




Think Beyond the Cash Donation

We sometimes forget the huge impact that non-cash resources (such as pro-bono services and in-kind donations) can have on our fundraising efforts. A recent survey found that two-thirds of board-generated resources are of this type. “Beyond Cash” (taprootfoundation.org/docs) describes ways to tap into such resources for your organization. For example:

- **When recruiting people for your board, emphasize** pro-bono and in-kind gifts as ways for board members to fulfill their fundraising obligations. Over 90% of the professionals surveyed said they would be interested in joining a board if pro-bono and in-kind resources were their expected contribution. Many added that they didn’t realize that organizations would value such resources.
- **Create contracts with board members** that include pro-bono and in-kind donations. (For examples of such contracts, see “Reciprocal Board Agreements: What Do Board Members Give? What Do They Receive in Return?” at NonprofitWorld.org/members, Vol. 28, No. 1).
- **Include pro-bono and in-kind donors on your Web site** and in your annual report.
- **Measure the impact** of pro-bono and in-kind donations by tracking the ways they achieved articulated goals. Collect data as well as quotes from stakeholders who can observe the impact and success of these resources.
- **Before passing the annual budget, consider** where pro-bono and in-kind resources could play an extra role.
- **Ask board members to think about their networks** beyond connections to cash. Chances are that they know people and professional firms that have the tools, products, and talent your organization needs. Tell them not to forget to check out their social networks, such as LinkedIn. 

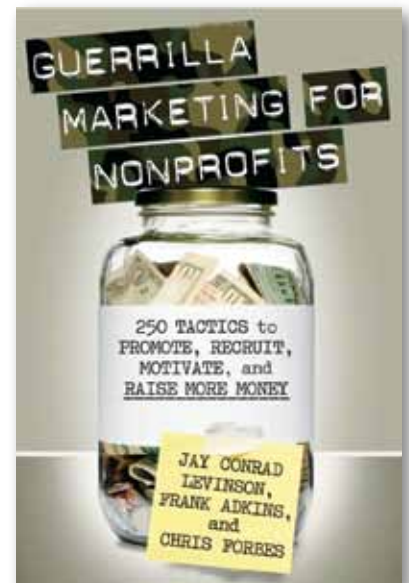
Are You a Guerrilla?

Nonprofit marketing is different from traditional marketing, and guerrilla marketing is different still, as *Guerrilla Marketing for Nonprofits* (Entrepreneur Press, entrepreneurpress.com) makes clear. Here’s how guerrillas see things:

- **They don’t just get donations.** They recruit partners.
- **Their work is about more than programs.** It’s about changing behaviors.
- **They know advertising is only one** of hundreds of marketing weapons, most of which are free for the taking.
- **They’re less concerned with features** (what their organization does) and more concerned with benefits (the effects of what they do).
- **They see staff not only as workers** but as advocates and marketers for the cause.

Here are some easy ways to put guerrilla thinking into work in your organization.

- **Interview your best and worst donors** and find out what makes them tick.
- **Make a list** of benefits — the value your organization brings to the community — and use this list to craft your marketing messages.
- **Shape an identity, not an image.** To create your organization’s brand, build on your reputation rather than developing a facade.
- **Ask people constantly for their feedback and opinions.** Have a plan to make use of what you learn.
- **Show your supporters with as much information as possible.** Education builds trust and assures people that all is on course.
- **Never forget that one of the best marketing tools** is to say “thank you” as often as possible.



Using Technology to Innovate


A research study by MAP for Nonprofits (mapfor nonprofits.org) reveals ways nonprofits can use new technology, often in simple and affordable ways, to innovate service delivery. The conclusions, reported in *Unleashing Innovation: Using Everyday Technology to Improve Nonprofit Services* include:

- **Breaking new technology into manageable pieces** can help. One organization noted the staff's anxiety when they started using social media. But once they developed clear steps and goals, the anxiety level went down.
- **You're more likely to find innovative solutions** if you're intentional about the process. Begin by identifying challenges you'd like to address. Step back and look at your operations to better understand the gaps and opportunities in your day-to-day work. A strong understanding of your needs will ensure that you'll find the best technology solution for your organization and truly open the door to innovation.
- **It's important to provide training**, which overcomes resistance to using new technology. Educating staff before and during implementation, and providing technical support once the innovation is in place, will make transitions easier.
- **Innovation flourishes** when a nonprofit is open to new approaches. The workplace culture has a powerful effect on driving change. A culture of innovation — always asking if there's a better way to do something — is a huge helping factor in implementing new projects.
- **Be sure you have a strategy or policy** to deal with the new technology. One organizational leader mentioned that, in hindsight, he wishes he'd put a social media policy in place before the organization's foray into Facebook. Such a policy would have been helpful as a guideline for using social media, as an exercise in understanding the technology, and in dealing with privacy issues.
- **Lack of budget** shouldn't preclude organizations from thinking about potential innovations, according to the research. In fact, the opposite is true. By creatively thinking about how affordable technologies might help address their goals, nonprofits may be able to increase service quality and decrease cost. For example, the HOWA Family Center improved its ability to communicate cost-efficiently with teens in its mentoring program by using text messaging. 

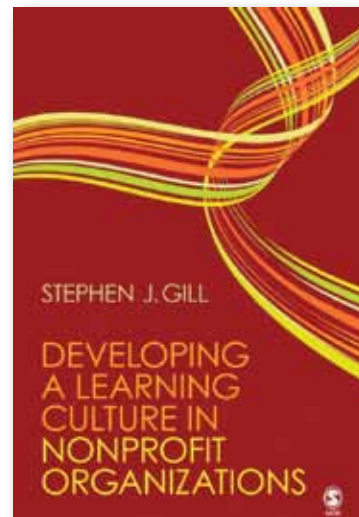
A Zeal for Learning

Nonprofits must constantly strive to improve themselves. Pressures, such as increasing competition and funders' demands, make continual learning imperative.

Developing a Learning Culture In Nonprofit Organizations (Sage Publications, sagepub.com) provides practical tools to build a learning environment. To critique your organization in a useful way, you must encourage learning from experience, not blaming, as author Stephen J. Gill notes. He explains how individual learning, team learning, organizational learning, and community sharing benefit an organization, and why they work best when occurring simultaneously.

You don't need a lot of money to implement a learning culture, because much learning will be on-the-job. The rewards are enormous compared to the resources required. 


— reviewed by Terrence Fernsler



Beginning the Grant Stewardship Journey

Many nonprofits think obtaining a grant is the last step in the grantor-grantee relationship. But it's really just the beginning of the journey together, as the Foundation Center explains in *After the Grant: The Nonprofit's Guide to Good Stewardship* (foundationcenter.org).

Funders like grantees to have systems in place to monitor gifts, communicate with grantors, and provide reports that reflect outcomes. Communicating includes notifying funders of changes in the project's leadership, structural changes, and any bad news, such as cost overruns or unethical issues that have been uncovered.

A nonprofit is a steward of all gifts it receives, and how well it carries out that stewardship will determine the strength of an ongoing relationship. A good steward is likely to receive much more support in the long run.. 

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