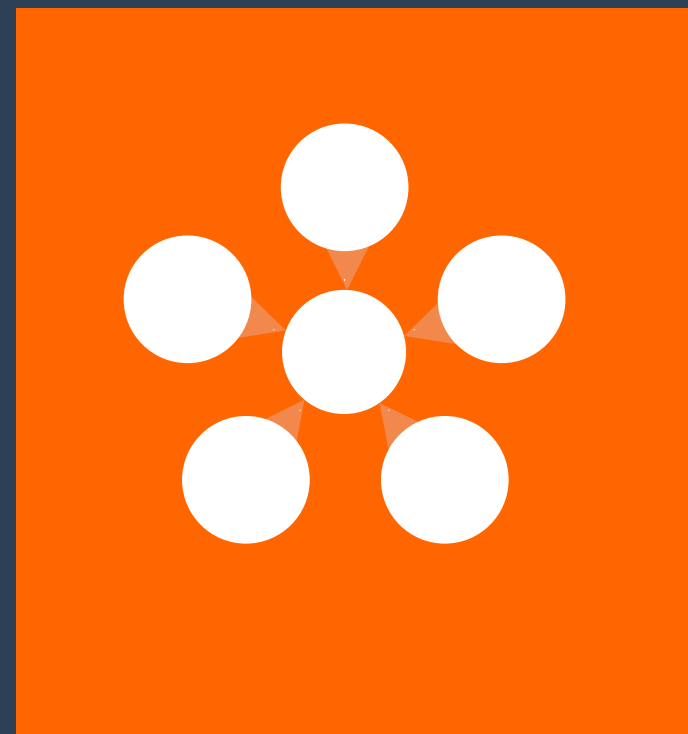


FACEBOOK HAS FILLED VOID



- “The new town square”
- Where issues and terms of reference are first framed, early impressions formed and spread
- Boost in screen time hours has boosted criticality of Facebook

RISE OF LOW-INFORMATION, HIGH-PROPAGANDA VOTER

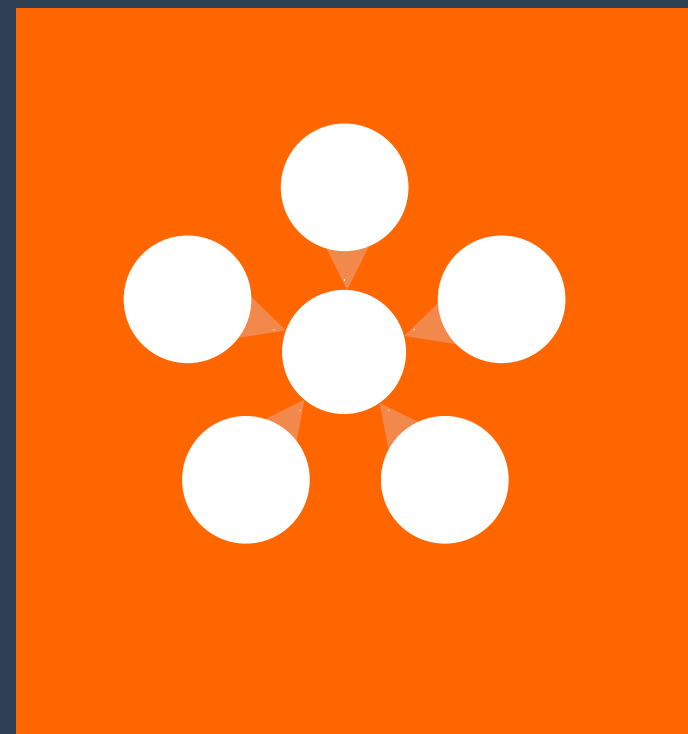


- Cultural, historical factors manifesting today in resistance to vaccines and mask mandates
- Rural residents' viewpoints now essential part of rural residents' identity and viewpoint
- Resistant to any information channel that could challenge their view



Actual sign on high-traffic highway in state of Pennsylvania, sponsored by sitting state senator

