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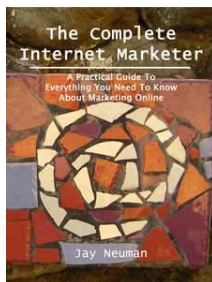
The Complete
Internet Marketer

How To Build A Successful Nonprofit Organization Website

*Chapter 21 from
The Complete Internet
Marketer*

Jay Neuman

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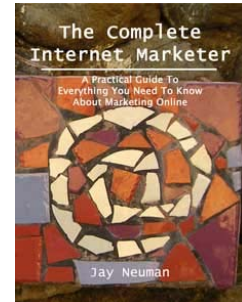
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Chapter 21

Building A Successful Nonprofit Organization Website

In this chapter, you will learn . . .

- How to define the online business model for a Nonprofit Organization Website
- How to measure success for a Nonprofit Organization website
- How to design a successful user experience for a Nonprofit Organization website
- The tactics used by successful Nonprofit Organization websites

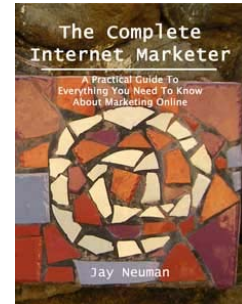
Creating A Window Of Hope The Peacock Foundation Story

In 1987, Michael Peacock was a passenger on Northwest Flight 255 when it crashed on a freeway outside of the Detroit airport. The crash left only one survivor, a two year old child. Her mother had saved her life by acting as a human shield from the flames. Michael left behind a wife, Catherine, and two daughters, nine year old Lisa and twelve year old Amy. Ten years later, Catherine Peacock was taken in an automobile accident. Lisa responded by dedicating her life to helping children suffering from grief, loss and trauma. Out of her own process of healing, the Peacock Foundation was born.

Lisa realized that for children suffering after a trauma, their worst enemy is the natural defense mechanism that closes themselves off from the people in their lives. They may blame themselves. They may feel there is something wrong with "me." Above all, they cannot acknowledge the source of their pain. They try to close it off, and close

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themselves off in the process. But, their grief does not go away. Some children lash out in violence. Some become problem children in school. Most exhibit anti-social behavior of some type.

All of this puts them at great risk, as they become teenagers. Many will end up in jail or in abusive relationships. It is a vicious cycle. It is a cycle that can only be broken when a child is able to take the first step of opening up about the trauma they have experienced.

That is where the Peacock Foundation comes in.

The children are not able to open up to their teachers, parents or classmates. But, they can open up to animals. Lisa brings exotic animals into a group counseling session and lets the children interact with them in a controlled setting. Each animal has a lesson to “teach” the children about healthy social interaction. The chinchilla teaches the children about caring for others. The snake teaches about fear, anxiety and protection. Week after week, the children meet new animals. With each visit, they also learn how to express themselves. They find themselves interacting, not only with the cute and friendly animals, but also with the other children in the group and their teachers.

There is no miracle cure for a child’s broken life. But, there is a first, vital step of being able to let people in. The other children in the group become a peer support network for one another. The teachers and parents (when they have parents who are able to participate) are part of the process also.

Anyone who has experienced trauma in life and who loves children can immediately see the incredible gift the Peacock Foundation brings to these children. Still, it is not immediately obvious to the general public. The Peacock Foundation consists of Lisa and a team of dedicated volunteers. Together they create a window of hope for children



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who could not see that a path to healing was possible. For its first four years, Lisa was able to self-fund the organization with her own savings. However, the need surpassed her own ability. She needed a way to ensure the financial viability of the organization into the future. More than that, she had a vision for expanding services to more children. She wanted to recruit more volunteers, hire paid staff and add counselors.

But how could she do this for a cause that people do not understand and that produces results which cannot be measured?

Part of the answer was to re-design the Peacock Foundation website. It had been a basic informational site with Lisa's personal story and a few pages about the animals and services offered. It needed to become a vehicle for getting the word out and for recruiting partners to help meet the needs.

The first step was to identify those who would be willing to help. These are the people who the website would be designed to reach. Lisa and her board realized it would be people who have experienced grief, loss or trauma themselves. These people would feel an immediate emotional bond with the children who are going through an experience they still feel deeply in their own hearts. A second group would be small businesses in areas where the Peacock Foundation provides services. These businesses will want to help meet the needs of the communities they serve.

The second step was to define the message. The new purpose of the website would be to build that emotional bond with partners and potential partners. What should the website convey to accomplish this. To answer the question, they identified five stages to the healing process:





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- ✓ Able to acknowledge your trauma
- ✓ Provided with a safe way to express your emotions
- ✓ Develop a community to assist in the experience of healing
- ✓ Develop the skills to navigate through interaction within community
- ✓ Able to help others in their healing

Realizing the importance of the fifth stage in the healing process was the breakthrough. For people who have gone through grief, loss or trauma in their lives, the healing process is not truly complete until they are able to reach out and help others become healed. The Peacock Foundation had discovered a new dimension to their mission. They would be able to help people work through their own healing by giving them an opportunity to help in the healing of broken children.

