



Financial Performance  Social Impact  Environmental Sustainability

Emerging Topics Paper Series
Working Paper # 8

Online Communications For Change
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Online Communications for Change



Online Communications for Change

Evolution of the Internet

*From initial concept
to today's world wide
web*

Online Communications for Change



The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew.

- Abraham Lincoln

Why are you here?

- Your name
- Name of organization
- **One sentence** to describe what your org does
- What do you hope to get out of today's workshop?



Is the internet our savior?

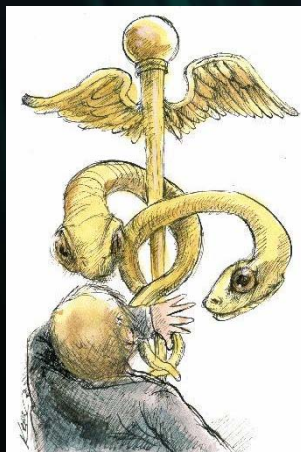


I put a dollar in one of those change machines. Nothing changed.

~George Carlin

Let's start with some context

What are we trying to change?



Fading Era

- Modern era: born out of the **industrial era**
- Need for broad scale social, economic, environmental change **not widely recognized as being critical**
- Most communication tightly **controlled and top down: Impersonal, alienating, cliché and pompous** with no humor or irony and no listening.



Emerging Era



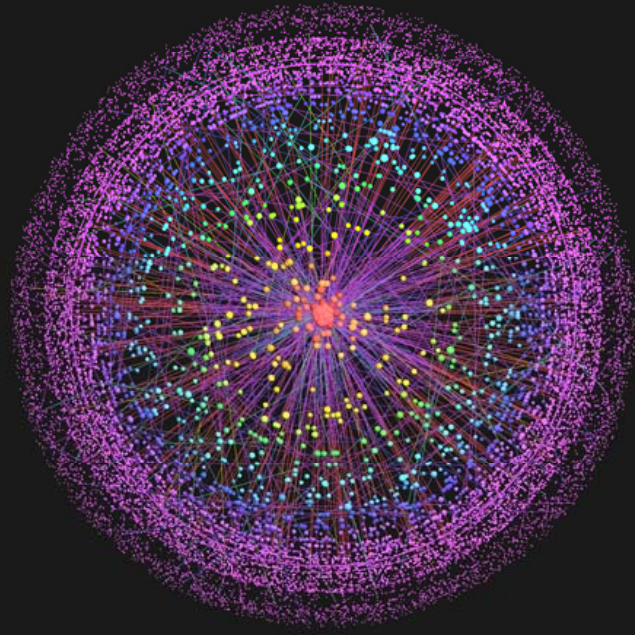
- Entering a **post-modern** era
- Widely recognized sense of **urgency** on issues and **failing institutions**
- **Human-like** communication is becoming norm, with less rigidness and more personality
- Government has **devolved responsibility** to the social sector; Business wants to **do well while doing good**; Donors want more **impact for their dollars**; Citizen **participation** is on the rise

How is Online Communications Changing Society?

- An unprecedented flow of ideas around the world accelerating the rate at which new forms can be conceived and take shape.
- Facilitation of collaborative efforts to produce results that transcend individual efforts.
- Mass communication has shifted from a monologue to a dialogue
- Growing sense of connection and interdependence.
- Nature deficit, especially in children



How is Networked Society Changing Organizations?



- **Shift from managerial thinking to ecosystem thinking**: groups must transcend traditional organization boundaries to create greater good.
- **Focus away from organization as means of social change towards organization as a change agent**, a catalyst that works through larger networks and leverages all sectors of society for the greater good.
- **Organizations no longer control flow of information.**

Becoming Relevant Again

- Only 25% say nonprofits do a “very good” job. This figure was 30% in 2006 and 34% in 2003
- 64% of Americans have a “great deal” or “fair amount” of confidence in charitable organizations. This figure was 69% in 2006 and 90% before 9/11/01
- 56% of those with a “great deal” of confidence in charitable organizations say orgs waste a “great deal” or “fair amount” of money.



