

A Web 2.0 STRATEGY FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Using Web 2.0 Media to Build Your Organization

INTRODUCTION:

Over the past decade, the digital age has irrevocably woven itself into the fabric of society. The Internet has become increasingly accessible, portable and relevant in people's lives; surpassing traditional media on most fronts and capturing increasing numbers of traditional media's audience. One of the obvious results has been the financial failure of a number of large newspapers, with the survivors holding on and struggling to find a niche to anchor themselves to. The same fate awaits traditional broadcast and cable television in the next decade as Internet TV continues to grow. As the population continues to convert to e-mail and rely on commercial shippers to deliver goods, the U.S. Post Office finds itself oversized, overstaffed, and constantly in need of subsidy by American Taxpayers.

Traditional media appears to some degree to be struggling to grasp what is happening and those organizations which have for years relied on traditional media to deliver their message are now realizing that as traditional media's audience shrinks, their effectiveness as a communications outlet shrinks as well.

In short, the digital age is here, it is continually growing and evolving, and it is essentially unstoppable short of a world-wide technological collapse. It embodies a paradigm shift which is leaving leaders in nonprofit organizations in the unfamiliar position of having to find and/or develop totally new approaches to accomplish their goals. For many leaders this situation is absolutely horrifying. Nothing in their careers has prepared them for this sort of rapid change. After all, traditional media and traditional methods have been effective and brought them success for their professional lifetime. Now many leaders find themselves facing the unimaginable position of no longer having the answers. They face sitting across from younger people and having to not only listen to them, but to learn from them as well. For many their world has truly turned upside down.

The unfortunate truth is that many of these leaders, rather than address the problem, will elect to cast blame on others or on conditions beyond their control. Others will simply make excuses for their problems. In either case they will refuse to learn new skills and will continue to cling to the media and methods that worked for them in the past. The purveyors of traditional media and methods will encourage them to do so because they desperately need customers. These leaders simply won't accept change and change will overwhelm their organizations as it is already overwhelming traditional media outlets.

I was once taught that every problem bears the seeds of its own solution. It has been my experience that this axiom is frequently true and it is true in this situation. It is the goal of this continuing article to help you discover those solutions and develop a practical strategy and some specific tactics to help you effectively make the digital shift in your organization.