How to Build a Great Nonprofit Website

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What we'll cover

Setting website goals
Creating great website content
Increasing conversions
Measuring outcomes
Which tools to use

Setting website goals

- Why create goals?
- Lots of tools and opportunities…only so much time and money. We must be able to track success to invest time effectively.
- Unless you set a goal, you can't measure your success.

Start with organizational goals.

- Increase new donors
- Increase adoptions
- Get more citizens to spay/neuter
- *(these are examples)*

How do you turn those into website goals?

- Increase new donors...
  - Becomes increase number of online donations
- Increase adoptions...
  - Becomes increase adoption applications submissions
- Get more people to spay/neuter....
  - Becomes increase visits or downloads of spay/neuter information on website

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Making website goals specific

- Increase number of online donations...
  - Becomes raise an additional $500 per month
- Increase adoption application submissions...
  - Becomes adopt an additional 10 animals per month
- Increase spay/neuter information visits...
  - Becomes 30 more calls/emails per month about spay/neuter services

Website goals should be…

- As specific as possible
- Based on a timeframe
- Initially somewhat arbitrary
- Numerous, then prioritized and limited, based on reality
- Ambitious, but realistic

Creating great website content

- What's the point of content?
- It's not just story time…
  must compel visitors to ACT.
- Content builds trust, rapport, authority
- Always think like your visitor thinks!

General tips for better content

- Specifics work better than generalities
- Stories are more engaging than statistics
- Photos and videos promote emotions
- Avoid jargon
- Write how you speak
- Use lists and headings
- Give visitors a reason to come back

Nonprofit tips for better content

- Illustrate your impact with first-person accounts
- Give multiple, specific ways to get involved
- Be transparent (build trust)
- Establish authority
- Clearly state the problem
- Inspire hope
- Better content means you ultimately save more lives

Make a world of difference for animals.

Join WSPA
in ending animal cruelty, today.

DONATE NOW

Increasing Conversions

- A conversion is a specific, beneficial action a visitor takes on your site.

DONATE
Safe & Secure

SUBSCRIBE

Comment

Examples of Conversions

- Downloading a file
- Commenting on a post
- Signing up for your newsletter
- RSVPing for an event
- Making a donation
- Viewing a page, story or blog
- Signing up to volunteer
- Filling out an application

Make sure your visitor is NEVER confused.

- Navigation should be clear and include search
- Provide many opportunities to engage
- Not everyone wants to be involved in the same way

Make sure engaging is convenient

- Provide a link to give on every page
- Keep people ON your site
- Give them different options
- Only ask for fields you actually NEED

Measuring Outcomes
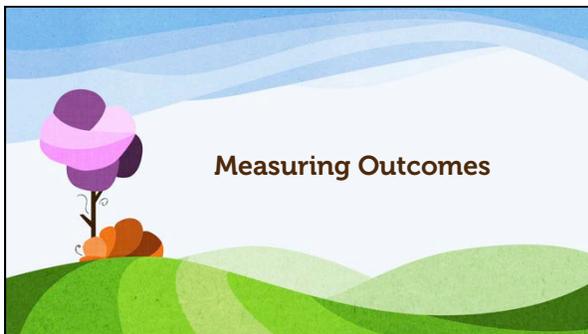
Adjustments to goals & site

- Goals should be adjusted depending on success and outside factors
- Test changes to the site and other tools (tip: don't make changes TOO often to ensure confidence in results)
- Repeat as needed

Do you NEED a website these days? Can you just use Facebook?

- *You still need a website. (Sorry, Mark.)*
- Facebook is where people may meet you, but if they're going to donate, volunteer, etc. they will want to do more research.
- Social media is a gateway to your website.

Stuff you should know

What is hosting?

- It's where your website lives.
- If your website is the house, the hosting is the lot it sits on.

What is a domain name?

- It's the address people type in to get to your site.
- If your house is the website, the hosting is the lot, then the domain name (www.yoursite.org) is the address!
- Also known as a URL (Uniform Resource Locator)

How do you build your site?

- Write it old-school in HTML
- Buy software to build it
- Use a free website tool

What is a CMS?

- Content Management System

- Web-based, no software to download

- Works on any platform (Mac or PC)

- You can use anywhere you have an internet connection

Open source vs. Proprietary

- Open source is "free", anyone can use

- Can be moved from place to place

- Proprietary is owned by someone

- May or may not be free—but you can't move it

- Example—"I'll design your site for free, but you have to host on my servers forever!"

Externally hosted site builders: PROS

- Free

- Most are easy to use; no coding

Free hosted site builders: CONS

- You (usually) get what you pay for
- They WILL place ads on your site
- Design options are limited
- Nonconforming code (it breaks)
- Not built for YOUR field
- Can't have email@yoursite.com
- Will be harder to find in search engines
- Not terribly secure (easily hacked)
- Have no way to securely accept donations on your site

Self-hosted options: PROS

- Still relatively inexpensive for hosting
- Your own domain name
- Better for search engines
- Total control over design
- Site belongs to YOU—no ads
- Your email @yourdomain.com
- Safer/more secure
- You CAN take it with you
- Way more functionality

Self-hosted options: CONS

- Some costs involved (hosting fees)
- Sometimes a little more skill required (at least for initial setup)

Externally hosted builders

- Wix
- Weebly
- Rescuegroups.org
- Webstarts.com
- Moonfruit.com
- Webnode.com
- Wordpress.com
- Sites.google.com
- WildApricot

Self-hosted building software

- Wordpress
- Drupal
- Joomla
- Concrete 5
- CushyCMS

What are your choices for collecting money on your website?