The messaging and imagery of the website would be designed around a call to action: "Create Hope For A Traumatized Child."

At this point, the website came alive in the minds of Lisa and the Board of Directors at the Peacock Foundation. They had a vision of what it could accomplish. Next, they set out to define volunteer opportunities and cost per child served. This information would be used to define different levels of partnership involvement. They created an online partner application and educational materials about the program. They developed an email strategy for opting-in partners and potential partners. The people on this email list would become the front line for creating awareness of the needs. All of this would revolve around the new vision for the website. They were building a network of partners who would work together to provide children with a window of hope.

As of the writing of this book, the Peacock Foundation is in the process of rolling out its newly re-designed website.





Understanding The Nonprofit Organization Website

Nonprofit organizations are part of the unseen glue that holds society together. When they are successful, nobody notices. They just quietly meet needs the general public would rather not think about. A website is often an important part of meeting those needs.

Nonprofit organizations come in all shapes and sizes. They range from international service organizations, like the Red Cross, to individuals with a heart to help, like Lisa Peacock and the Peacock Foundation. There are museums with multi-million dollar endowments. There are homeless shelters who rely on daily food donations from local businesses. Wherever there is a need, there is someone with a heart to help. Their organizations are as varied as the needs they meet and the people they serve. Still, all nonprofit organizations have two things in common. They all meet needs that others might not perceive or understand. They also all depend on the help of partners to meet those needs. The Nonprofit Organization website is built around these two factors.

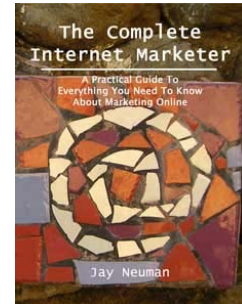
Dimensions of the Nonprofit Organization Online Business Model

In Part I, you learned an easy way to begin defining your online business model. You start by choosing from among seven basic dimensions that form the foundation of all online businesses. This quick and easy approach will allow you to implement a set of features and tactics aimed at achieving the goals of your business or organization.

There are typically three dimensions to the Nonprofit Organization online business model: *Information Delivery*, *Business Development (a.k.a. Partner Development)*, and *Brand Development (a.k.a. Awareness)*.

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Seven Dimensions To Online Business Models	
1.	eCommerce
✓ 2.	Business Development
3.	Lead Generation
✓ 4.	Brand Development
5.	Customer Relations
✓ 6.	Information Delivery
7.	Cost Savings

Figure 21.1

1. Information Delivery

Nonprofit organizations often use their websites to disseminate information or to provide resources related to the issues they address. The website may also serve as a resource center for members of the population being served. Therefore, *Information Delivery* is often the major dimension of this online business model.

2. Business Development (Partner Development)

Nonprofit organizations also will typically use the website to recruit new members/partners or to receive donations. This is not quite the same thing as a business recruiting new customers. However, the basic process is the same as the *Business Development* dimension. Because nonprofits are building ongoing relationships with partners who will volunteer and/or make donations, this dimension is more accurately called *Partner Development*.





3. Brand Development (Awareness)

Another major purpose of the Nonprofit Organization website is to promote awareness of the issues being addressed by the organization. In some cases, there is also an activist or community involvement component to the organization. The website is often used to motivate action on behalf of the cause. These website uses are not exactly the same as a business building awareness for their brand. However, using the website as a vehicle to promote awareness is essentially the same thing as the *Brand Development* dimension. Since nonprofits are not building a brand, but creating awareness for a public need, this dimension is more accurately called *Awareness*.

Typical Nonprofit Organization Website Goals

Once you have defined your online business model, the next step is to determine what goals will lead to success. These goals set the compass heading for your website.

The following are typical goals for the Nonprofit Organization website.

Information Delivery Goals

- (1) Provide information and resources empowering those seeking to help with the cause
- (2) Provide information and resources to the population being served
- (3) Connect service recipients with access to services

Business Development (Partner Development) Goals

- (4) Recruit volunteers, members and/or donors
- (5) Opt-in supporters to email and/or other partner communications





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Brand Development (Awareness) Goals

- (6) Create awareness of the issue(s) and motivate action.

Of course, this is a prototypical list. As you go through this process, you will need to define goals specific to your own organization.

Hybrid Nonprofit Organization Websites

The website for a nonprofit organization, as discussed above, is basically a hybrid between the subsidized content website (discussed in Chapter 17) and the small business website (discussed in Chapter 18). A more complete understanding of how to create a successful website can be gained by reviewing these chapters.