~ *Chronicle of Philanthropy*

Organizations as Agents of Change

High-impact nonprofits do this

Work externally with all sectors of society

Advocate for policy change and run programs

Harness market forces and work with business

Engage outsiders in meaningful experiences;
build long-term relationships

Nurture networks of nonprofits, build the field

Constantly adapt

Empower others to lead and take action

Use leverage to change entire systems

...Not this

Focus exclusively on their own organization

Only provide direct services, avoid politics

Avoid engaging with business or capitalism

Treat volunteers as free labor or donors as check-writers;
focus on transactions

See fellow nonprofits as “competitors”

Become mired in bureaucracy, or get overwhelmed
with too many ideas

Maintain a command-and-control hierarchy,
and allow the CEO to be the “hero”

Use organizational growth to scale impact

Change the Way You Change the World: A Model for Wide-Scale Social Change by Leslie R. Crutchfield & Heather Grant McLeod

The Need to Think Big

“Social entrepreneurs are not content to merely give a man a fish, or even teach him how to fish; these entrepreneurs won’t stop until they have revolutionized the entire fishing industry.”

~ Bill Drayton, founder of Ashoka



"What is now proved was once only imagined."

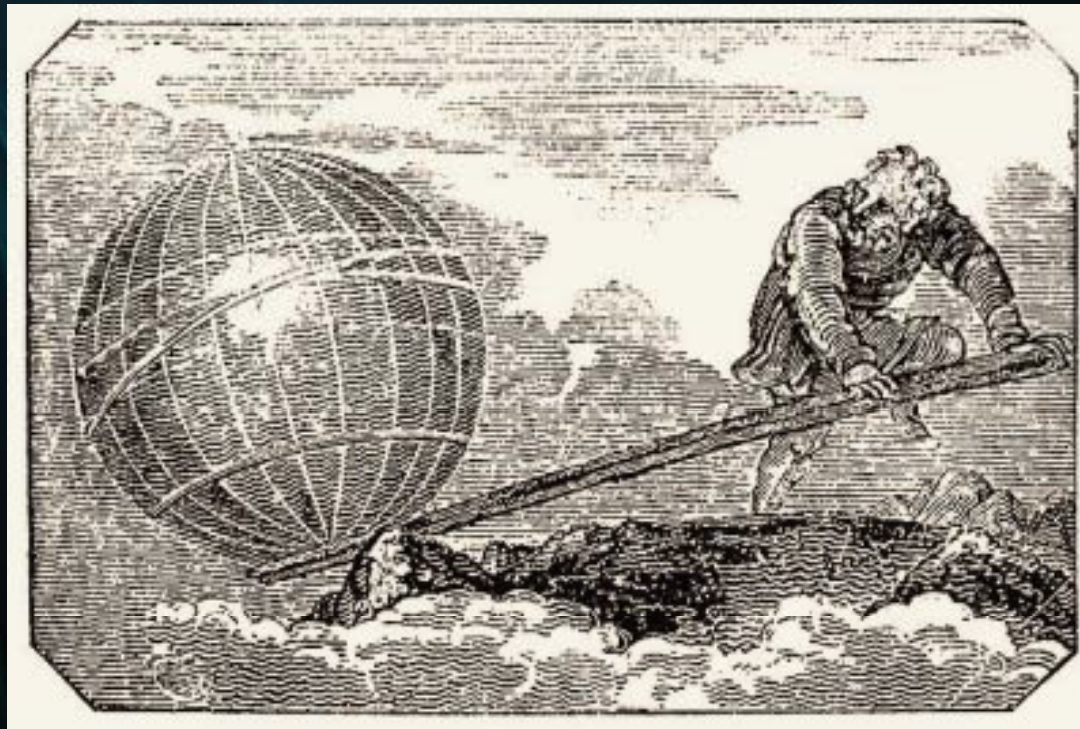
~William Blake



ISLAND BREEZE

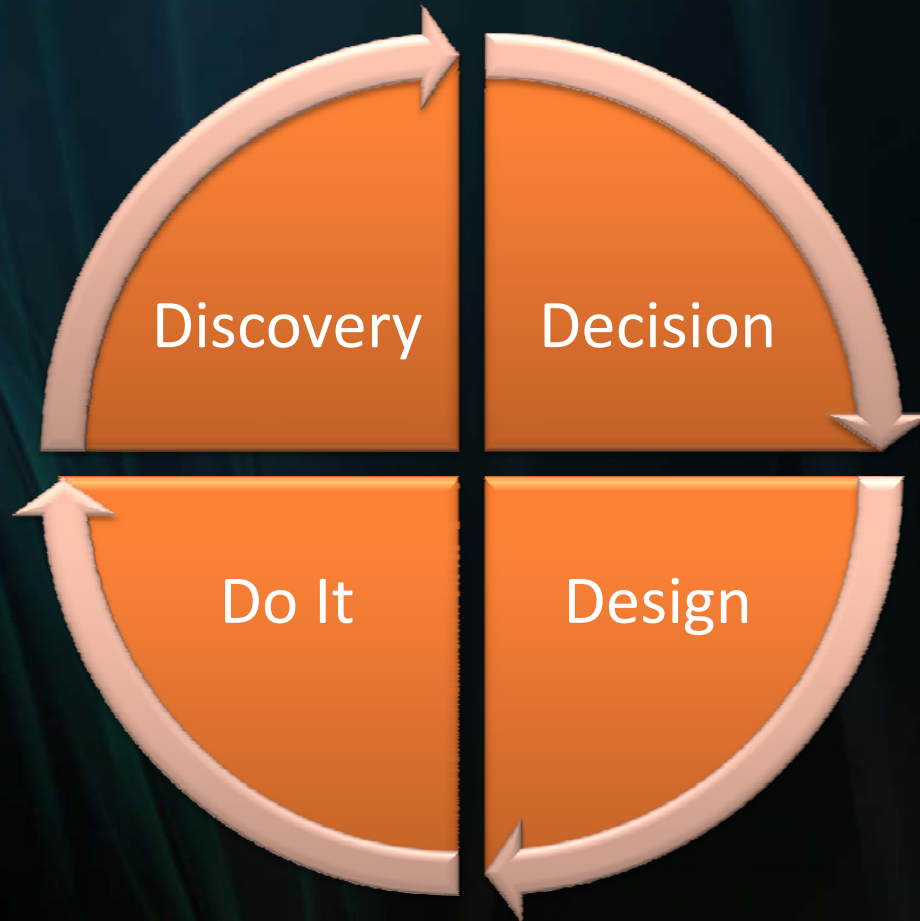
The Need for Leverage

Limited resources, need to be strategic



*Archimedes offered to move the world with leverage
but didn't promise it would be moved to a better place*

Communications Planning



Key Planning Points



- Situational Assessment
- Target Audience
- Message development
- Communications Vehicles
- How is success measured?
- Reality check

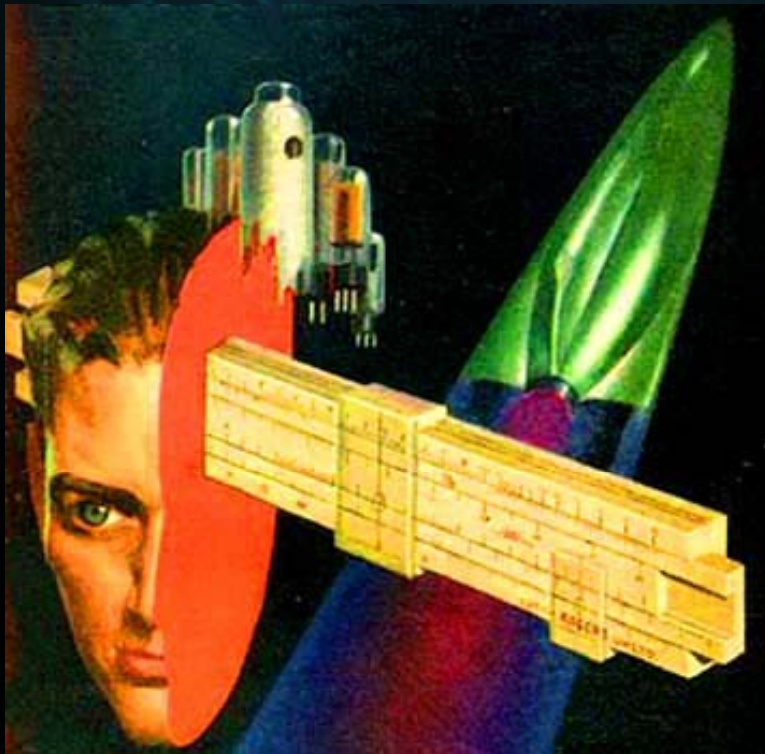
Some important principals

- Rapport
- Empathy
- Dialogue
- Narcissism
- Humor
- 80/20
- Innovation



Tools of the Trade

- *and how you might want to use them...*
- *Or how your constituents want to use them...*



Technological change is like an axe in the hands of a pathological criminal.

