

FUNDRAISING TIPS AND STRATEGIES THAT WORK IN ANY ECONOMY



USING SOCIAL MEDIA AND MORE!



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Welcome to a new opportunity to rethink and readdress your process for raising resources!

The fundraising landscape for nonprofits in the United States is changing for a variety of reasons. First, the economic climate has shifted substantially since 2007. The housing bubble, the Madoff ponzi scheme, and the overall recession have foundations, volunteers, and donors re-evaluating how they invest their money and time. And who can blame them? The surprising news is volunteers and contributors aren't disappearing, according to *Nonprofit World* magazine. Instead, they're becoming infinitely more discriminating in how much, and where, they decide give. To attract them, you need to spend time rethinking and getting creative about how you're going to make your organization stand out from the rest of the pack.

The other good news, to those who are working with small and medium sized nonprofits, is that donations are up over 5% (as of April 2009), according to an analysis of users of DonorPerfect's online fundraising application (www.donorperfect.com). "The country's generosity remains even during financially stressful periods such as these," says Jon Biedermann, Vice President, DonorPerfect Division, Softaware. Since 1969, U.S. giving, measured in current dollars, has risen every year except 1987 (mainly due to a change in tax law that year that prompted people to give early).

This is very good news for all nonprofits. People still want to support good causes. They are still giving because they know in desperate economic times the need can be greater, especially when initiatives provide services that target human suffering. However, this is not necessarily a slam dunk for existing nonprofits. They aren't necessarily going to bring in the same level of donations as before. They must prove to donors that their causes warrant continued support. To new nonprofit start-ups, both of these trends can be good news because donors do not have a preconception about your cause. However, you still must prove to them that your services are worthy of their donations now and in the future.

Accelerate Your Start-up Fundraising Campaign with Four Simple Options

Launching a nonprofit, especially in turbulent economic times, is not for the easily discouraged. However, new nonprofits are being created all the time, just not at the phenomenal growth rates that were seen over the last 15 years. Remember, in order to raise donated funds, your cause will need to be 1) a 501c3 IRS-approved nonprofit organization, or 2) you will need to be fiscally sponsored by an existing 501c3 nonprofit. (The donated funds would be in the name of the fiscal sponsor and your cause would be a project under the sponsor. You can either be in the process of applying for the tax-exempt status with the IRS or not.) For the purpose of this book, we will refer to your fundraising entity as a nonprofit organization.

It's important to recognize that creating a stable fiscal base for any fledgling nonprofit organization will require significant seed money to cover operating expenses, such as professional and support staff to help keep the future fundraising wheels turning and operate the programs. When you understand the funding community and the nonprofit sector, and when you make a decision to go in with a clear commitment to succeed, then you will have a greater likelihood of success. But it is not mandatory that you pay for a fundraising professional at the outset. There are many ways to raise money, as this book will relate, without paying the expenses of a skilled development person.

Four Start-up Options

There are four start-up options to building revenue for fledgling nonprofits that do not involve grants.

1. The first is to launch a membership drive which provides immediate and unrestricted funds along with a predictable and ongoing funding base. While there is paperwork involved, it is a route that can be managed by a handful of volunteers. An online membership site can also be set up through www.Ning.com to manage the membership database, communicate with members in a single email, launch discussions, and

promote events online. You can also connect it to other social networking sites and recruit new members. Ning.com is a free site, but for launching a revenue-producing membership campaign through Ning, a reasonable charge each month is applied to your account. It is up to you how much you want to charge members annually to be a part of your cause.

2. The second is to solicit your own board members for seed money as well as have them appeal to friends and associates for individual gifts to increase general operating funds. And, by all means, if you know of wealthy individual donors who believe in your cause, don't hesitate to go to them and lay out your campaign request. You may or may not need to show them your marketing plan. At least make sure you have the basic mission statement, goals, and objectives written down for how you are going to spend donation money and who you are serving.
3. The third idea is to go the "house party" route which publicizes the mission of the organization and acts as a fundraiser. It could also entail a dinner party (hosted by a supportive friend with social clout) with a pre-set charge for attendance. Another option is a theater party. Or you can create a raffle or host an auction. In order to stage these events successfully, it is crucial that board members and volunteers share time, skills, and their circle of friends as invitees.
4. The fourth is to put together a sporting event such as a tennis match, road race, or even an inventive one like a bed race. Or host a battle of the bands. A corporate or celebrity sponsor can draw attention to the event and produce a much better turnout of potential donors. It's worth pounding the pavement and networking with friends to locate a radio personality, sports celebrity, or well-known face in the community who will lend some time to support your cause.

