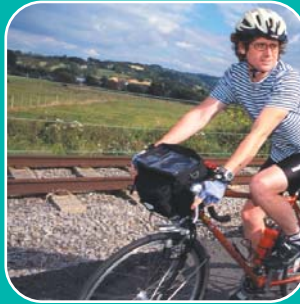
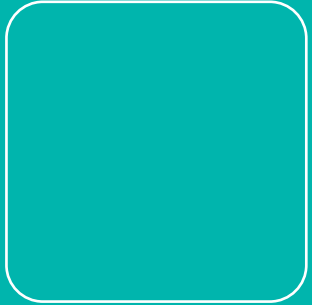
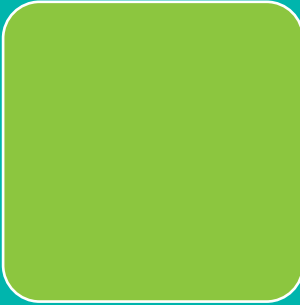


ICT Hub Think Tank

New Media Case Studies



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FOREWORD

by Caroline Diehl, Chief Executive of Media Trust

"Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform. Chief among those rules is this: Build applications that harness network effects to get better the more people use them."

From Wikipedia, 16/02/07:



For over a year now, we have been on an exciting journey. A journey that has seen us travel both around England and around the idea of Web 2.0 too. We've had fiery debates and effusive feedback and we've seen people becoming more connected: via new networks, via new ideas and via new media techniques.

The ICT Hub has made it possible for us to train 1,200 people from small voluntary and community organisations in techniques such as blogging, podcasting and wikis. Together, these groups, all with a turnover of under £2m, have identified new and forward-thinking opportunities to publicise their work, fundraise, and ultimately to support one another. By collaborating with our volunteer Media Trust advisors, hundreds of charities have accessed a range of practical support that has helped them realise the true potential of their campaigns.

We have learned much ourselves and the overwhelmingly positive feedback from delegates about our dedicated trainer Paul Caplan has confirmed that there is real passion in our sector for new media, and in particular 'the live web'.

Harnessing the potential of Web 2.0 can feel quite slippery at first. After all who hasn't felt nervous

about telling their story as a blogger for the first time? With this in mind we've put together this booklet (also available online!) in order to share with you some of the valuable advice and stories which have emerged over the course of the project.

We hope that you find it useful and will keep sharing your experiences with us. Please don't forget to visit the ICT Hub site and our own new Media Trust website for details of the remaining seminars. It's the first small step in linking up with skilled and passionate volunteer Media Trust advisors in your area and an easy route into the exciting world of Web 2.0 today.

For more information please visit:
www.mediatrust.org



Caroline Diehl
Chief Executive of Media Trust



FOREWORD

Nicola Thompson Head of the ICT Hub

Technology developments move fast and with that arrives an ever increasing number of new ways for the voluntary and community sector to reach new audiences, communicate, advocate, lobby and provide services. In addition we work increasingly in an environment where ICT is changing many aspects of our society, from how we conduct business and consume services to how we spend our leisure time.

The ICT Hub is delighted therefore to have supported this publication working in partnership with the Media Trust. This publication highlights exemplary practice in how the voluntary and community sector is benefiting from new media technology and highlights the ways new media technology is enabling organisations to meet their missions more effectively and efficiently.

We hope this publication will inspire you to think about how you could use ICT to either do things better or do better things, and demonstrates just how powerful technology could be in helping your organisation.

Research carried out by the ICT Hub has found that whilst many organisations would like to benefit from new media technology, and maybe you are one of them, many are still struggling to plan, budget and fund their ICT, and manage the basics.

The ICT Hub's foresight report "Campaigning and consultation in the age of participatory media", for example found that the take up new technologies to support campaigning and consultation had not been widespread in the sector. Yet they also concluded



that these technologies would change the landscape of campaigning and consultation and that there would be winners and losers in this new technological age.

At the ICT Hub are working hard to address this issue, working hard to try and help voluntary and community organisations benefit from technology by providing a range of free and low cost services. I hope you will find these case studies as inspiring as I have and if you would like further ICT advice and guidance and access to hands on support then please visit the ICT Hub website, www.ictHub.org.uk or call on 0800 652 4737.