There are also cases where a nonprofit organization will use the website for other uses, described elsewhere in this book. The following two are especially common.

An Online Store on the Website

In some cases, a nonprofit organization will want to sell things through their website. There are a variety of reasons for doing this. Some nonprofits subsidize their activities through retail sales of some sort. Others have books and other resources for sale. Museums have bookstores or novelty shops. The list goes on.

If you are planning to sell things through your website, there are companies who make it easy to set up an online store. They will handle the eCommerce processing such as online transactions, secure data exchange and eCommerce web pages for the eRetail store. This is the easiest, and probably the safest way to go about it.

From the perspective of your online business model, adding an online store is basically adding an eRetail compo-





ment to your website. The goals and tactics are essentially the same as those discussed in Chapter 15.

Providing an Outsourced Service to Government Agencies

Some nonprofit organizations offer services that are subcontracted out to government agencies, or otherwise work in conjunction with them. Organizations like homeless shelters, food banks or free health clinics often work together with local and regional government agencies. They may offer overflow services for public agencies who exceed their service capacity. Some organizations are partially funded through government grants and are accountable to meeting certain requirements.

In cases like these, the nonprofit organization is acting like a Business-to-Business (B2B) supplier, with the government agency as their client. The website might handle some of the outreach and administrative aspects of these public-nonprofit partnerships. Although this is different in many ways from a B2B supplier, from the perspective of an online business model, the organization is basically adding a B2B supplier component to their website. For more information, turn to Chapter 20.

Measuring Success For The Nonprofit Organization Website

Now you have set the compass heading for your website, by setting effective goals. This will let you develop a set of tactics and site features to reach those goals. Before you can do that, however, you must determine how you are going to measure success on your website. This section will show you how Return on Investment (ROI) is calculated for the Nonprofit Organization website.





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ROI for Information Delivery and Awareness

In general, to calculate ROI, you would start with a measure of monetary return from a given action. Then you count the actions in question and calculate a monetary return per action. This cannot be done if there is no direct monetary return, as is the case with much of what nonprofit organizations are trying to accomplish with their websites. In other words, a store can measure profits per sale but how do you calculate the benefit of somebody practicing better pre-natal care because they saw your website?

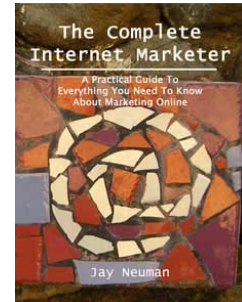
To calculate the success of this type of website, you would need to devise a measure, not of revenue earned, but of effectiveness of information delivery or awareness efforts. For example, if your organization is trying to build awareness for a specific issue, such as child nutrition, then you may want to measure number of unique visitors to your website or number of downloads of your eBook on low cost, healthy meals for children. If you provide data sheets for advocacy groups and researchers, you may measure successful downloads of data files or aborted visits because users were not able to find the information they needed. Perhaps you are promoting volunteerism in your community. You may measure click-thrus to the websites of local service organizations. The specific success metrics will depend on what your organization is trying to accomplish. Part III describes how to use Web Analytics to measure the effectiveness of content on the website.

ROI for Partner Development

Calculating ROI for Partner Development is similar to ROI for sales leads through a Small Business website. It is based on conversion of leads generated through the website. However, with a nonprofit organization, there is not always a direct monetary return resulting from a new part-

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ner. In many, if not most cases, nonprofit organizations are seeking a non-monetary return. Some common non-monetary benefits gained from Partner Development efforts include:

- ✓ Volunteer service
- ✓ In-kind donations
- ✓ Newsletter subscriptions (to meet awareness goals)
- ✓ Increasing member roster (to support lobbying efforts)
- ✓ Board membership

In these cases, you must estimate the value of a new enrollment. In other words, you must answer the question, “How much is it worth spending to gain a new partner?” Even if this number is a guess, it will give you a target to measure against. Then you can compare what you are actually spending.

In some cases, the only goal is to receive donations. In this case, ROI can be measured directly. Still, care must be taken to set up a measurement that is appropriate for your organization.

ROI for Monetary Donations

Calculating ROI for donations is not the same as ROI from sales. With sales, you are earning a profit per sale, which can be measured. Donations do not yield profits. Therefore, you cannot base ROI on a profit margin calculation. One method to measure ROI from donations is to evaluate your Internet Marketing costs *in terms of a percentage of the donation amount*. Consider the following example.