Having events like this can draw greater attention to your cause and expose it to people and businesses of means in your community. We'll discuss the all-important branding aspect of your nonprofit to bring more visibility to your campaign in the next section. Before you begin, it's important to be clear on what your mission is, who your target client population is, and what your short and long-term goals are. When asked by potential funders about these aspects

of your nonprofit, the answers should easily flow from your closest volunteers and supporters as well as yourself. A mission without a clear vision and focus is likely to not gain the support of repeat donors.

When you develop a budget for any of the events or strategies above, remember to include reserves of start-up and general operating money that you will need to sustain operations as your cause gets going. Don't forget to set aside money for future fundraising expenses as well.

Techniques for Keeping Costs Low

We always think of money as the main resource and, certainly, nonprofits need it. However there are other resources that drive the income engine not the least of which is the wise use of volunteers. Volunteerism is up and you may find not only friends but also people you don't know who want to help you by going to online volunteer sites like www.VolunteerMatch.com. Be sure to register your initiative and post your volunteer needs. Volunteer time is valuable. Don't take for granted the savings in staff expense, benefits, and vacation time that a volunteer can provide.

Could you share office resources with another already-established nonprofit? Or are there volunteers or supporters who may not be able to donate dollars but have access to equipment/machinery, office supplies, or who might be willing to donate printing costs?

While events can raise money they can also raise much needed awareness to bring in a wide variety of resources. One former real estate agent launched a battle of the bands in her community to raise donations for her home repair nonprofit. Everyone knew of people losing their homes during the housing bubble and suddenly she was approached by multiple skilled professionals willing to donate their talents. Not only did the "bands in the park" raise awareness, it also encouraged carpenters, roofers, plumbers, and even medical personnel to donate their valuable time to help the future residents who'd lost their jobs and savings.

If your desire to make your cause flourish is strong enough, you can draw on your creativity and employ a word-of-mouth approach to raise the help and resources you will need to get your cause off the ground quickly. More people are willing to help than you realize. You just need to be bold, state your cause and why it's important, and people will begin to follow you. You are the leader and leaders don't quit. They find ways to state their cause repeatedly until the right people hear it and follow. Get out from behind your desk and find ways to network where you can build your cause, your brand, and your loyal followers. Its fun and it's worth it!

Visibility and Branding for Your Cause

People in the nonprofit community are often a little shy of the term “marketing” when it comes to promoting their cause. But it can’t be denied that that is exactly what nonprofits need to be doing in any economy but especially in tough financial times. You must make your message and mission VISIBLE and your organization TOP of MIND!

Promotion and marketing are:

1. Essential to GETTING CLEAR ON YOUR MESSAGE and GETTING YOUR CLEAR MESSAGE OUT.
2. Critical for creating visibility and convincing supporters of your organization’s value.
3. Necessary for driving memberships and donations which, in turn, drive expanded programs and services.

The next step is to do the following:

1. Define your target market for donors – who are the best candidates?
2. Research online similar organizations and associations and their strategies.
3. Determine the desired outcome of your marketing efforts.

Why Must I Create Branded Handouts and Materials?

1. “Branding” is another term being heard more often in the nonprofit arena. If a cause is to compete with other nonprofits, it must have a unique brand so people can differentiate your cause from others. Answer these questions: Do you know who you are, what you do, how you do it, and why anyone should care? Next, what should you consider when branding your initiative? These important points will get you started: Tagline, mission statement, supporting statements, logo.
2. The core messages you want your brand to convey.