Nicola Thompson

Nicola Thompson
Head of the ICT Hub

CASE STUDY 01

Making It All Add Up - Online Fundraising with Sustrans

You can persuade a donor to download a form but you can't make them fill it in and send it to you. That was the experience of Sustrans, the UK's leading sustainable transport charity.

Sustrans vision is "a world in which people can choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment." Their work is important but something of a niche market for fundraising and they need to maximise their opportunities. Giving tends to be seasonal.

The online fundraising project has been a journey and developed over a few years. From paper based direct debit forms downloaded from the website, Sustrans moved to paperless direct debits (PDDs) with the support of CTT's (Charity Technology Trust) online direct debit system. Online quickly resulted in a sevenfold increase in funds compared to the previous system. From here, the next step was taking credit cards online.

Call to action

It is important to make sure the website (and email) calls people to action. "Donate Now" buttons are prevalent – on the front page, on specific project pages and linked to particular choices and interests. The intelligent use of 'donate now' and other opportunities to give has dramatically increased income. It's about offering every opportunity to give.

Sustrans also runs an online shop. Customers give their email address during a purchase but these addresses had previously been unused for fundraising purposes. A decision to compile emails from the online shop and the introduction of the DotMailer tool (which also allows the organisation to



import contact information from their main supporter database) allowed Sustrans to create an initially quite crude email newsletter. The results were unexpected but worthwhile – a significant increase in orders and also in donations. The benefit to the shop customer is that they get all the up to date offers without having to keep looking themselves, we make it easier for them.

In Sustrans' experience, with a new initiative such as this, it's sometimes a case of doing something and seeing what happens, test it! Whilst you need a plan and a vision of what you want to achieve, good things can happen by accident.

Creating an address book from all customers of the online shop enables Sustrans to email the latest offers, producing a good click through response and more sales. It also offers opportunities to support Sustrans through donations or direct debits. Initially they planned to email only customers who had shopped in the last month, but a late night and shortage of time resulted in them emailing all customers including those who had received the previous month's email. The response was again unexpected but excellent – a massive increase in orders and donations. The message is keep sending the emails but allow for opt-outs.

A picture's worth...

Sustrans have experimented with message placement – a picture focuses the mind and can make a big difference to how much revenue an email can generate. So can how you position your key messages, and links, within a given email. The time and date of an email also have an impact – think about how much more generous you might be if you're just been paid. It takes trial and error to see what works but is well worth the investment. Learning from the experiences of other organisations and maximising the investments really does make the difference.



The next major aim is to increase donations when users are completing their purchases in the online shop. Offering to 'round up' shoppers' purchases with a donation could be one way to increase revenues.

In addition to increasing revenues, the systems such as DotMailer have meant other departments can improve communications with their own contact lists. Sustrans has a common email template, messages can be personalised and sent quickly and easily and there are excellent reporting facilities.

Concerns are limited but the project and systems do need to be 'owned' by a department or individual – there is a danger of too many people getting involved and it becoming uncoordinated. It's also important to ensure that Data Protection and ecommerce legislation is complied with and that recipients have an unsubscribe option.

Just Do It!

So should you try this? Jenny Sheriff, Fundraising Director at Sustrans says "Just Do It!" Make sure you use a broadcast email tool such as DotMailer (don't even dream of sending everyone emails from Outlook or similar) and put communication at the heart of it. It does take time but is well worth the investment.

For more information, please visit www.sustrans.org.uk



CASE STUDY 02

Mind Blogging

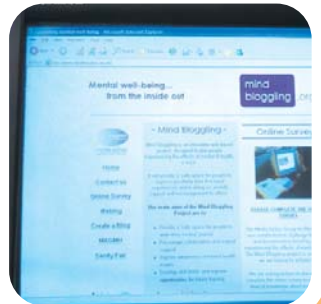
Mind Blogging (www.mindblogging.co.uk) is a new project, an online community of blogs, giving a voice to people with mental health issues. The anonymous nature of the project allows people to come forward without having to identify themselves. It provides a 'safe space' for people to positively express, first hand, their experiences and concerns and in so doing, provide support and encouragement to others. Bloggers can talk about what they want, when they want and this was never more obvious than during Christmas when the online community really proved its worth.