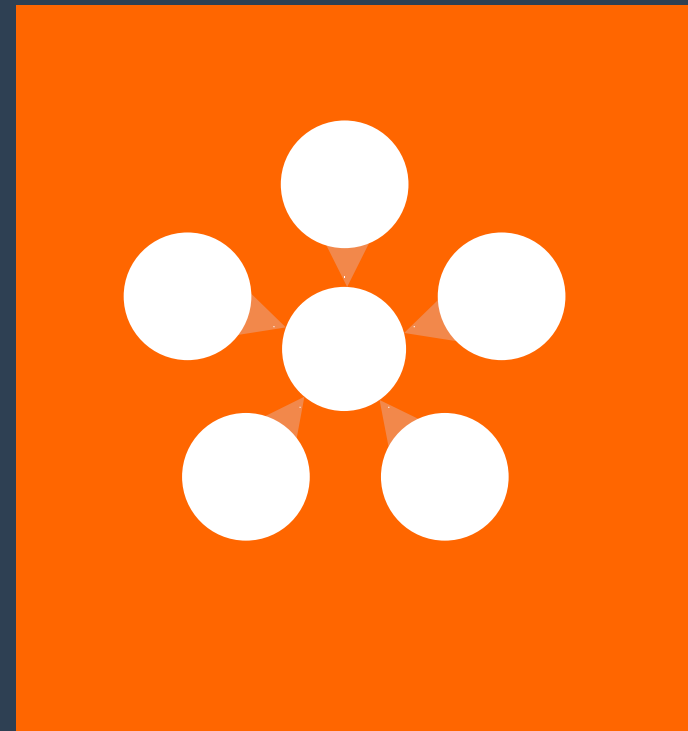
CASE STUDY – SPOWER (U.S. DEVELOPER)



sPower

- Wind and solar developer with tradition of “heads down” culture that avoided unnecessary communications with local constituencies
- With lower viewshed, company assumed utility-scale solar was immune from local objections
- *Until* they had near-death experience w/[\\$700M solar project](#) 40 miles south ([here](#) and [here](#))

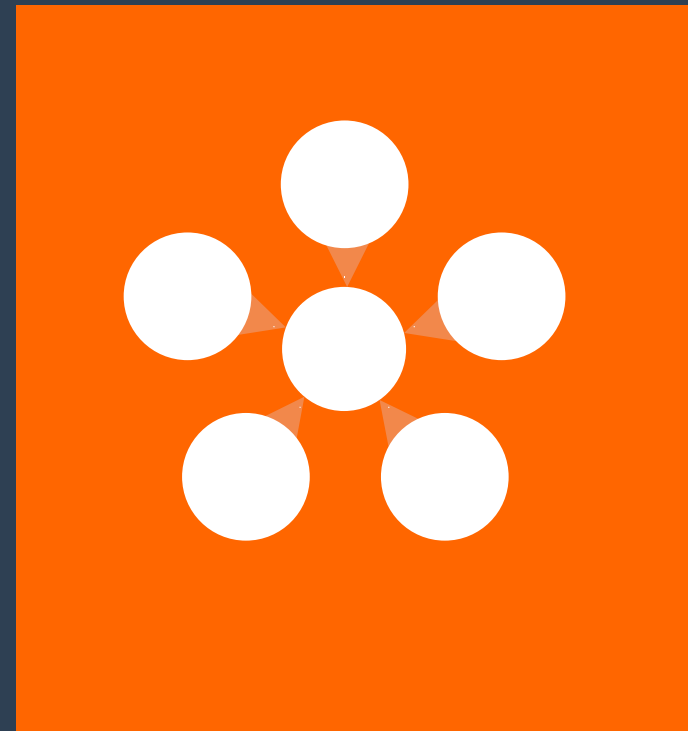
CASE STUDY – ROCKWOOL (DK)