3. A brand should not only communicate who you are...it should captivate!

The next step is to showcase the benefits, services, donation opportunities and values of your organization. Look for inexpensive ways to create brochures, business cards, and fliers. One company, VistaPrint, has easy online design software at reasonable prices that can produce your branded brochures quickly. You may also find donors for these items in your community.

Before you invest, remember to brand your materials and your website consistently. A consistent brand:

1. Provides tangible, in-hand evidence of your organization and message.
2. Makes an impact that gets the attention of donors and volunteers.
3. Drives people to the next step: Your website or the phone to learn more.
4. Offers a powerful impression, more conversations, and more interest in your organization.

Remember to be concise and keep your copy short. Have your copy looked over by an editor or copywriter. Copy must be proofread for spelling errors and typos before you have brochures printed. Your credibility depends on it!

REMINDER: When you build a website for your cause, print your website URL on all your handout materials and business cards.

The Web and “Wired Donors”

One of the first things a nonprofit should do to attract donors today is develop and maintain a professional internet presence. More and more people are donating to causes online thanks to social media and the increased usage of the internet. A large number of online donors are coming from the 50+ age group. They are becoming more internet-savvy so they want to be able to search for causes that illustrate their passions and concerns clearly on websites.

If you don't know how to set up and maintain a web site, no problem. There are lots of people willing to volunteer to help you do it. One such organization is www.Grassroots.com. This group is all about helping nonprofits with free volunteer help to get their sites up and running fast. Just submit your request and someone will likely contact you within 2-6 weeks to discuss what you would like on your site. That means you should have your branding figured out ahead of time and what copy and photos you want to put on your site to engage visitors and donors. They can also help you with basic Search Engine Optimization (SEO). In addition, there are also web designer volunteers to be found at the online volunteer sites and even at your local business college.

What should you put on your Website?

- The story behind why you launched this cause (the “About Us” link)
- Photos of who it is you are helping with captions explaining them
- News of upcoming fundraising events
- A place for press releases and press you'll receive, often called a Media Room
- Monthly newsletter sign-up link on every page and a place for archived issue links
- A discussion forum and/or a blog
- Online donation button on every page (can be created at PayPal.com)
- A Donor Page: showcase and list the benefits of donating to your organization.
- In-Kind Donations: A list of what types of equipment and other resources can be donated
- Social networking links and links to other important sites

- Contact info
- An FAQ page with questions and answers about your cause
- Branding, branding, branding!

The goals of your website are to create a powerful impression, engage visitors, give them reasons to subscribe to your newsletter, and make it easy for them to donate to your cause.

Remember – Stories About Your Cause are Key!

Give your site "story-like" visual imagery that speaks to your supporters' emotions. Decisions are made on an emotional level, not a logical one. A well-told story allows donors to visualize their contribution having a positive impact on those they read about. Combine your personal story with a *call to action*. A call to action leverages the immediacy of the emotional reaction to your story with a request to help *now* because their contribution will have a positive impact.

Everyone wants to help. They just have to be properly coached about your situation and motivated to act now! Gather stories of people who have been helped, even just the few you've helped at the beginning, perhaps before you have your 501c3 in hand. These stories are the most convincing reasons and motivators for why someone will want to donate to your cause.

While you do want photos on your home page, remember not to size them too large or have too many; otherwise, your website will be slow to launch (which can discourage visitors). Also, avoid flashing or fast-rotating photos on your site. And always use the real estate at the top left-hand side of the home page for your email subscription area. It's the first place people tend to look on a site.

Online donation tips

There are other online donation options for your site besides setting up a PayPal account. You can set up an account with www.JustGive.org instead. Also, register with GivingExpress, set up just for American Express account holders.

You may not find donors donating on your site right away until they have more information through your newsletters. Make sure you put out an online newsletter at least once a month. People typically need 6-9 exposures to your cause before they'll donate online. Most of your donations will come from local fundraisers at first. However, you will still need a web site presence to provide information to people locally and nationally who want to learn about your cause. It will save you time and money in the long-run to invest a little time in a decent site.

Make a commitment about your group's fundraising goal and state it clearly on your site. This causes the mind to internalize it as a verbal commitment. Your goal should be realistic, but also aim high. Make sure it has a compelling call to action. Include it in all your communications and fit it into your "sales script."