Mind Blogging is a project of The Media Action Group for Mental Health (MAGMH), a charity based in the West Midlands. The focus of MAGMH is to promote positive perceptions of mental health by collaborative working with the media and the general public. It has had considerable success in challenging the stigma and prejudice attached to the reporting of mental distress and mental health issues in general and in encouraging self supporting communication.

The main aims of the Mind Blogging Project are to:

- Improve awareness of mental health issues
- Provide a 'safe space' for people to write their online journal
- Encourage collaboration and mutual support
- Develop skill levels and improve opportunities for future training.

MAGMH first discussed the idea of a blog over two years ago as a way of raising awareness of mental



health issues. Giving those living with the affects of mental ill health a voice was seen as an ideal way to reduce misconceptions and to help to tackle the stigma that surrounds mental illness. It was also seen as an opportunity to build a supportive online community for people experiencing the effects of mental ill health.

In 2006 staff and volunteers attended an ICT Hub funded Media Trust 'New Media Made Easy' seminar. The session proved an excellent resource of information and an inspiration to make the blogging project succesful.

"We learned a lot from reading blogs, talking to 'expert' bloggers who were kind and generous with their time and information and reading books. Neither me or Natalie Brown (out-reach worker) had any significant training in web site design or graphic design, we developed the web site through trial and error."

– Emma Brown, Mind Bloggling

The project has made an enormous difference and the bloggers have found the site a huge source of support. It has enabled the organisation to find new volunteers, changed the lives of the bloggers involved and supported who knows how many other visitors to the website. The sense of community has really begun to develop and was particularly noticeable over Christmas.

A press release (proving the value of offline media in promoting online activity) generated huge interest and increased the number of visitors to the website from hundreds to thousands. Like most online media, mindbloggling is a continuous development with staff maintaining and checking the site every day. This isn't arduous - it's typically a few minutes – but does require commitment.

Emma was surprised that the site took off so quickly but attributes some of this to the more 'natural' status of blogging compared to a couple of years ago. Blogging is now fairly common and Mind Blogging was a clear call to action and a practical and easy way for people to get involved.

There haven't been any major issues although the organisation was clear about setting out 'house rules' for bloggers. There is no censorship but there are clearly understood rules and guidelines to cover potential defamation or offense. Monitoring these takes a few minutes a day of staff time and they are looking for volunteer support for this role.

Mindblogging fits into a wider picture at MAGMH – reducing the fear around computers and giving people confidence to use ICT to promote mental well-being. It's offered a great opportunity for those with mental health issues to share experiences and also get more involved with new technology.

As Emma says, "We would definitely recommend others to get involved in setting up an online community around blogs. It's made a huge difference to the people we work with, has helped create a self-supporting community and has helped raise awareness of our other work."

So go blog! You don't need to worry about the technicalities and it could make a huge difference.

For further information, please contact:

Emma Brown
Mind Blogging
Media Action Group for Mental Health,
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Hanley, Stoke-On-Trent, ST1 2AT

Web: www.mindblogging.org.uk
Email: mindblogging@mindblogging.org.uk

CASE STUDY 03

Accessibility – Blind in Business

Accessibility matters. Not only is it a legal requirement but why would you want to exclude up to two million visually impaired people in the UK from viewing and using your website?

Blind in Business is a small charity with five staff based in the City of London. They help young blind students develop the confidence to think about further education and perhaps university. Through the training service they help lead them to good careers and the employment service helps blind graduates towards good jobs.

The Training Service runs a series of training courses and workshops for blind students between the ages of 14-18. The students are helped to construct, implement and develop a personal career action plan and introduced to the latest specialist IT technology. The charity works with the students, their parents and teachers to overcome traditional stereotypes and low expectations. Blind in Business believe in technology and how it combats barriers to education and employment. Accessibility is important to help Blind in Business practise what they preach.

The organisation recognised their existing website wasn't accessible to all and wanted to redevelop it so it could be enjoyed and accessed by everyone, regardless of visual impairment. They were aware of press criticism of similar websites and also concerned about excluding their own clients.