- Albert Einstein

NOT A PRODUCT ENDORSEMENT



Viewer's Choice

- Email
- Online Donations
- Website
- Social Networking



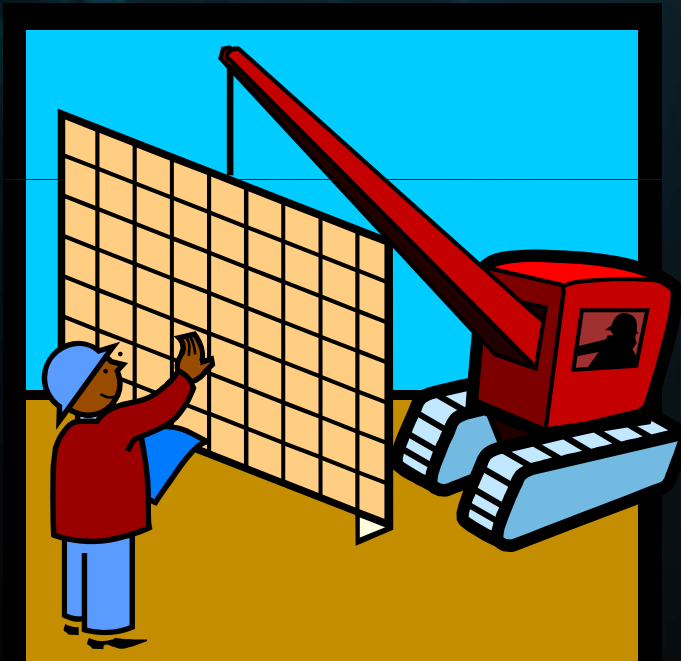
Why Email is Important

- **Everybody on the net has email** and most of them read most of their messages.
- People **visit far fewer websites** than they get email messages.
- Email messages are treated as **To Do items**, while bookmarks are often forgotten. Email is always a call to action.
- Email is handled within a **familiar user interface**, whereas each website has to teach a new interface.
- Email is a very **personal** medium.
- Email is very much about **building a relationship** with your constituency.



(From the Gilbert Email Manifesto, www.gilbert.org)

Building Your List



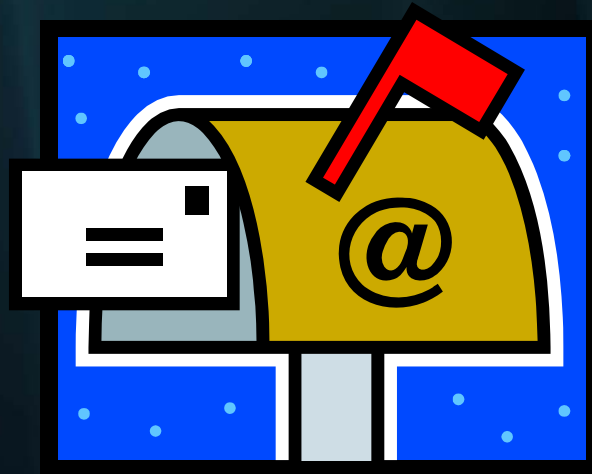
- Bigger list means **more potential donors, people served and supporters**
- List needs to be **high quality**: subscribers that are interested in your cause and will remain on the list for years (building relationship)
- Carry out **permission based** email marketing, not SPAM!
- Consider **segmenting** your list

List Building Tactics

- Make it **easy!**
- **Collect** emails at every opportunity
- Exchange a **piggyback** mailing with another group
- Create and **incentive**



Email Strategies



- Relationships and Conversion Rates.
- Don't be a narcissist.
- What **Format**: Plain Text, HTML, Attachment?
- Distribution **Technology**: Bulk mailing client, list-serve, third party service?
- **When** to send?

Image Blocking by Major ISPs & E-mail Clients

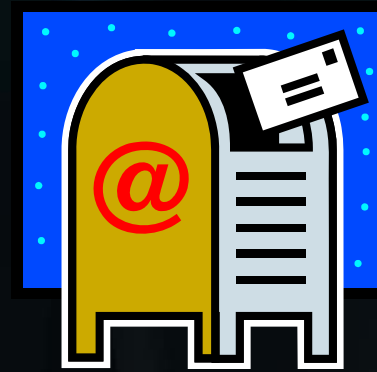
Blocking Issue	AOL Versions 6.0-9.0	Gmail	Hotmail	Yahoo	Outlook 2000/XP	Outlook 2003	Outlook Express w/SP2	Outlook Express w/o SP2
External images are blocked by default	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
User controls image-blocking settings	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
User clicks link to enable message's images	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	N/A
Images enabled if sender is in user's address book/buddy list	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Images autoenabled if sender is on ISP whitelist	Yes	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Alt tags displayed when images disabled	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	N/A
Preview window featured included	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: SP2 = Service Pack 2 upgrade for Windows XP