Use your website to thank donors and volunteers who have given time or money to your cause! A personal handwritten thank-you to larger donors is also appropriate.

Another revenue producer is a year-round online store or a web shopping mall with click-through purchasing that pays a commission to your organization.

You Need a Newsletter – Preferably Online!

Why do so many people suggest that you must have an online newsletter or ezine for your nonprofit? You may have been sending out "snail mail" newsletters to keep in touch with donors and volunteers. But you aren't convinced that an online ezine is going to be more effective than a paper newsletter. Let me say here that some initiatives have found paper newsletters to still be a great fundraising opportunity. Some groups are doing both versions

because the paper newsletter is read by those who don't use email or use it irregularly. Paper newsletters also allow one to insert an envelope in the mailing as another way to solicit donations.

Feed My People of St. Louis still finds the paper newsletter worth the printing costs, postage, and time because the inserted donation envelope that accompanies it generates a significant, ready-made opportunity for people to pop a check in the mail. The donations exceed the expense and time of mailing. However, they have an email newsletter as well. The same amount of work that goes into the paper newsletter can be replicated into an e-newsletter quickly. Email is quicker to produce, helps you build your database of followers quicker, and it makes it easy for your stakeholders to “point and click a donation” to your group online. It also allows your supporters to easily forward the email to their friends, widening your exposure and potential access to future donors. Give people who are on a paper newsletter an incentive to subscribe to the online email.

An email newsletter has the added benefit of becoming a tracking tool. If you are sending yours to more than 50 people, you need an email service provider. Because an email service provider allows to check whether your email is spam sensitive, it allows you to segment your lists by donor group, track the open rate, determine which links they've clicked on to know which gain the most attention, and archive each email with a URL by month sent to save administrative time.

Here are the Primary Reasons to Have an Email Newsletter

- Over 75% of Americans use the Internet and email to date. That percentage is still climbing annually so nonprofits must keep up with the growing population of “wired donors.” The 50+ age group is the fastest growing online group right now. These people typically have the highest incomes and are the biggest donors. (Read more about “wired donors” later in this ebook.)
- As social media becomes more common among web users, online email will become even more important to stay ahead of the nonprofit competition for funding.

- Email can be forwarded to friends, associates, and people who might not otherwise know your initiative exists but who might want to donate and follow your progress.
- Email is an inexpensive way to stay connected with donors and volunteers. It can also be sent out more than once a month to feature special events, for special appeals, and to broadcast important news.
- Photos and stories of success are critical in the nonprofit fundraising world. Email is a quick and inexpensive way to insert new photos of events. Success stories can begin in your email and then continue to your website to drive people to it and conserve space in the newsletter.
- Placing a DONATE NOW link on your newsletter is also an effective way to solicit donations.
- Online newsletters can be archived strategically on your website so people can see what your initiative has been doing over a series of months.

How to Build a great Email Marketing Plan

The first step to successful email-marketing is establishing a plan. Start with a calendar, think about the types of messages you send and include every department that wants to send messages. How can messages be combined or complement each other? What data do you need to collect to improve your coordination? Ensure that you have a healthy mix of messages. Keep in mind that your messages should focus on what your donors want to hear; for example, people donating to a human services non-profit want to help others in need. Therefore, the bulk of your communications should reinforce the idea that they made the right choice by donating to your organization. How? Repeat the message that their donation has made a difference in someone's life. Headlines such as "You fed a child today" or "You saved a life today" get a donor/reader's attention and heart. As you and your volunteers go about your daily routines, be sure to capture these stories for future use. Never make them up, or your credibility will eventually come into question.

The next step is building the email list. The key to growing a loyal email audience is hooking them early and keeping them engaged over time. Optimize your welcome message and send a follow-up message within a week (or less). After a few months of active email, survey your list to see if you are meeting its expectations. You can use poll data to subtly drive content

and creativity on your site and in emails. This will dramatically improve your giving percentage. And it pays to segment your email mailings by donor giving levels; this way you can address those donors in a more strategic and user-friendly style. Major wired donors prefer this treatment.