ABC Community Services is a nonprofit organization that provides services to senior citizens and low-income households in a number of mid-sized cities. They have a policy of applying no less than 90% of all donations towards program costs. That





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leaves 10% for administration and marketing costs. Let us assume the organization has streamlined their operations. Administrative costs account for only 8% of donations. That leaves 2% which can be used towards marketing. They spend 1% of their total donations on print materials and outbound phone calls. We are now left with 1% of donations that can be spent for online recruitment. This can be used as the break-even amount for measuring the success of Partner Recruitment efforts on the website. If the average donation amount is \$100, then they can spend \$1.00 per new partner on website recruitment costs.

For many organizations, a calculation like this might be overkill. What if ABC Community Services only provided services to one community? In this case, they may just have a small budget for all website activity. They include this under general administrative costs. They might, for example, have a \$1,500 website budget which covers: website hosting, content updates, email campaigns and secure transaction processing for donations. In this case, the organization would not calculate an ROI per donor. They would simply try to optimize the results from all online efforts, working within their budget.





Designing The User Experience For A Nonprofit Organization Website

We have now defined the Nonprofit Organization online business model, identified typical goals and shown how to measure the success of your website. The next step is to design a user experience for your customers that successfully achieves the goals of your online business model.

Many businesses make the mistake of trying to build a website before taking the time to figure out what the website is there to accomplish. That is always a set-up for poor results. Only after mapping out a user experience that will lead to successfully achieving your business goals should you put your web designer to work creating the look and feel for your website.

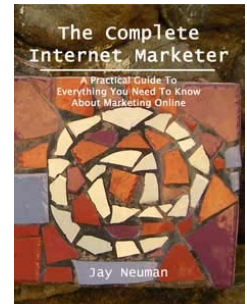
The Goal of Website Design

The primary purpose of a website is to meet the needs and wants of customers coming to the site in a way that maximizes the attainment of Internet Marketing goals. The easiest way to understand what a website is trying to accomplish is to think of it as a funnel. At the wide end, tactics are employed to reach out to customers, appeal to their interests and entice them to enter your website. From this point onward, every action a user takes should be moving them down the funnel, towards the ultimate outcome(s) you want to achieve from your website.

This section will walk through a typical user experience that successful Nonprofit Organization websites create to effectively deliver information and build partner relationships through the website.

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To understand the Nonprofit Organization website we turn to the funnel a user travels through between their initial interest and the desired outcomes you hope will result from their visit to your website. With this model, users will typically take one of two paths through the website. These are shown in Figure 21.2.

Information Delivery Path

The first path is the Information Delivery path. Partners, service recipients or the general public will view your website as a resource. They each have information needs they hope to have met on the website. Members of the target population will come to your website seeking such things as access to services, instructions on use of services, directions to your facility. Partners may use your website as an information resource, to receive aids for their own outreach efforts, or just for the latest stories about the impact your organization is having. The general public will find your website while they are looking for information or resources related to the issues you serve. They may find you on a search engine or find a link on a related website. In all three of these cases, the website must quickly and easily take them to the information they need. Those resources must also be easy for them to use when they find them.

Partner Development Path

One of the truly great things about nonprofit organizations is that everybody wins. People who volunteer and give always benefit. The act of helping others is often an incredibly meaningful experience for your partners. Sometimes it gives them the ability to give back where they had a need in their own past. Sometimes it is a part of the healing process they are going through themselves. Sometimes it just helps cement the human bond between the giver and the community, or society at large. It is always a good