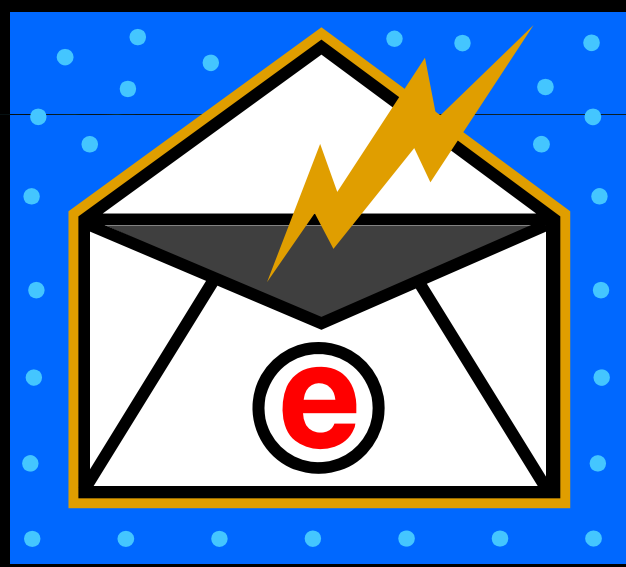
Source: EmailLabs, 2004

Email Strategies

- Provide a **clear and consistent subject line**
- **List** the email's contents at the top
- Use short summary paragraphs with **link** to full article/ item on your website
- Give them something they will **want to read!**
- Be **honest, focused and clear** about what you write
- Include an **action** component and remember to **follow up**



More Email Strategies



- **Frequency** – Not too much, not too little.
- Be **consistent** with the timing of newsletters
- Ask your subscriber to **add** your “from” address to their address book
- Check your **metrics - conversions**
- Always provide an easy **un-subscribe** option

Viewer's Choice

- Online Donations
- Website
- Social Networking



Online Donations





- *“The ability to accept online donations is equivalent to having a bank account. Just because it is there, doesn’t mean people are going to begin filling it.”*
 - *Paraphrased from the Gilbert Center*
- It is important to have the right tools, but relationships need to be cultivated.

The Tools:

Some things to look for

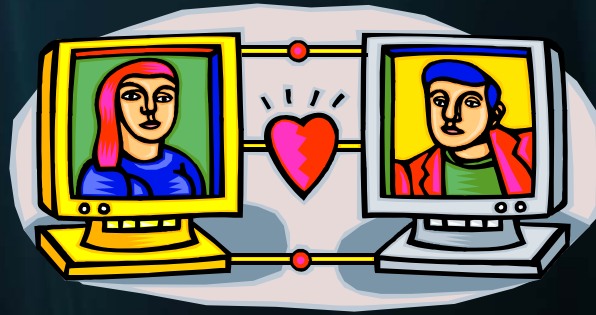


- What is your anticipated **monthly size and volume** of donations?
- Will you need to **collect payments** in addition to donations?
- What are your **overall** online communication **goals** and what is your capacity to meet them?
- What is your **budget**?

	excellent 	good 	acceptable 	poor 		Network for Good	PayPal	Click and Pledge	Groundspring	Democracy in Action	MemberClicks	eTapestry	Auctionpay	GiftTool	GivenGain	CharityWeb	Contribute.com
	Least expensive \$	Moderate \$	Most Expensive \$														
Setup Fee	-	-	-	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-
Fees when Few Donations	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Fees when Many Donations	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Merchant Account (V=vendor; O=organization; E=either)	V	V	V	V	E	O	O	V	E	V	O	V					
Company Background																	
Setup and Support																	
Donor Form Appearance																	
Donor Form Flexibility																	
Payment Processing																	
Reports & Data																	
Money Distribution																	
Integrated Recurring Donations																	
Donations outside US/ Canada																	
Multiple Donation Forms																	
Registration/ Ticketing *																	
Product Sales *																	
Integrated Email *																	

* These features may require additional fees

Strategies



- Fundraising is ALWAYS about building relationships.
- Fundraising online is no different.