Granted, email often has the downside of ending up in people's SPAM folders. Until there are more sophisticated improvements to servers and email clients, there will be an ongoing frustration with targeted email. Here are a few ways to help your email reach your readers' inboxes more successfully:

- Instruct those on your mailing list to "white list" your email address in the *Rules* section of their email software. This will usually keep it out of the Junk email folder.
- Keep the "from" email address consistent from month to month so your readers and the spam rule recognize you.
- Make sure you check your newsletter for SPAM-type wording. Usually you can check this with the functionality offered by your email software provider.
- Make sure the subject line of your email is not in all caps and that it doesn't use words that email servers may consider to be spamming words.
- Any email address that returns two hard bounce-backs should be eliminated quickly from your database. A soft bounce may just mean that the network is temporarily down but it could get through in the future; if you receive between three and five soft bounces on the same address, then, eliminate that email address. Your nonprofit could get "dinged" by the email service you are using if there are too many bounced emails so keep your list clean.
- Hand-amend addresses if you see obvious typos in the domain name portion.

How do I know I'm on track?

The annual growth rate of email lists is 2.4% per month in the nonprofit sector. The faster you grow, the faster the unsubscribe rate will drop. To get 1,000 solid names on a list you need 1380 names for the year. The average open rate is 17.6%. On average, 3.8% will click on URLs. Advocacy emails will open at 7.5%. Fundraising clicks average 1%.

Place your email subscribe link on every page of your website. Also, put it in the email signature of every email that you and your staff send out. Make sure to have a “forward to a friend” link on every email newsletter you send out (almost always automatically provided by any email service provider). And make sure to place the subscribe box in the upper left-hand corner of your home page...the most valuable real estate on your website.

There is no excuse, from a cost standpoint, for your nonprofit not to send out an email newsletter each month and build followers. A number of email providers are now offering discounted or free email programs for nonprofits. One that offers up to 10,000 free email-sends per month is VerticalResponse.com. Another that offers a substantial discount for their program is ConstantContact.com. Newsletters can be time-consuming ventures, for sure. But a volunteer for your initiative may be willing to learn how to create your newsletter using these programs and save your staff valuable time.

Social Media Fundraising

So what is social media and how can I use it to raise funds for my nonprofit? There are techniques anyone can learn with practice. Social media has proven itself to be a nonprofit organization's dream. The 2008 presidential campaign proved the metal of social media's effectiveness to engage dollars, volunteers, and buzz. Newly discovered by most nonprofits, this free venue is increasingly being used to create awareness, cultivate relationships, and generate new sources of funding.

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Ning and similar social media platforms are perfect for causes because they can spread a message quickly, connect with individuals, and create calls to action immediately. And more importantly, time, not money, is the investment.

Since "tweeting" and social media engagement takes some focus and small chunks of time, why not enlist a social army... a "social media" army... to help you spread the word and eventually bring in donations? Recruit some of your volunteers who are using social media regularly to help you create awareness. Youth and college students are great at this. It's a great way to influence a brand new target market and with the help of loyal supporters you can reach more people. Remember the following four rules when it comes to engaging volunteers for social media:

1. Carefully select volunteers you know well and have a good relationship with.
2. Decide the social media platforms you want to broadcast on.
3. Decide what messages and needs you want to broadcast.
4. Decide how many times you want to broadcast.

Which Platform Should I Use?

You will need to decide which social media platform you want to master and use first. It isn't necessary to be a member on all of them. Many choose Twitter because of its rapid growth (at least 50 million people use Twitter as of this writing.) If you aren't using social media now,

you can be sure your competition for donors is or will plan to. Choose one and get good at that one, then move on to others.

There is a certain amount of control you should keep over your message when you're sending it over social media. This is true within your volunteer staff, your regular staff, and your supporters who tap social media to promote your cause. In order to keep your brand consistent, create a key daily message and send it to your "army." They can Tweet your message, add it to LinkedIn, put it on your Facebook page or to any other social media platform you and they decide to use. Be sure to add your organization's web site in your message to give the recipient a place to find more information. (You can shorten your URL, if it's a long one, by going to www.tinyurl.com and shrinking it to fit within the character limitations of Twitter.) You have control of your message to a point, but after you have the message out there then you'll have to let go and not worry so much about control.