- Simple Paypal button
- Merchant account with bank + payment gateway account
- Razoo, Firstgiving or other 3rd party handler
- Turnkey donor management software systems (DonorPerfect, Raiser's Edge, etc.)

Merchant accounts

- Set up with your bank or other provider
- Allows you to accept credit cards
- Allows credit card companies to put money into your bank account
- *(If you accept credit cards at a physical location, you already have this)*

Payment gateway

- Allows your website to "talk" to your Merchant account.
- Allows you to take payments on website.
- Integrates with 3rd party donor tools.
- Requires you to have an SSL installed.

Third Party Partners

- These sites provide a turnkey, web-based solution.
- Firstgiving, Causes.com, Razoo.com, etc.
- Accepts and processes donations on your behalf, allows supporters to create their own campaigns
- Usually have some great page templates and widgets
- Hefty Fees range from 5% to 15%

Paypal - PROS

- Gateway AND Merchant Account...sort of...
- Fees rolled into one
- Easy to manage
- You don't pay unless you use it
- No need for SSL on your site (security)
- Easy to embed on social media, emails, etc.

Paypal/google checkout - CONS

- Donor must leave your site to pay (this is HUGE)
- Many people don't like Paypal
- Donor must create Paypal account to make a recurring donation
- 2.9% + 30 cents per transaction
- No donor management tools
- Poor record keeping and reporting

Pros/cons of regular merchant account vs. paypal

- A hosted merchant account will cost you a monthly fee, regardless of use.
- However, you WILL get more donations.
- Paypal is easier, and you only pay if you use it.
- But you'll raise far less money in the long run.
- Would you spend $14 a month to make $1,000?

How much you make determines the best solution for you.

- Less than $5,000 per month in donations?
  - Stripe payment processor on thesocialdonor.com. Use shared SSL certificate. $100 set up fee. 2.9% + 30 cents a transaction, no fees unless you use it. Forms can be embedded in your site, Facebook, etc.
- More than $5,000 per month in donations?
  - Merchant account integrated with your bank account. Authorize.net payment gateway and SSL installed on your domain. SSL cost - $10/year; Merchant account + gateway fee - $30/month; transaction fees around 1.5%.

Donor management software & tools

- Software—either installed on your computer or web-based
- Usually interface with a merchant account or payment gateway, but sometimes they process the donations too
- Integrated features like email receipts, user account self-management, thank you letters, tax statements, donor note features (for account representatives)

CiviCRM – our favorite tool!

- Open-source donor & fundraising management tool
- Integrates with Drupal, Joomla and Wordpress (new)
- Track contributions, send emails, account self-management by donors, recurring donations, event management, member management
- Donors can create their own fundraising pages
- Event registration & ticket sales (golf tournaments, 5ks, etc.)

Civicrm donor management

Miscellaneous tools

- Wufoo – online form builder (adoption applications, volunteer applications, etc.)
- Small free plan; basic (definitely adequate) plan is $14.95/mo.
- Can work as a payment processor!

Animoto.com

- online tool for making video slideshows set to music out of still photos
- Free account (30 second videos)
- Plus account - $30/ year

Text to Donate

- Mobile Giving – still cost-prohibitive (in its true form).

- Close alternatives are MobileCause.com and Tapfunder.com. Both allow users to text, then it sends them a link to an online form to complete the donation.

Text:
KEYWORD
to **65047**
To pledge your support to our charity.

Because we respect your privacy, you can "opt-out" at any time by replying "STOP".

Google for Nonprofits

- Allows you to participate in Google programs just for nonprofits---Google Grants, YouTube for Nonprofits, and Google Apps for free

- Must be a 501(c)3 to be eligible

Flickr.com/creativecommons

- Royalty-free photos for non-commercial use on your website, blog, social media, etc.

- Photographers make their work available to use for free, as long as you give them credit

Easel.ly

- Free online tool for making infographics (you don't have to be a designer!)

- Infographics are graphics that convey information, and are shareable and easy to digest

FotoFlexer.com

- Free, web-based photo editing tool that allows you to crop, resize, and embed text and logos onto your photos.

- If your nonprofit is active on Pinterest or Instagram, a little finesse on your photos is really important!

Picmonkey.com

- Great online photo editing tool – cropping, resizing, etc.

npCloud.org

- Free software, backup, phone service and computing in the cloud
- Saves you money: your hardware is never out of date and never needs to be fixed
- Solutions include cloud desktop computers, cloud office software, back, phone & more

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So what is MY "ideal" setup for a small/ medium organization?

Wordpress website on your own hosting account

CiviCRM for donor and event management

Stripe payment processor + SSL + Gravity Forms for online, mobile and Facebook giving forms

PhoneSwipe for onsite transactions (donations, adoption fees)

Mailchimp for email newsletters and communications

The Bottom Line:

- Your website exists to make money for your organization and further your mission. Therefore, it's worth an investment of time and money on your part.
- Define goals for your website, just as you would an employee or volunteer. Make sure it's meeting the goals. If not, change things.
- A website is a living, breathing thing. It's never "finished." You get out of it what you put into it.

Questions?

And please tell me other tools you use and like (or don't like!)