Helpful Tips



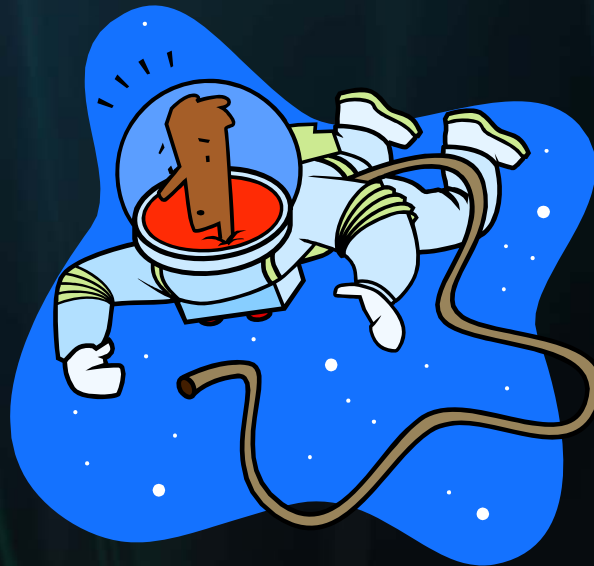
- Keep donors and constituents (potential donors) informed and **ENGAGED**.
- Develop **creative campaigns** that leverage the tools you have.
- Keep your online presence **fresh, consistent and compelling**
- Make it **easy** for them to contribute.
- In a nutshell, **build your relationships and drive donors**

Viewer's Choice

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- Website
- Social Networking



Turning Your Website Into an **Effective** Tool



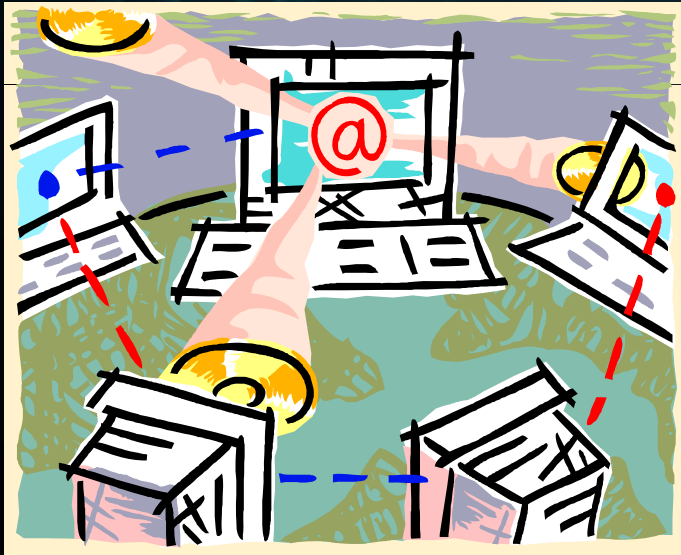
Don't let your website be lost in cyberspace

Web Statistics

United States: Average Web Usage, Month of July, 2008 Home Panel

- Sessions/Visits Per Person: **36**
- Domains Visited Per Person: **66**
- PC Time Per Person: **37:16:07**
- Duration of a Web Page Viewed: **00:00:51**
- Internet users can take just **one-twentieth of a second** to decide whether they like the look of a website

