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Why Non-profits Should Blog

Posted on August 25, 2005 at 05:34 PM

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From time-to-time we'll be inviting clients to guest-write for the Voce Nation. Today's post comes from Whitney Smith, Co-CEO for Girls For A Change, a non-profit organization that's empowering girls to create social change.

When first approached about the concept of blogging by Voce, I first had visions of middle aged engineers posting photos and stories about their recent robowars competition or crafty people posting their latest sock monkey pattern. As a non-profit we had all the technology communication tools that were being used by other cutting-edge organizations. We had a website and it was updated 2-3 times a week and we had a well received html newsletter so why would we need a blog? I didn't speak it out loud however because somewhere in my conscious was a feeling that my perception might not be the most up to date. My preconception was that blogging was something for the edification of the ego. Little did I know....

So we embarked on the process of learning how to blog. As an organization we have a value around being risk-taking and also to live into the concept of abundance, rather than scarcity. If we did not have this mantra many times along the way we might have seriously considered tossing in the towel. It isn't that it is difficult to learn how to blog or that it takes a great deal of time, but there is always something to do which seems as if it will have more immediate gratification. Also in groups of other non-profit professionals, I would mention our blog endeavors and receive strange looks and comments such as, "Don't you have enough to do without adding something else." Along the way as the path unfolded it became clear that we were developing an amazing tool and that the doubters would be proven wrong.

As I learned more about blogging, I discovered many things. Yes, there are engineers and crafters out there and there are a lot of them, however there is a huge section of technology, industry and individuals using blogging as a tool to increase their sales, boost their marketing efforts, attract talent, and even run for president. Blogging is being used widely in many, many venues which are increasing the success of the public and private sector. Since we have learned about the basics of blogging and how to apply it to have a major impact on the strategic goals of our organization I have become a fervent believer and promoter of blogging to the non-profit sector.

Blogging is an amazing tool. Just a FEW of the things we have created or are creating through our blog InHer City are:

- A live tool that we can use as a way to distribute information about our organization and issues affecting our constituents widely. This allows us to have a group of readers who increase their contact with us from a quarterly newsletter to possibly a daily or weekly visit to the blog to read the latest news and thoughts.
- An innovative way to engage our primary focus, young women, in using technology and creating systems of communication for them to widen their network globally. Our girls love to be able to contribute their voice to the blog and promote it to their friends. All young people now spend considerable time online and we have discovered that blogging can be a way of reaching them as an organization.
- A way to reach out globally about the work that we are doing and engage future geographies in the vision of our work before we are able to establish a real branch in that area. We have also begun to be able to begin establish ourselves as a girl and social change hub.
- Enhancing our current volunteer recruitment and donor cultivation tools by using the blog as an ongoing source of information about issues affecting girls and about social change.
- A way to get our organization in front of more people for fewer dollars than we could ever do with our more traditional marketing efforts, our website or newsletter.

And these are just a FEW of the ways we are expanding our organization through the use of this tool. I know there are going to be many more as this journey unfolds.

Something the non-profit sector has learned over the years is to look to innovative ways to maximize their resources and use the models of for-profits to the benefit of their non-profit work. Blogging is just one way to succeed in this area and that the investment of talent and time can potential yield many more resources for not for profit ventures.

Whitney Smith, Co-CEO Girls For A Change
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Great summary! This is just such exciting stuff. There are so many reasons for nonprofits to blog that it's hard to boil them down to a few, but you've done a great job. The key to all of them -- the nugget of information I think all nonprofits should take away from your post -- is that a blog is about connecting very intimately with the unique audience you're trying to reach. It's so much more than a traditional website, which functions largely as a "billboard" for information. A blog is a place where you can create a community that centers on exactly the issues you want to discuss, with the people you want to have a discussion with. It's like throwing a big dinner party where all the people are interested in exactly the same conversation as you!

Posted by: David Brazeal | January 20, 2006 10:12 AM

Great summary. Very interesting comments.

Posted by: jack | March 28, 2006 07:28 PM

Really great post. Thanks.

Posted by: sara | March 30, 2006 07:27 PM

The argument we frequently find ourselves using is that none of that explains the reasons nonprofits should do it. Frankly.

<http://www.Johnbecksamazingprofits.com/john-becks-amazing-profits.html>

Posted by: john beck | August 21, 2006 02:16 AM

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In the past, I've seen non-profits from the perspective of someone who worked around the State Capitol. Non-profits from around the state would send stacks of mail to our office with each piece containing an important message. The reports, new... [\[Read More\]](#)

Tracked on August 28, 2005 04:25 AM

» [The Voce Nation: Why Non-profits Should Blog from Unified Studies](#)

The Voce Nation: Why Non-profits Should Blog. The first website I ever designed and built was for a non-profit...The Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA). Since then, the majority of the websites I have designed, built, or managed as a [\[Read More\]](#)

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» [Girls, Non-Profits, and Blogging from youngcaucasus.neweurasia.net](#)

Via Beths blog, via Britt on NetSquared, a blog posting from the CEO of Girls For A Change, a non-profit organization thats empowering girls to create social change. (Sounds familiar!!) An innovative way to engage our primary focus, young... [\[Read More\]](#)

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