Tips for Using Social Media for Visibility

Visibility brings donors to your website and your cause. Recently, the Chronicle of Philanthropy offered a podcast on "Using Social Media to Bring Visibility to Your Nonprofit Cause." Here are some featured insights about how to use social media from that podcast:

1. To truly connect, nonprofit groups have to be fully engaged in the effort online. The most successful nonprofits have several people in the organization, even the CEO, writing blogs and tweeting. The Lance Armstrong Foundation is highly effective in social media having engaged 36,000 followers on Twitter and 600,000 fans on Facebook. The CEO, Lance, and the management staff are all Tweeting throughout any given day to blast their message around the world.
2. Social media gives a broad platform to the people who support your cause.
3. To engage people, be sure to post tons of photos on your Facebook fan page with your nonprofit's name.
4. Beyond the message control system that you institute with your staff and volunteers, you're going to have to release control of worrying about branding infringement by giving others freedom to Tweet so that more people can engage in your cause. You have

to refrain from hovering as much as you'd like to. You can't control the message entirely ... simply make it clear what your message is but then relinquish control.

5. The Lance Armstrong Foundation held a social media conference recently, the Global Cancer Summit, through social media since they have not set up satellite offices in different countries. They train and help others learn best practices and connect people through a social media summit. What came out of it was for smaller nonprofits to realize that they can get their message heard like the larger ones thanks to social media.
6. Relationships made over social media are strong and viable. Occasionally you'll have an opportunity to meet in person after engaging online, but that is up to you. Meeting in person isn't necessary to build cooperation or spread your message.
7. The most effective campaign is not one that is spread by your organization but by your followers. Earth Hour strategy, the "turn out the lights" campaign, was launched using social media and impacted 4,000 cities. The campaign released the logos and widgets to others online (everyday people, not staff), which gave them a "buy-in" to the concept and made the cause their own. If you want to reach every part of the community, it can't just be your own cause, it has to be theirs. To get something to grow like this, you have to let go.

Social Media Insights from Nonprofit Leaders

In a recent discussion forum on LinkedIn, the question was asked,
"I'm seeking input from any nonprofit director or staff member that has social media success stories. The question: Is social media worth the time investment?"

Here are some of their comments ...

1. Jeff Stern at the Museum of Life and Science in Durham, NC – "If you haven't heard this yet, the most important thing is providing a remarkable service for your core mission, rather than using social media. When you do decide to get into social media, listening (alerts, RSS feeds, etc) and finding out where your intended audience already is should be your first step. Once you've found where the folks you want to talk to are - communicate strategically and make time to listen and respond.

Only you will be able to determine whether this is worth the investment of your time and energy, and you won't be able to determine that without knowing what your goals are

before you begin. We've been pretty clear with our fans/supporters that we're doing social media on an experimental basis, and we don't know ahead of time what may be expanded and what may be discarded. This has allowed us to be flexible in what we do.”

2. Heather Mansfield Owner, DIOSA Communications – “I get more website traffic, email newsletter subscribers, and people signing up for my webinars from Twitter than Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, and this LinkedIn Group combined. Nonprofits shouldn't even hesitate... and Tweeting takes a fraction of the time as MySpace and Facebook. My lowest ROI is from Facebook.”
3. Ralph Boeije, Innovation consultant at Alares – “I know and appreciate Twitter mostly for internal knowledge sharing and knowing who is about what kind of business. Twitter for fundraising can be interesting, look for #twestival, #tweetup (# denotes keywords).”
4. Deborah Mourey, Social Media Sherpa – “I have many years of marketing background and working with my not-for-profit clients to help them understand that social media tools (including Twitter) need to be thought about like any other marketing effort. What is your organization looking to accomplish and then pick the correct tools? If awareness of the organization and mission is one of the goals, then there are ways to use Twitter and other SM tools to accomplish that. I like the comment about limiting the number of people you follow. You may choose some national and local people, but YES to the donees/members for sure. This is a way you get to listen to them. If you use a Twitter management tool like Seismic, you can sort what comes in by groups (that you can set up) so you can look at that first and not miss what your members are saying. Imagine being able to announce (anything) to hundreds of donees and potential members/event attendees/etc. for free! The closer your Twitter bond with them, the better. I like to think of it like public relations.”
5. Katie Winchell, Marketing & Communications Director, California League of Schools – “I feel a little differently about following - if you open yourself up to the possibilities that true social community may bring, you might get unexpected results. Not that an organization must follow everybody, but you never know what motivations others may have to follow your organization. I've started some great collaboration with contacts outside our usual service area - people who are passionate about the shared mission of student learning. Of course you need to define your PR objectives for Twitter, but don't negate the unknown. Twitter is about trusting in the community and building bonds more than controlling the conversation.”

