



Incorporating the Internet into Your Organization

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www.alaskafood.org

An understanding of how online giving and social networking helps to generate volunteers, support and revenue; and how vital it is to your organizations future.

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What Can the Internet Do for You?

“ePhilanthropy is the building and enhancing of relationships with supporters of non-profits using an Internet-based platform, the online cash or real property or the purchase of products or services to benefit a non-profit, and the storage and usage of electronic data or use of electronic methods to support fundraising activities.” *NetworkforGood*

There are advantages and disadvantages to using the Internet for fundraising. Online giving is fast and cost effective; you get quick results. It is easier and less costly to customize and track results, it gives you insight into donor behavior, giving trends and it's great for targeted appeals. On the downside, only 18% of internet users donate online. Online giving represents only 2.4% of total giving. Still, 76% of Alaskans have access to the internet (2007 US Census Data). That's 93,000 potential supporters you can't afford to ignore.

Websites

A website is simply a collection of related web pages, documents, images or videos addressed with a common domain name. When someone types in a domain name, example: 'yourfoodpantry.com' it locates your internet address.

It's said that potential customers decide within the first 30 seconds whether or not to leave a website. Your content is one of the most critical parts of your website. Regular updates encourage users to return to your site and help you achieve higher rankings in the search engines, a great way to keep your volunteers and supporters informed.

Website domain names must be registered; some of the more popular registration sites are Network Solutions, GoDaddy.com and Register.com. Some are free and others charge annual fees. Most require you to register annually.

There are many companies in Alaska who do website design and development. You may even have a volunteer in your community willing to do this work for you. If you don't already have a website, put this on your wish list.

Strengthening Alaska's Anti-Hunger Network

Online Fundraising

Online Giving Page - This page should include a 'Give Now' button, explanation of how to give, samples of gift programs, profiles of major donors (with permission) and contact information for the staff person responsible for donations. The 'Give Now' button should be visible and located where people can easily access it, usually at eye level.

Email Fundraising Appeals - It is important to customize your appeal and keep your message brief, one or two lines. Examples: "This Winter, 1 out of 5 children in Alaska will not eat breakfast. Help our kids start their day with a healthy meal." "Because children are hungry all year long" Average gifts from this kind of appeal will be higher than one from direct mail. The reply is immediate but your response rate will be lower, the bigger your list the better your return. Email campaigns conducted in December are ideal; funds raised online are at their lowest in Jan-Feb-March (16%) and highest in Oct-Nov-Dec (40%).

Pay Pal and Network for Good are just a few of the companies that do online donation processing for credit card payments.

Social Media

Social media describes a set of internet tools that enables shared community experiences, both online and in person. An online community is a group of people with common interests who connect with one another to learn, play, work, organize and socialize. Communities can be large or small, local or global. They can be public or restricted to members. Social media allows people with basic computer skills to tell their stories using the Internet. Most are free for participants. Blogs, YouTube, and Twitter are all examples of Social Media.

The December Alaska Food Coalition White Paper will cover the different types of social media currently available and how to best utilize.

Examples of Websites, Blogs and Virtual Giving Sites:

<http://feedingamerica.org/>

<https://app.etapestry.com/cart/LakeviewPantry/default/index.php>

<http://hunger101az.blogspot.com/>

<http://blogs.oxfam.org/en/blog/09-11-18-declaring-vision-world-hunger>

Need More Help?

The Alaska Food Coalition is here to help. Want to know more about creating a website? Do you have fundraising appeal you would like to highlight or need some help finding graphics? We are here to help.

To access this resource, contact Vanessa Salinas, Alaska Food Coalition Manager

*Next Month:
Communicating
Through Social
Media*