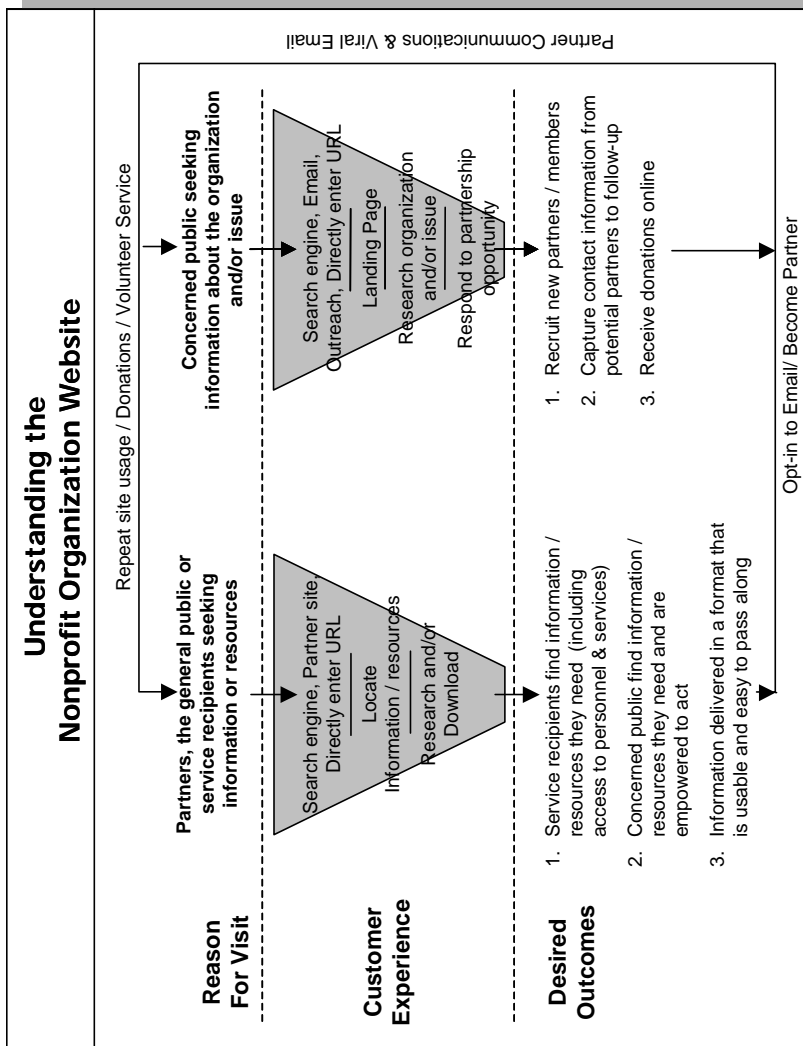


Figure 21.2

thing to give people the opportunity to lend a hand.

The second path through the Nonprofit Organization website is the Partnership Development path. Concerned members of the public will come to your website seeking information about your organization or the issue(s) you address. They may have people in their lives who need services like those you provide. They may have been personally affected by the type of circumstances you address. They may have been made aware of the issue by a friend, a





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TV commercial or another website. In any case, they have searched for information and found your website. The job of the website is not merely to give them information. It is to create a connection where they can find a way to contribute to meeting the needs they have begun to recognize. That may just be by finding information they can use in their own lives. But, it may also be that they can help you meet the needs the organization feels passionate about. The website should give them the opportunity to do so by partnering with your organization.

Many people who work with nonprofits genuinely dislike asking people for help. Even more, they dislike asking for money. The reality is, your organization is doing something worthwhile. You are not asking for a handout. You are giving people the opportunity to become more complete human beings by being part of the unseen glue that holds together the broken pieces of our world.

The Nonprofit Organization Website User Experience

The following steps provide a guideline for mapping out a user experience on your website. These steps support both the Information Delivery and Partner Development paths user may take through the website.

1. First Contact

For a Nonprofit Organization website, the most important way you will reach out to your potential site users is by letting them find you when they are looking for a resource you have. This boils down mostly to optimizing your website for search engines. Identify all of the words and phrases people may type into search engines related to the information services you offer. Then make sure search engines will find your site when those keywords are entered. A second way to reach out to your





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potential site users is to get the word out about your website on partner websites. If there are other nonprofit organizations or special interest websites that cater to interests related to your cause, try to get them to place your link on their websites. Finally, if your website is the online component of a larger public outreach program, then you will include reference to the site on your offline materials.

Only pursue other, more costly, traffic generation methods (such as Search Engine Marketing) if you have the available budget or if you plan to conduct a recruitment campaign through the website. Then be sure to measure the performance of those efforts to make the best use of your marketing budget.

2. Home Page and Content Pages

The first impression on any website is always of critical importance. Web users will only give a web page a few seconds before they decide if they will stay there or move on. You must capture their attention and win over their interest within a couple of glances at your site. For the Nonprofit Organization website, traffic is often sent directly to the home page. Budgets are often too small to support an ongoing initiative to build targeted landing pages. Because of this, it is of utmost importance that the home page is able to effectively reach out to potential partners.

A major goal for the Nonprofit Organization website is to create a bond between the organization and the concerned public (including potential and current partners). This will first be an emotional bond. Loyal partners to your organization are bonded by an empathy with the needs addressed by the organization and their own need to help. The home page must be designed so the first im-





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pression serves to nurture that bond. Time should be taken to define a core message speaking to this bond between your organization and partners. Then, craft the text and choose the images for your home page to reflect that message.

A common mistake is to neglect to spend enough time designing an effective home page. The home page must positively reflect your cause. It must also quickly draw site visitors into the actions you want them to take on the website. This can only be done by taking some time to map out what information you want your site visitors to reach and what actions you want them to take. Then you can design the home page to appeal to their interests while drawing them to the information and actions you want them to find.

If you are planning to send people directly to lower level pages on the website, or to custom built landing pages, you should spend time designing these pages to be as effective as your home page.

As a note of caution, some freelance web developers and small design shops love to create Flash animation “welcome” screens for the websites they build. Unless your organization specializes in something related to the creative arts, this is usually not a good idea. People doing research online do not want to waste their time watching video animation before they find the information they need. Many will leave before the cool Flash movie finishes playing. Just take them directly to a very professional looking home page where they can easily find whatever information they need. That is the best way to make a great first impression.