Other Social Media Options

Besides Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn there are a number of other social media ways to get your name out in cyberspace and glean potential donors. In every case, remember that your opt-in email list link or logo needs to be on everything whenever appropriate. This is the easiest way to engage donors. Creating a YouTube video channel for your nonprofit gives you the opportunity to give two-minute snippets of the various aspects of what you do. Try the website www.animoto.com to create it free! Submitting articles to social bookmarking sites like Digg, Delicious, and [SelfGrowth.com's Charity site](#) can increase your visibility. And, finally, keeping up with social media trends is key!

Other Low-cost Fundraising Ideas

In any economic downturn, it never hurts to get very creative and a little “out there” when it comes to fundraising. One creative idea that a local theater company came up with generated over \$5,000 and involved just a few hours of staff time. They printed formal-looking folded invitations to a “non-event” event, shown below. With today’s printers, you can save money printing your own invitations or, better yet, locate a business willing to donate in-kind printing. Modify it to reflect your initiative’s needs. Graphics, such as children’s faces, art, or other graphics that speak to your initiative, can be inserted as well. Here’s how the invitation read:

It’s the “NON-EVENT” of the season!

Imagine an event you don’t attend
at an imaginary ballroom on an imaginary date.

It IS a major fundraiser to benefit

BAY STREET PLAYERS.

You are cordially invited to

NOT attend the Imaginary Ball*

but...your generous support with a
tax deductible donation is greatly appreciated.

\$25 for (1) ticket

Imagine the relief of not buying a new outfit!

\$50 for (2) tickets

**Imagine the joy of not feeling foolish while dancing the
Macarena and Electric Slide!**

\$100 for a Table-for-Four

Imagine not having to make witty conversation with strangers!

\$250 VIP Theatre Angel

Imagine our happy smiles as we cash your heavenly check!

\$ _____ Optional Donation

**Imagine the pleasure of spending a relaxing evening at home with a
non-imaginary companion and beverage of your choice!**


***Note: Please do come to our next production!**

Bay Street Players, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all gifts are tax-deductible.

Sometimes desperate economic times require some very creative re-thinking.
Here are two other low-cost ideas for generating new sources of income:

- Visit www.ContactAnyCelebrity.com and either pay for a subscription to their database or purchase their large book of 55,000 celebrity names, addresses, and phone numbers to solicit autographed items for your cause. Hold a local celebrity autograph auction to raise money for your cause. Or, to save setup time and dollars, hold the auction on eBay and promote it on your nonprofit's Fan Page on Facebook. It takes some staff time to write the letters, but the rewards are worth the effort.
- Ask corporations for matching donations. Institute an "I pay ten dollars a year – 'IPTDAY'- campaign" with your email list or as you talk about your cause. Then glean the match from a local company. Make sure to give the donor company a lot of free exposure on your website and email newsletter (assuming you've grown your list).
- Look into "social enterprise" earned-income strategies for your cause. Check out the www.SocialEnterpriseAlliance.org site or the www.Ashoka.org site to explore the possibilities for service or product revenue streams and how to set it up legally.

I hope you received real value and inspiration from this book. If you would like to take the next step to grow your cause, I would enjoy hearing from you! Use the coupon below for a free 20 minute consultation.