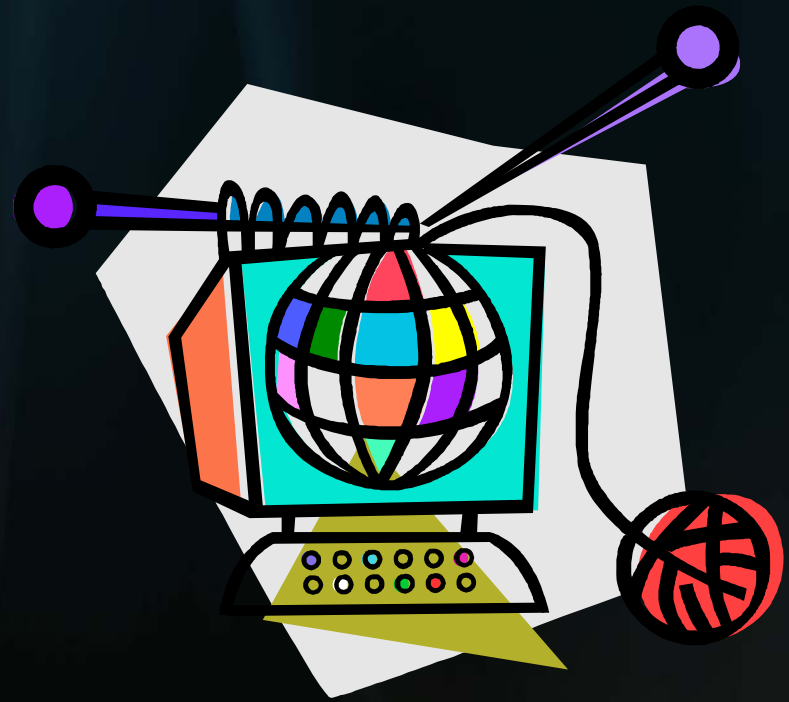
Effective Website Basics



- People need a reason to visit
- Keep it relevant
- Keep it fresh
- Write for the web
- Keep the layout clean and functional
- Search engine optimization: an afterthought
- Don't display email addresses:
name@site.org = SPAM

Promoting Your Site

- Turn supporters into **evangelists**
- **Distribute** your content
- **Cross-link** with relevant groups
- **Display** site address at every opportunity: publications, email signatures, t-shirts
- Keep it **bound** to your email campaigns



Web Tools



- Traditional Build vs. Content Management System (CMS)
- Online Surveys
- Forums & Message Boards
- Blogs and Wikis
- Multimedia
- Gaming & Virtual Worlds
- Many developed and emerging low-cost web-based applications

Content Management Systems (CMS)



- Separate Design from Content
- Incorporates Many Useful Functions
- Easily Searchable; RSS Feeds
- Fairly Easy to Manage
- Examples: Drupal, Mambo, Joomla, Plone
- Test Drive: www.opensourcecms.com

Viewer's Choice

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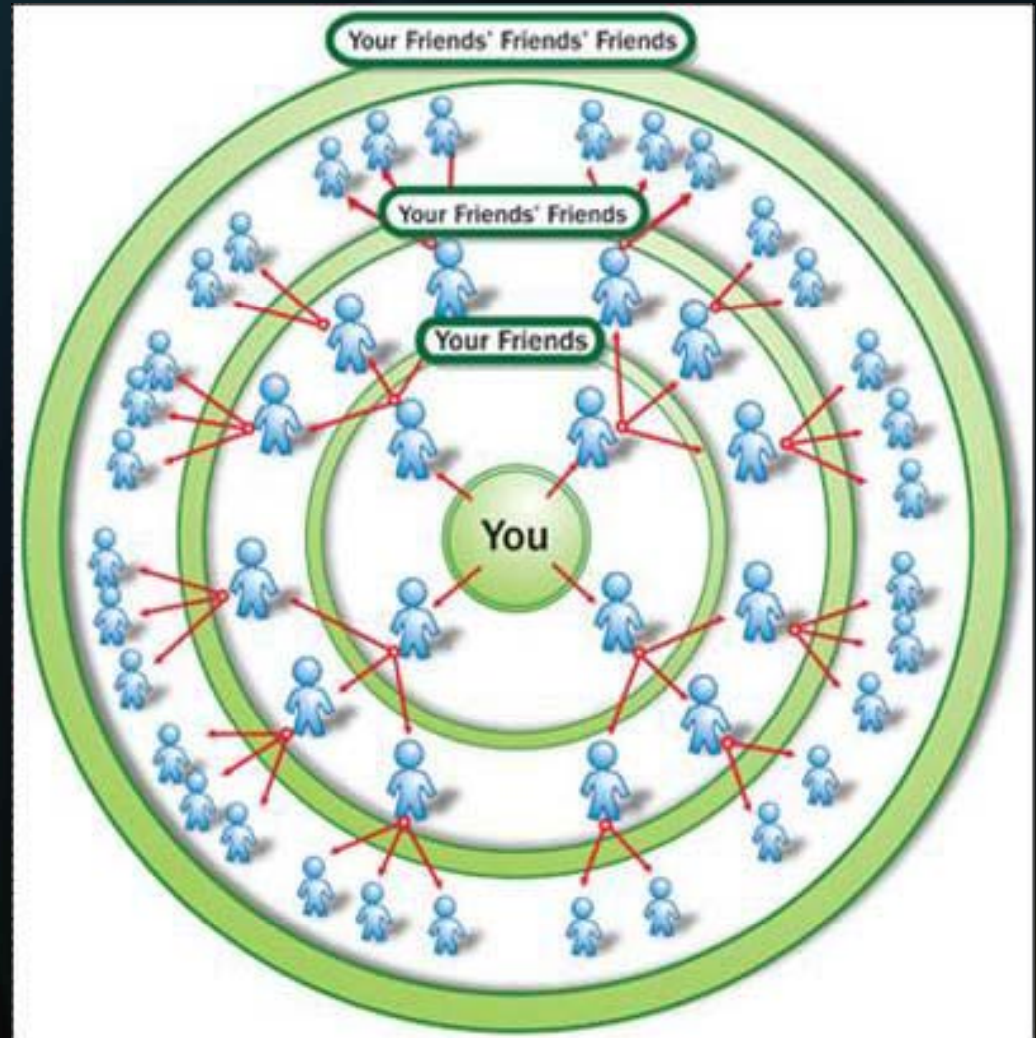