3. Navigation and User Interface

Once users decide they want to stay on your website, they have to be able to find what they are looking for. This is the first hurdle. If they cannot find the information in the first few seconds on the site, there is a good chance they will abandon the session and look somewhere else for it. Unfortunately, many Nonprofit Organization websites are built with a very small budget and cannot afford to bring usability experts into the design process. As more and more information gets added, it can get buried under hard to navigate links and menu choices.

The most important way to address this issue is by taking time to map out your menu choices on the top and left navigation. This does not add any technical costs to website development. But it will involve some human costs in the time taken to map out your onsite menus. The hierarchy of menus and items in them is known as your site's *taxonomy*. Another critical component to many information websites is a robust search capability. People should be able to enter search terms into a search engine on your website and find the information they need. Search engine technology, however, can be costly to buy. Many nonprofit agencies cannot afford to spend that much on their website. For those agencies, having an easy to navigate taxonomy is all the more important. That is the only way users will find what they need.

4a. Researching on Your site

The reason users are most likely on your website in the first place is to research an issue of importance to them. The information they find must meet their needs. This means having information that is relevant and accurate. But it also means presenting





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it in a way that is accessible to the user. When users look for information on the Internet they scan first, then they read on if they find what they want. Users on your website will spend a few seconds on a given web page and quickly look over the high level information to see if it has what they need. They will look at headlines and menu items. If it has what they need, then they look a little deeper to get some high level details. They will look for bullet points, or maybe read the first few lines of text. If they still feel they need more, then they will actually read the paragraphs of written text. This is called *scanning*. Well-crafted web content will accommodate this practice.

4b. Information Delivery

Your site users need to receive the information in a format most usable for them. In a large number of cases, they will want to download information and take it with them. The format of the download will be different for different websites. The important concept to remember is to find out what your target audience will be using your information for and how they will want to use it. Then deliver it in a method that is most conducive to those uses.

There are many options for delivering content. The most common is to create a “print friendly” version of the HTML page the user is viewing. A typical web page has a variety of content elements including images, tables and text. If you expect your site users to print your information, you can let them view it on a separate page that removes a lot of the HTML formatting and peripheral content. This will be easy for them to print and easy to save to their computers.





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A second, very common method of delivering content is to allow downloads of white papers, articles and eBooks in PDF files. These are created to be displayed in Adobe Acrobat or similar software. They have the advantage of being small and easy to download. Also, longer articles, that people do not want to take the time to read online, can be downloaded and read later at their leisure.

A third very popular information delivery method is the audio or video download. There are many varieties. With the popularity of MP3 players, a very popular download method has become the “Pod-cast” (named for the Apple iPod). This is basically a download that can be saved onto the user’s iPod, or other MP3 player.

Finally, websites that include statistical information can allow the files to be downloaded as spreadsheets or comma-delimited text files that can be used in MS-Excel or other spreadsheet programs

5a. Partner Recruitment

The final step in the user experience is for the site visitor to initiate a partnership with your company. This could be by a partnership form on the website, by calling your phone number or by making a donation (see 5b). To accomplish this, you will need to structure the content on your site so key paths through the site lead to a partnership opportunity. Web pages should have a tasteful, yet prominently displayed call to action with a link to the partnership form, donation page or a phone number.

In addition to partnership and donation opportunities, the website should also include opportunities to sign up for your opt-in email list. Typically, this





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will be done by providing an email newsletter that they agree to receive. This is also a way to initiate a relationship with concerned people who do not want to become partners or donors. Through email communications, you can build awareness, and provide resources. If handled well, many people on the email list, will eventually participate in your organization at some level.

5b. Accept Online Donations

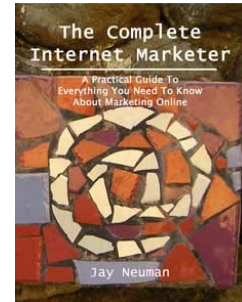
If your website is going to accept online donations, you must offer a secure method to process the transactions. Except for very large organizations, this should be handled by a third party that specializes in secure online transactions. The risk is too great to try and handle it yourself. Identity theft is a very large problem. Your organization must be able to guarantee the privacy of personal information submitted through the Internet. If you cannot, you take on the liability if anything happens with the information customers submit to your website. For this very reason, companies have been set up who will process that transaction for you. In addition to eliminating the risk, it also will reassure your potential donors. They may not be, and should not be willing to send credit card information to a website that does not use a trusted source to ensure the security of their personal data.

Nonprofit Organization Website Roadmap To Success

The final step before you actually build your website is to map out the specific objectives and tactics that will lead to successfully achieving your goals. In Part I, we called this

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your *roadmap to success*. The tactics in your “roadmap” are the building blocks that will create a winning user experience on your website.

