

So Is Social Media The Bad Guy Or The Good Guy?

By: Jack Greiner on August 12, 2011 on graydon.law

I suppose it depends on who you ask. But I found this [article](#) absolutely fascinating. It talks about the presence of Twitter and BlackBerry Messenger in the recent London rioting. It's been pretty well reported that rioters used Twitter and BBM to pick target areas, and organize. It made it tough for authorities to keep up. But the article also points out that folks organizing clean up efforts are using social media to help coordinate those efforts. And authorities are using Flickr to help identify perpetrators. So it's hard to answer my original question definitively. And it's worth considering one other point. Social media played a large role in the Egyptian uprising earlier this year. Since those folks were fighting for freedom, we liked that. But the British thugs seem bent merely on a non-ideological path of mindless destruction. So we don't like that so much. The point I think is that the social media tools are neither good nor bad. They are the tools. And the bad guys are the tools in London who want to burn the city just to watch it burn.