The “Cause Coach”

Email: debra@nicenetwork.org
Web Site: www.DebraBerg.com
Phone: **1-888-753-3395**
Chat with Debra: [@CauseCoach on Twitter](#)
[DebraBerg on Facebook](#)
[DebraJBerg on LinkedIn](#)
Join the [NICENetwork group on LinkedIn](#)

I’m here to help your cause succeed in its mission ...

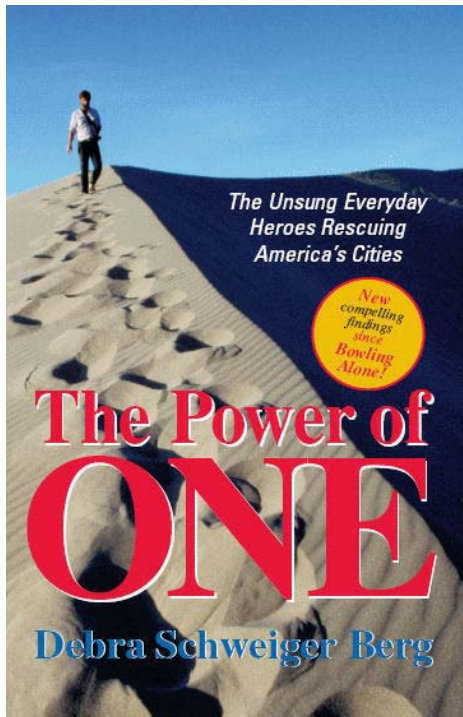
- To provide 1-on1 coaching to help bring visibility to your cause.
- To give you ideas on how to partner your initiative with business.
- To inspire your organization as a speaker on “the power of one” person to make an impact in your company, nonprofit, or the world.

I’m known as the “Cause Coach” by my clients and I help new and existing causes improve nonprofit visibility, revenue streams, and promotion. As the Charity and Volunteering Guide on SelfGrowth.com, I inform and encourage those seeking to support and grow nonprofit causes. In 2007, I launched the National Institute for Civic Enterprise (NICENetwork.org), a national research and human services nonprofit network, to support and connect human service nonprofit professionals. I also publish informational articles, books, and e-books to inform and train civic/social entrepreneurs, donors, socially conscious businesses, and volunteers. Contact me and let me know how I can help you.

**Coach to not-for-profit causes - Trainer on nonprofit visibility and promotion -
Bestselling author - Inspirational speaker**

Special Offer!

**Contact Debra for a FREE 20 minute analysis of your nonprofit’s challenges with promotion or visibility. It will be worth the call.
Phone 1-888-753-3395 or email debra@NICENetwork.org**



Why Doesn't Somebody Do Something?

Debra Berg asked herself this question more than once. "Why is there still poverty in the richest country in the world?" "Where are the answers for our youth who are floundering in school and attempting suicide?" "Why are our inner cities decaying?" Then she took a trip across America and was re-inspired by what she found.

In **The Power of ONE**, Debra features 35 innovative civic entrepreneurs who've helped fuel a new trend in social innovation and civic engagement. Like the inspiring story of the small business owner who crafted the national *Amber Alert*, people are saying "enough is enough" to decades of unsolved problems by getting very creative. One person, with a good idea, can inspire major change!

Do their techniques actually work? Could they work for my cause?

- ✚ An 85% job retention rate of the previously homeless after 9 months!
- ✚ Youth successfully "policing" their peers and preventing shootings, drug abuse, gang violence, and bullying in 33 countries!
- ✚ Low overhead costs of 10% are typical compared to 70% with state and federal government programs.

"I really enjoyed your book! I need to order 10 copies for my staff right away."

Bruce Gunter, Executive Director, Progressive Redevelopment
(Past Finance Director, Habitat for Humanity International)

**"I keep The Power of ONE on my desk and whenever I feel discouraged or overwhelmed...I pick it up and open it. I am always inspired and renewed...
Thank you for writing this book!"**

Julia Neiman, Founder, Taking Charge Industries

**>>>Purchase your copy of *The Power of ONE*, here
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