Figure 21.3 presents a set of objectives and tactics common on Nonprofit Organization websites. They are laid out according to the four levels of customer intimacy described in Chapter 2. A quick survey of the objectives and tactics shown here will give you an idea of what goes into a successful Nonprofit Organization website.

Typical Nonprofit Organization Website Objectives and Tactics

	Objectives	Tactics
Interest	Ensure that web searchers find the site when searching for topics covered	1. Search engine optimization 2. If part of a budgeted outreach, search engine marketing
	Get links from related websites	3. Post with online directories & personally contact related websites
Trust	Effective home page	4. Optimize home page content around building partner relationships
	Ensure that site visitors have a positive online experience that allows them to easily find the information they are interested in	5. Scannable page content 6. User-friendly navigation and interface, with short path to information sought by user 7. Functional onsite search (if applicable) 8. Freshness and accuracy of content
	Provide user-friendly information delivery	9. Printable version of text pages; Data downloads in MS-Excel or text file; Video/audio downloads in multiple formats
	Provide usable and reliable links to additional resources	10. Links to other resources easy to find and of guaranteed quality
Satisfaction	Partnership opportunities built into the context of content on the website	11. Present partnership and donation opportunities tastefully, but prominently
	Use targeted email to cultivate customer relationships resulting in greater awareness and repeat visits	12. Create an opt-in email list and use email to deliver useful information, build awareness of your organization and generate repeat visits
	Utilize viral marketing to increase the reach of site content	13. Include Forward-to-a-friend links on content and emails 14. Create eBooks or other viral objects from valuable content
Loyalty		

Figure 21.3

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These tactics are prototypical examples. They should be used as guidelines to give an idea of what your website can accomplish. However, you will have to determine specific objectives and tactics that match the unique aspects of your organization and the needs of your target audiences.

The Roadmap Unfolded: Typical Nonprofit Organization Website Tactics

In this chapter you have learned what successful Nonprofit Organization websites are trying to accomplish and how to design a website that meets those objectives. The basic consideration for a Nonprofit Organization website is to create an emotional bond with people who will be willing to help meet the needs the organization addresses. The website must also make sure people find information or resources they need as effectively as possible. In the process, the Nonprofit Organization website presents opportunities to volunteer, donate or otherwise participate in the cause.

The following table contains a detailed description of the tactics presented in the Roadmap to Success table (Figure 21.3). It provides nuts-and-bolts examples of the type of things implemented on successful Nonprofit Organization websites. You can use this information as a framework for developing your own website. However, there is no substitute for defining the details of your own online business model and mapping out a set of tactics that will meet your own organizational goals.

(continued next page)





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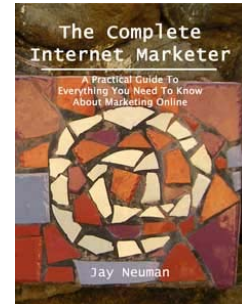
Building Interest

Building interest with the Nonprofit Organization website is mostly a matter of being found on search engines and getting linked to from other related websites. People will be searching for information related to the issue(s) your website addresses. You must be found by them.

<i>Search engine optimization</i>	<p>Search engine optimization is essential for any website. Most people will find a Nonprofit Organization website while they are searching for information about an issue of concern to them. They will find your website if it appears in their search listings. Optimizing the content on your web pages to be found by search engines is the most important thing you can do to get traffic to your website.</p> <p>Search engine optimization is discussed in Chapter 6.</p>
<i>Search engine marketing</i>	<p>Paying for sponsored links on search engines (known as search engine marketing) is simply paying to get your search results listings displayed to people searching for the topics your site addresses. If you have a marketing budget to pay for advertising to bring people to your website, this will be an important part of your strategy.</p> <p>Search engine marketing is discussed in Chapter 6</p>
<i>Get linked to</i>	<p>Websites form a natural information network. Each of the websites offering content related to the issues your site addresses will benefit by links from other related sites. It also helps them to have links on their site to other related sites. In this way, web users can find one site and continue to follow links to more and more content of interest. You should get your website linked in to this network of sites related to the issue(s) you address. Having links from other websites is also an important factor in being listed on search engines.</p> <p>For your Nonprofit Organization website, the first place to start when seeking links from other sites is to perform your own searches on topics related to your website. Then personally contact the website owners for all the sites you find that are complementary to your own. If it is appropriate for your website, offer to place links to their site on your own website and ask them to place links in return. Make sure you also offer suggestions about places on their website that will generate the most clicks to your website.</p>

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Building Trust

With the Nonprofit Organization website, building trust means people develop a connection with your organization and find it easy to locate information and resources they care about. This basically comes down to a well thought out home page and landing pages, plus generally good site design and quality of content.

