

# The Path Forward

## For New & Growing Non-Profit Organizations



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### Check Out These NPO Resources Online:

**www.implu.com** ~ Don't miss this new online directory of publically traded companies, nonprofit organizations, funder organizations, political and lobbyist organizations and the individuals associated with them. Create a profile and post news about your organization. Search for prospective donors and see if they are affiliated with groups whose interests might resonate with your mission. Steve Driscoll, one of Implu's vice presidents, told me that they have three goals as far as the nonprofit world is concerned.

- 1) Determine the product/service offerings of nonprofit organizations
- 2) Facilitate donations to nonprofit organizations via their web pages
- 3) Reach advertisers who target nonprofit organizations.

Implu is an invaluable prospect researching tool even though it takes time to learn how to use its many features—more are added almost daily.

**www.epicchange.org** ~ this group raised \$11,000 in a 48 hour period of "tweetsgiving". They used twitter and linked it back to their site. They also created cards and items for sale that promote their mission and also appeal to the general public.

**www.philanthromedia.org** ~ this blog shows the funder's perspective when it comes to giving to nonprofit organizations.

**www.linkedin.com** ~ I belong to these LinkedIn groups. They connect me to experts who are usually very willing to share their insight and experience whenever anyone in the group asks a question. Reading the postings is a great way to get new ideas that can be adapted to your organization.

- Social Media Marketing
- Nonprofit Professionals Forum
- Association of Fundraising Professionals
- Legacy/Estate/Gift Planning & Planned Giving Professionals
- International Network of Social Entrepreneurs
- People to People Fundraising

If you are not on LinkedIn, I can invite you to join. Just email me a request. It is a huge way to build a really good network of friends who may become interested in your organization as a result.

**Happy New Year** in what promises to be the best of times and the worst of times depending....

- On what you choose to accept, tolerate, plan for, refuse, believe, trust, understand, adapt to, push through to, grow into, realize, hope for, reach for, and imagine
- On your framework that embraces either poverty or wealth
- On the strength of the foundation you have built in terms of donor relations, fulfilled mission, board enthusiasm, and financial stability
- On your ability to evaluate your own strengths and weaknesses with humility and honesty
- On your ability to take risks prudently and courageously
- On your vision of the next steps as preliminary to achieving your main goals
- On the core values that your organization espouses and seeks to promote
- On your reputation with clients, board members, donors, and the watching world
- On your discipline to make and follow strategic plans to meet specific measurable time-based objectives without going over-budget
- On the effectiveness of your communications
- On the motivation of your staff and volunteers (which is tied to how well you recognize their work)
- On your relevance for today

Have you already set your 2009 goals? Do you have the funds in hand to pay for them? Do you know that you need help with strategic planning to build your organization's capacity by fund-raising, donor acquisition and promotional activities? Give me a call if you want to brainstorm. Don't forget to do a thorough review of your brochures and web-content to make sure that everything is up to date.

### The Potential of Social Media & the Internet for Nonprofit Organizations

The use of social media for nonprofit communications and fundraising is still in its infancy but already some basic premises have emerged. The most important key to getting good responses from social media such as blogs, FaceBook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter etc. is to focus on growing relationships without explicitly worrying about marketing, fund-raising, or donor acquisition.

People resent being manipulated to give or even click on a button before they have developed trust with you which grows when you participate in dialogs that others start. Listen and respond with genuine authentic information. Make your role conversational, giving, listening and responsive. Then, after a connection has been established with people whom you know care about your organization's mission, begin to ask for their involvement. Post questions that invite a true give and take and that demonstrate your transparency. This is a process that only works when it doesn't look like you're only hanging around to get something. You have to be a contributor. Good relationships only last when both people make the other one more than would be possible had they remained alone.

The Internet has other functions that make our nonprofit work really efficient compared with what it took to do the same things in the days before computers. Aggregating statistics and other data is fast and flawless. Disseminating information digitally is free and has immediate global reach. It is easy to customize presentations by tweaking a template so each recipient is able to receive targeted information that pertains to their particular interests and passions. Collaboration can happen in real time via Microsoft Shared View and Skype or similar combinations of shared desktops and audio connections no matter where the participants are located as long as they all have Internet access and simple microphones. Finally, using micro-blogs like Twitter as a viral bulletin board, you can reach a global audience quickly as long as your message moves people to share it with their contacts.

**"A fool with a plan can outsmart a genius with no plan any day." ~ T. Boone Pickens**

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