

Facebook Basics for Nonprofits

FOUR POSSIBILITIES

If you think that Facebook is the right next step for your nonprofit, then make it part of your online strategy. Make sure to start slowly and with realistic expectations.

Don't expect to see huge ROI.

Simply expect great opportunities to share your story.

Consider the following ways to get started.



Inspire

A nonprofit can create a homepage within the Facebook community. This page is an organization's digital entity, complete with pictures, videos and articles. Facebook offers easy-to-use guides to help you create this organizational profile. Once it's up, shout out your good work and inspire people to become involved. How to? Post a video of volunteers hard at work. Include important news updates that relate to your cause. Share photographs depicting the injustice you work to fight.

Build an online base

People on Facebook can become "fans" of products, brands and organizations. Once a fan, they are signed up to receive messages and updates from you. It's an opt-in list that can bring big rewards. How do you get fans? Send messages to co-workers, stakeholders, friends and family. Use Facebook's keyword search to find people with interests related to your cause. Include the link in your newsletter. And be patient. Your list will grow with time.

Mobilize and promote

Once you have a solid fan base, you can send people a monthly message through Facebook. Whether by promoting events or calling for volunteers, Facebook can help nonprofits recruit and motivate supporters. Consider the Human Rights Campaign, an LGBT advocacy organization. It mobilizes supporters through its Facebook page with an HRC Mobile Action Network. HRC fans can sign up to receive "take action" texts and breaking news alerts.

Raise funds

Facebook has a built-in application called Causes. People can use this to donate to causes of their choice, and the supporting nonprofits reap the benefits without any heavy lifting. Too good to be true? The statistics don't lie: Over 20 million people use the Causes application. Success stories like that of the Society Against Child Abuse (over \$20,000 raised!) show that this little application can yield big results.