Making it work

Identifying web developers who understood not only accessibility but also the nature of visual impairment was an important factor in selecting a supplier.

Clarifeye employ visually impaired web developers and programmers and had a good understanding of the charity's needs. The company were vital to keeping Blind in Business focused on the project.

Key to the website's development was user need - who are the visitors and what do they want? The website was designed with inclusion in mind as well as usability, brand and information. Clients were consulted during development and the various potential visitors mapped out – parents and carers, employers, technology providers, teachers, young people, volunteers and funders amongst others. The site also had to be simple.

The new website is a major change from the original couple of pages but it still maintains a simple 'look and feel' and simple structure. Content can be easily updated as necessary so there is no major overhead. Blind in Business only spent £1000 on their website and have had a huge 'bang for their buck'.

The difference it makes

The redevelopment of the website has had a significant impact. The site is now accessible to everybody and open to all, offering all visitors a trouble-free experience, regardless of any visual impairment or other disability. The number of visitors to the website has doubled and it has significantly increased the awareness of employers and teachers in the training courses the charity provides. The new site has proved an excellent recruitment and marketing tool and helped with fundraising and bringing in new volunteers. Over 50% of new work now comes through the website.

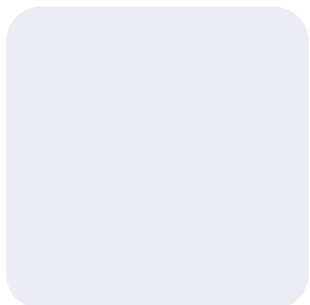
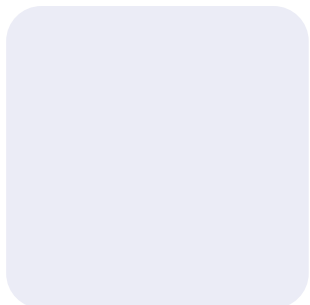
Blind in Business believe accessibility is important and that accessible websites are good for business. Dan Mitchell, Training Manager, says, "Make your website accessible now so people don't miss out.

Open your business to everyone.”

Key points

Clarifeye, the developers, were a key part of the success of the project along with the clients and users inputting into the development. Dan highlights four key things for any voluntary organisations thinking about redeveloping a website: get it up and running, get it done, make it look nice and make it accessible.

For more information, visit www.blindinbusiness.org.uk



CASE STUDY 04

How Interplast uses a blog

What does Interplast do?

Interplast is an international organisation providing free reconstructive surgery in developing countries, making a profound difference in the lives of 3,000 children each year who suffer physically or emotionally from a congenital deformity or injury.

Renowned for its high-quality medical care, Interplast works in partnership with volunteers and overseas medical colleagues to educate and empower local communities so that medical access continues year-round.

How does Interplast use a blog?

Interplast has a website which, in a well-ordered and structured way, explains who they are and what they do, and which uses fairly formal language.

Their blog at www.interplast.blogs.com, entitled So No Child Must Wait, is different. It is contributed to by the people who work for and are served by the charity, the tone is chatty, and the layout is less like a standard website and more like a personal journal.

A blog, short for web log, is an online journal that is updated frequently and is easy to maintain and read. The most recent entries are posted at the top, and older news is archived by month and year. A blog is updated over the Internet rather than using software on the computer desktop.

What difference has ICT made?

Interplast use a number of online tools but blogging has been the most valuable to them. Blogging has given Interplast a way to communicate with their community daily. Previously they were limited to newsletters, annual reports and email, all of which



cost much more time and money to produce and were only read by people they already had contact information for.

The media tend to be less interested in stories of international development that don't involve celebrities, war, corruption, AIDS or scandal. Blogging offers Interplast a more direct way to publish news and bypass the usual media outlets.

It's possible to use the blog to follow an individual's story and this can be very compelling. Interplast are a very visual organisation, and saying the words "reconstructive plastic surgery" or "burn reconstruction" doesn't have nearly as much impact as seeing pictures of children before and after their experiences with Interplast.

Blogging has given Interplast's supporters simple options for managing their information. A blog automatically generates RSS feeds so that readers can subscribe for free to news using their Internet browser, an aggregator service or even in their email inbox.

