



Using Technology to Advance Your Board



Use your Web site to help create a strong, energized board of directors.

By Peter Brinckerhoff

Technology can help a great deal when it comes to governance. No, you can't get software with artificial intelligence modules. Nice try. Seriously, though, tech can be a great help as the staff works to keep the board informed, up to speed, and acting together.

If you don't already have it, put together a board-specific part of your Web site, one that is passworded only for your board members. On this part of your site, provide all kinds of information that board members can use. For example, such information could include:

- **name**, address, home and work phone, e-mail, and cell phone number of all board members, as well as who serves on which com-

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mittee, name of spouse and children, if any, and date that the member's term expires

- **organizational chart** with the name and picture of the staff member in charge of each area (remember to include staff e-mail addresses and direct phone numbers or extensions)

- **schedule** of all upcoming committee and board meetings and tentative agendas

- **minutes** of the organization's board and committee meetings for the past 12 months

- **copies** of the current audit, budget, and strategic plan

- **bylaws** of the organization
- **list** of funding sources and the focus of each one

- **description** of each of the organization's main programs.

This kind of information can keep a board better informed and more involved. It can also save

many questions at board and committee meetings.

Regularly ask your board what they would like included on their part of the Web site and what would help make their board service more meaningful. Provide an easy way for them to give feedback, and then listen to what they have to say.

You might also consider having a similar part of your site for your staff, but start with your board. And remember not to technologically exclude any board members who don't have regular access to the Internet. Also, hold a few training sessions for board members on how best to use the Web site, and keep in touch with them about ways that you can provide more information. ■

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