Social Networking

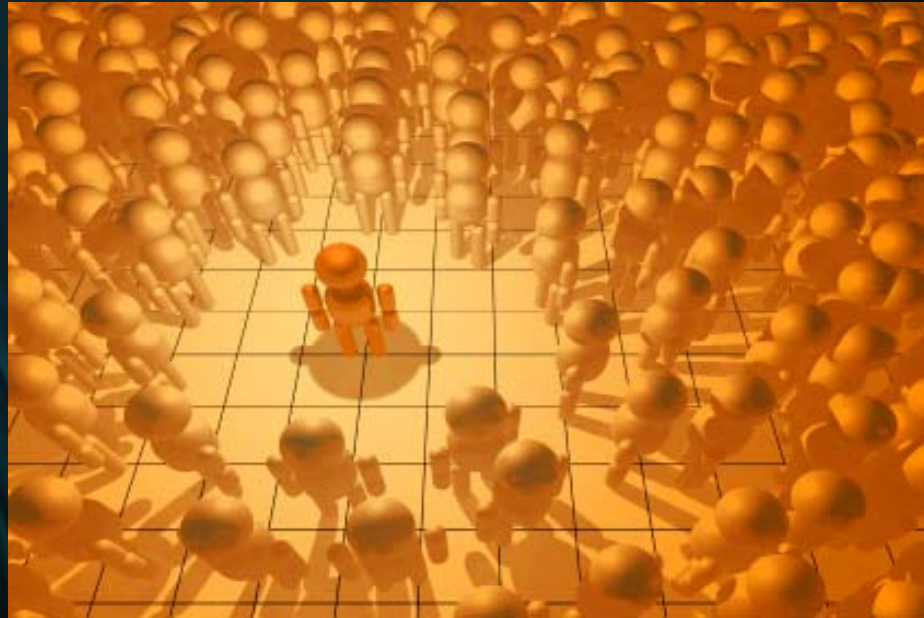


What is Social Networking?

- Sites that allow individuals and organizations to create online **profiles**, **discover** others who share their interest and create an online **network** of contacts and supporters
- Big buzz



Is Social Networking for You?



- Allows organizations to connect with constituents in non-traditional format
- Allows constituents to connect with each other
- Helps build a spirit of community and sharing around your campaign

Is Social Networking Right for You?



- Is your organization **technically savvy** and do you have the basics down?
- Is your **target audience** using social networking tools?
- Are you willing to invest in gaining a **real understanding** of the medium?
- Are you willing to give up clear editorial **control** over your brand and message?
- Can you deal with **limitations**, including site blocking?

“Walled Garden” or “Niche Network”?



- “**Walled Garden**” = Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Twitter, hi5, Bebo, etc
- “**Niche Network**” (Not necessarily open) = Ning, Change.org, Donorschoose.org, Good2gether, WiserEarth, etc.

Key Strategies

- First do your **planning**, establish your **goals**!
- Go where people **are**
- Take the time to **understand** and be a **part** of your online communities
- Be yourself and use an **authentic voice**
- **Be creative!**



Viewer's Choice

- Email
- Online Donations
- Website





- **The world, civil society and organizations are changing.** We must understand our context or we will become irrelevant.
- **First understand your communications needs and goals within this context, then identify the appropriate technologies.** Don't lead by identifying the tools you want first.
- **Develop your online communications based upon how others will use & view what you create, not on your own desires - Avoid narcissism.**
- **Think big and** communicate like a human using technology, not like technology trying to act like a human.

Adam Rubel

- Research
- Facilitation
- Planning
- Design
- Stepping Outside of the Box and Most things Innovative



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