It's given volunteers and international medical partners more of an incentive to share their pictures and stories. They come from all over the world and volunteer in far-off places and their pictures and stories are the raw material with which Interplast creates its communications materials. People who blog for the organisation find their names high up in the Google rankings.

Each post in the blog has a link to a donation page. The blog hasn't increased the online donations much but it has been a useful tool in thanking donors and in soliciting potential donors.

What was learned?

Young people tend to be more comfortable in social networks and online environments, but charities tend



to be nervous and wary. Don't be afraid to try new things and make mistakes because blogging is a very cheap and forgiving medium.

Resist the urge to control the message. That's what your annual report is for. People don't look to blogs for a commercial, they want to see what things are really like.

The biggest barrier is convincing staff and donors that blogging is appropriate for the organisation. It's necessary to explain in simple terms that it's a website that encourages people to comment, is casual in tone and chronological – words that people can understand. Rather than talk about "blogging", the key is to speak in terms people understand and to demonstrate the possibilities by showing people the site and letting them treat it as a normal website.

There are a number of blogging tools available. Interplast began by using the free www.blogger.com service but have since chosen to use to pay a small monthly amount to use www.typepad.com instead. Typepad always answer promptly and are very knowledgeable and the system seems designed for non-techies. Organisations with slightly more technical abilities might want to use the www.wordpress.org system instead.

Want to find out more?

Seth Mazow

Communications and Technology Co-ordinator
Interplast

Email: seth@interplast.org
Website: www.interplast.org
Blog: www.interplast.blogs.com

CASE STUDY 05

How the Ectopic Pregnancy Trust uses online forums

What does the Ectopic Pregnancy Trust do?

One in 80 pregnancies is ectopic, meaning that the egg develops outside the fallopian tube and the pregnancy is lost, with future fertility often affected. There are at least 20,000 admissions into hospital every year and approximately five deaths per year.

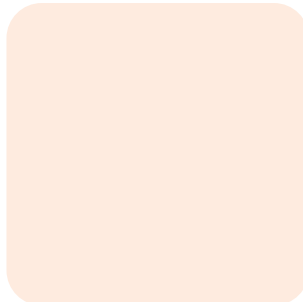
The Trust raises awareness of the condition amongst women of childbearing age, the medical profession and the general public. It provides a helpline and supports research into the underlying causes, to improve earlier diagnosis and make advances in the treatment and management of ectopic pregnancies.

How does the Ectopic Pregnancy Trust use ICT?

An incidence of one in 80 pregnancies means that although the condition is common, it is not so common that women are likely to know anyone else who has had it. The Trust uses simple technologies and the ubiquity of the Internet to put people with similar health and emotional needs in touch with one another, who otherwise would never meet.

The condition is potentially fatal, so the website provides quality information on symptoms, diagnosis and treatment, written and peer-reviewed by medical experts. Because the condition is often misdiagnosed, articles on diagnosis and treatment are provided for medical professionals. The Trust also uses the site to further its own research programme by publishing a questionnaire.

It was the introduction of forums into the website that changed how the Trust operates. Forums (also called messageboards or bulletin boards) enable conversations online. Someone might post a



message to say they are worried they might have an ectopic; others can respond with sympathy, understanding and information based on their own experiences. Separate forums exist for women at different stages of loss and recovery and there are passworded rooms where the moderators and volunteers can support one another.

What difference has ICT made?

The Trust now exists in many ways as an online rather than a physical organisation. Most new referrals are via the website, fundraising efforts are co-ordinated online and the forums have relieved the burden on the phone helpline. Visitors often find the website by typing their symptoms into Google. Many visitors are from overseas because the Trust is the only charity in the world for this medical condition.

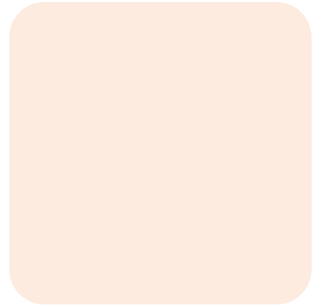
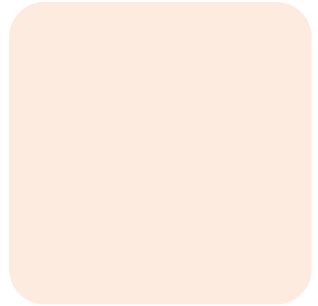
The forums have enabled the sharing of quality information and emotional support in an informal setting and with a degree of anonymity. There are on average 44,000 visits a month to the forums and over 1,300 registered users, with up to 40 people online at any one time. An average 200 messages are posted daily.