Make a connection with the site visitor

With a Nonprofit Organization website, trust begins with an emotional bond between your organization and the site visitor. This is true for any website, on some level. It is at the heart of a Nonprofit Organization website. You should take time to determine the things that will make people feel an affinity to your cause and your organization. Then design the presentation and messaging of your home page and content pages to reflect those things. This is the impression people will associate with your organization.

Scannable page content

The most important consideration for the usability of a content-rich website is scannable page content. When people are looking for information on the Internet, they are impatient. They will scan the first web page they find on your site and decide in a few seconds if it has what they want. If not, they will go on to the next site. The content on your website must not only be useful, it must be presented in a way that makes it easy for people to find the parts that they want to use.

User-friendly navigation

User-friendly navigation is an important key to success for any website. If your website is presenting information and resources for the public, it is critical. You must have easy to follow menus with categories that make sense to your site users. This is a matter of usability. Site users must be able to simply look at the web page and intuitively understand what they need to click next to get to where they want to go.

Site search

If your website has more than a small number of pages, you should look into having onsite search. People are used to using search to find what they need on the Internet. They will expect to do the same when they come to your website.





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Building Satisfaction

Satisfaction on the Nonprofit Organization website comes mainly from making it easy for site visitors to access and use the information you provide.

User-centric information delivery

One of the most frustrating experiences when doing research online is to find what you need, but then have a hard time getting it. There are many variations to this frustrating experience. You have probably experienced some of them.

If your website contains articles or other content that users will want to print, it is much easier when the site includes a link to display a "print friendly" version of the page, without graphics and HTML code.

If you have numerical data on your website, consider how your site users will need to use it. Then deliver it in a format they can easily use.

Your website might have white papers, eBooks, video/audio downloads, charts or graphs. Always think about how the end user will be using your information. If you make it easy for them, they will keep coming back to your website.

If your website provides news of interest, you can deliver a daily factoid directly to your site users' PDA or wireless device. There really is no limit to how user-centric you can get with your information. Most of the technologies for delivering content are relatively inexpensive to implement.

Ensure quality of links

The Nonprofit Organization website often will serve as a resource center for issue(s) addressed by the organization. Site users will hope to find links to related information and resources that can be found both on the website and on other websites. These should be provided in a manner that complements the site navigation and is intuitive to the user.

You must ensure the quality of content you link to. Users will view the links displayed on content pages as recommended resources. When users click on those links and find useful content, it reflects positively on the quality of your site. If not, it calls into question the reliability of your site.

Tasteful presentation of partnership and donation opportunities

An important purpose for the Nonprofit Organization website is to recruit partners and donors. This must be presented on the website in a way that is prominently built into the context of the website. That way, site visitors will be drawn to the opportunities to participate. However, it must also be tasteful, and not appear to be a pushy sales pitch. Otherwise, people may be turned off by your organization.





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Building Loyalty

Loyalty for a Nonprofit Organization website basically means people feel an affinity towards your organization and want to spread the word about you to others. It also, often will mean that they view your website as a valuable resource. They may come to rely on the information you provide and want to pass it along to people they know.

Web content is naturally suited to being delivered through the Internet. You need not rely on people coming back to your website, although you will want them to. You can deliver content directly to users and make it easy for them to pass it along to others.

<i>Opt-in email</i>	Opt-in site users to a free newsletter. This gives you the opportunity to deliver content directly to a large group of people interested in what your website has to offer. If they like what you send them, they will follow links back to your site and forward your newsletter to friends and colleagues. Email marketing is discussed in Chapter 7.
<i>Forward-to-a-friend</i>	Include Forward-to-a-friend links on articles, or other useful content found on your website. This will make it easy for people to send your site content to others. They will not only find your content valuable, but are likely to come to your website to find more of the same.
<i>Create viral objects</i>	If you have valuable content, you can package that content to be passed along. This is the essence of viral marketing. You can create eBooks, articles, video clips, or any number of other items that can be sent through email. Then make these available to your site users, with an easy way for them to forward it along. Include some promotional copy and a link to your website. This will spread the word about what your organization is all about and bring new users to your website. Viral marketing is discussed in Chapter 10.

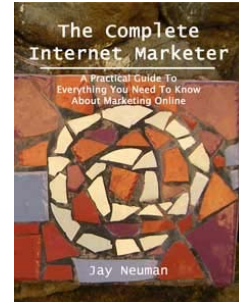
Conclusion

In this chapter, you have learned how to successfully build awareness for your cause, deliver information and recruit partners through a Nonprofit Organization website.

This is the final chapter. Turn now to the Concluding Thoughts

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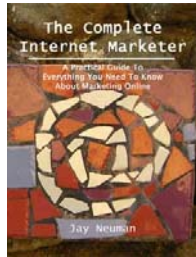


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