ROCKWOOL

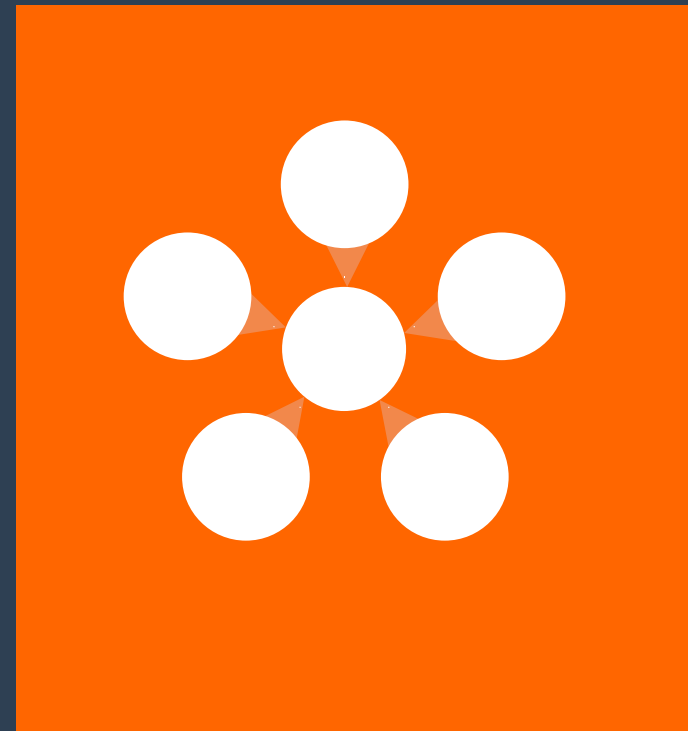
- Operated in >40 locations around world without serious challenges
- [Jefferson Co., WV](#) part of 50 counties from 10 states that publicly competed to win plan
- Announcements made: Victory, construction plans, groundbreaking
- Pushback started within days after groundbreaking
- By time company talked to us a few weeks later, 8K people on Facebook opposition group in County of 55K people; opponent #s leveled out at 10K w/in a month
- Imperiled \$150M plant
- To ROCKWOOL's credit, company leadership went all in to solve.
 - Allocated necessary resources.
 - Gave clear mandate to designated project lead.
 - Though project lead typically works from HQ, he was an American who spent a great deal of time on the ground.

SUGGESTED OPERATING PRINCIPLES



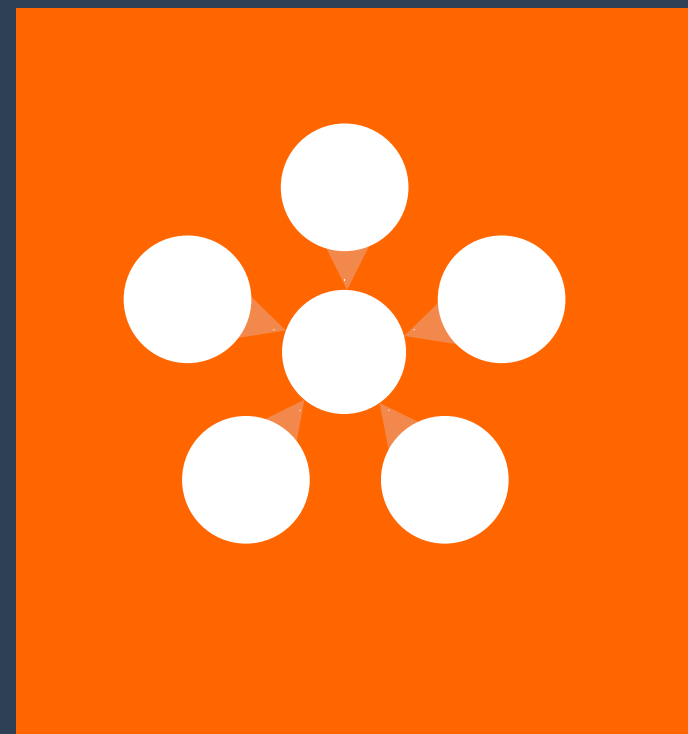
- Proactive planning, not reactive panic
- Need repeatable plan to build supporter base
 - Key: Expansive definition of supply chain – any business that *might* stand to benefit
- Plan built on pre-empting predictable objections to your project that come from locals' viewpoint
 - Typically conservative & focused on job growth, economic development, maintaining local traditions