The board has saved lives. Forum users once sent message after message to a woman with symptoms to convince her to go to hospital immediately - she had an ectopic and without their advice could have died.

What was learned?

Simple, inexpensive and popular technologies are often better than expensive, custom-built applications. The first messageboard was custom-built by an IT volunteer. It was difficult to maintain so the Trust switched to the free and open source phpBB bulletin board: easy to install and use, with a large community of other users.

The original messageboard went live without being



properly tested and this compounded the problems with its design. The new phpBB forums underwent months of user-testing first, to iron out any problems.

Small charities can't monitor such busy forums using paid staff alone. Moderating duties are delegated to eight trusted volunteers, who look after visitors, reading and replying to messages and ensuring everyone is welcomed.

The website has been active for six years with no funding and a web designer voluntarily keeps the site going. It's impractical to rely on a volunteer to make changes to a large website so the Trust edit the site's content using Adobe Contribute software and a blogging tool is used to post news onto the site.

Although this example shows that a small national charity can use the Internet to build a successful community, it's not sustainable without secure funding, which is why the Trust has put together a plan for the website's development. The website has twice been nominated for an E-Commerce award and in 2007 was nominated for an eWellbeing award. This kind of recognition will be invaluable in approaching funders.

Want to find out more?

Jason King (website designer)
The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust,
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Uxbridge,
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Email: ept@ectopic.org
Web: www.ectopic.org

Registered Charity No. 1071811



CASE STUDY 06

Really Simple Syndication – VoResource

VoResource (www.volresource.org.uk) aims to provide practical resources for people involved in the voluntary sector, making use of communications technology such as a website and an email newsletter. Their dynamic news pages give the flexibility to allow voluntary organisations to add their own news. The latest 20 news items on **VoResource/VoluntaryNews** have been available as an RSS feed since 2003, using the Kerchunga program to generate static pages.

Since March 2006, news items have been processed using WordPress blogging, allowing organisations to add their own news, which is automatically produced as RSS feeds for the latest news. People taking the RSS feeds can limit their choices to a particular category, as well as accessing news more broadly.

Really Simple

RSS is now usually taken to stand for 'Really Simple Syndication', although 'Rich Site Summary' is an alternative. It's a web format that is easy to re-use, and has been adopted as a way of quickly updating subscribers. Users need to have some form of news reader software – this can be part of the web browser (as in Firefox), a stand-alone program or incorporated into the email facility. Depending on how this works, subscribing to an RSS feed can be just a click on a button on a web page. From then on the news reader will work in the background keeping the feed up-to-date. RSS can also be incorporated into other web sites as an automatically updating news feature.

RSS is a simple form of XML, a way of structuring web content so computers can in effect identify meaning and process accordingly. It is likely to

develop further, with more features (you can already embed links to podcasts, for instance).

VoResource chose these tools because they like to demonstrate the possibilities available. They believe that if they can collaborate with other providers, on limited resources, then so can others. They consider this to be a 'work in progress'; RSS is likely to develop further, with more features.

RSS has a number of advantages.

- With current technology, it is pretty much 'click and go'. Once set up, there is no extra work at the web management end and the subscriber updating systems puts relatively little load on the server (hosting computer).
- Users gain by not re-visiting sites to check for new items when there aren't any.
- They have control – they can delete any feed from their subscribed lists very easily.
- In some ways, organisations might see RSS as a very basic email newsletter which draws subscriber attention to the latest news.

However, you still have to get subscribers to sign up. How effective it is depends on how they've set up the software.

There are also a number of disadvantages:

- Different versions of RSS can cause confusion, although most feed readers cope with most formats.
- Partly because of differing standards, and no central overseeing body, there are varying ways of how to display an RSS feed link on web pages. This can cause confusion, and has probably led to relatively slow uptake outside web/techie enthusiasts.