SUGGESTED OPERATING PRINCIPLES



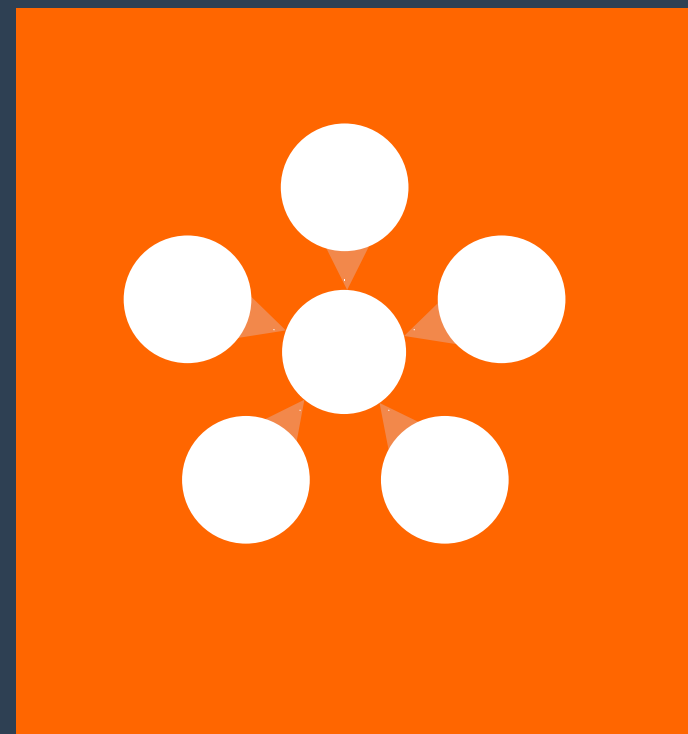
- Crucial: “Social due diligence”
 - Researching social and political dynamics – should be part of project planning, and even site selection
- Engage with people, not just distributing technical information
 - Engagement is unavoidably messy/unpredictable, requires discipline, preparation, clear parameters for those responsible

SUGGESTED OPERATING PRINCIPLES



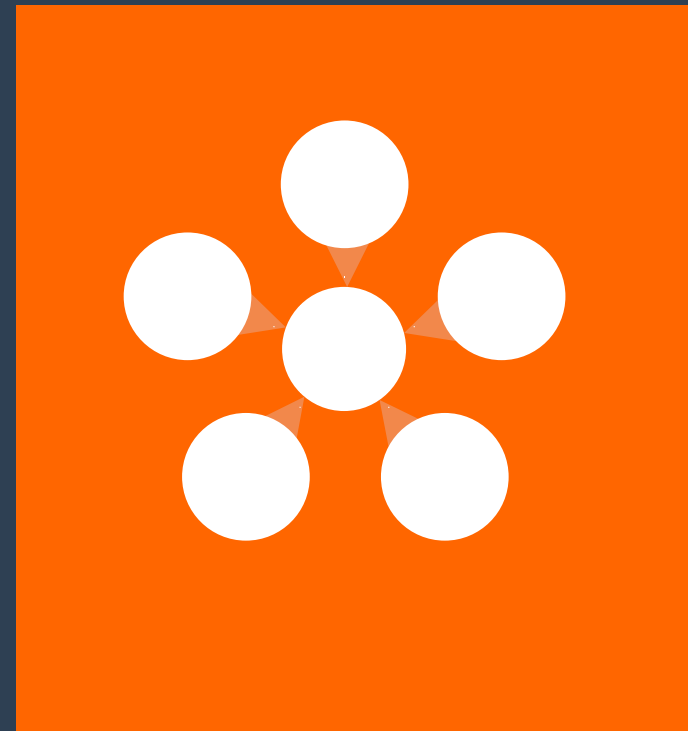
- Most infrastructure from your companies will be built in rural areas that are conservative and older
 - Facebook is *the* platform
- Cannot be shackled by global brand constraints on use of social platforms
 - Need rapid turnaround, empowered local teams to react quickly
 - Can do so w/clarity on boundaries beyond which local team needs higher-level approval
 - Tolerance within leadership team for mess of social platforms
 - As Danes say: “You need ice in your stomach”

SUGGESTED OPERATING PRINCIPLES



- Goal is content that connects emotionally
- What you say is constrained by facts, but *how* you say it is only constrained by your creativity

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- Recharge Magazine – “U.S. wind developers are losing the online battle against NIMBY groups” ([here](#))
- Views of U.S. clean economy trade magazine editors ([here](#))
- Why Steer Into Rough Seas? Helping Help Offshore Wind Avoid Community Acceptance Problems ([here](#))
- E.ON's Kevin Gresham on Digital Tools and Community Acceptance ([here](#))

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AND COMMUNITIES,
CONTACT TIGERCOMM**

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