Making RSS available via a feed subscription system such as Feedburner rather than direct from WordPress gives more statistics on use by

individuals but limits choice of formats.

The feed can contain either a summary or the whole of a news item (or other piece of content). To get people to visit your site, make sure the summary format is used, which should link back to the full item on the web site.

Podcasts also use RSS to let subscribers (or more often their MP3 player software) know that a new edition is available to download, so more and more people will be using RSS in some way or another.

Impact and benefits

Other websites (e.g. www.hcvys.info, www.onevoice.co.uk) have been able to pick up the RSS feed and display voluntary sector news. This widens the reach of VolResource and provides a useful service without adding greatly to the load on the VolResource web server.

The original desire to develop RSS grew out of wanting to be able to distribute news items easily and quickly around other organisations providing information for the voluntary sector, preferably in a two-way process. The main difficulty to start with was finding adequate documentation of a widely-used RSS standard – the actual formatting using the existing news content management tool (Kerchunga) was easy. With WordPress and other tools available this is no longer really an issue.

Why you should do it

RSS is an important tool for any site which often has new or updated content added and will bring readers back to your site time and again. It is also possible to use RSS integration tools to add news from other sources to your site, making it more dynamic and fresh.

More information:

www.volresource.org.uk

CASE STUDY 07

Sharing the Web – Mouse, Camera, Action

Websites represent fantastic tools for collaborative working and sharing ideas and experiences. At their best, they involve all ages, support creativity and opportunity and go beyond what's feasible in the offline world.

First Light Movies are the leading organisation working with children and film. They distribute National Lottery money to support filmmakers aged between 5 and 18 years old and promote media literacy through a number of activities including Film Street (www.filmstreet.co.uk) and a new website featuring the 'Lightbox'.

The original First Light Movies website was static and uninspiring. The organisation knew things needed to change and were looking for a site which put young people at the centre and would be young, fresh and up to date with new technology.

Key to the website experience was to involve the users – the young people and organisations that facilitate the filmmaking process. The outcome of this was the decision to build a community rather than use the website purely for marketing and information. First Light Movies created a brief around these aims and started working with 3form.net

3form believe that thinking always comes from the users point of view. In this case, does the website meet the needs of young people and their activities?

The website needed to engage and to become two-way (between young filmmaker and organisation) communication. This first prompted the idea of the



Lightbox to support the process of making a film. Based on the concept of collaborative web-based applications (such as 37signals.com), the Lightbox is an interactive zone where young people can blog their thoughts on the process of filmmaking, share ideas, upload their storyboards and scripts, and update the site with films still in development. Finished films can then be screened from within the main website. Lightbox also enables First Light Movies to be more involved in the process and to share in the development experience.

The key aims were to build a community feel, create a wider network and inspire others through film. 3form adopted a dual development model in building the website. The main website, although simple and straightforward, needed a specific plan to bring together detailed content and structure. The more interactive elements were based on a rapid development process – do quickly, test and adjust. This worked well with Lightbox and the young people appreciated the opportunity to contribute and get involved in the process.

The prototype Lightbox will be piloted with young people making a First Light Movies film in early Spring 2007. It will help First Light Movies strengthen their brand with young people and make the task of documenting their projects much more fun.

The difference it makes

The project has had significant impacts already. First Light Movies were expanding rapidly and the new website has supported that process and made people's jobs easier. It has provided a way of engaging more effectively with the young people and getting involved in developments. Films can be published easily on the new website and changed frequently offering wider exposure to greater numbers of young filmmakers. The website is also



helping to build a history of film developments and communicating that to the wider world.

There have been a number of lessons learned in the development. The project took a long time and a lot of commitment and First Light Movies acknowledged they underestimated the size of the project when they took it on. However, it was well worth the effort and the involvement of the young people was critical to its success.

First Light Movies are also involved in a separate site www.filmstreet.co.uk which is aimed at engaging primary aged children with film. The site is full of interactive activities that teach children different film techniques and introduce the language of film. There are also downloadable lesson plans for teachers mapped to the curriculum and exercises for children to do away from the computer.

Find out more at www.firstlightmovies.com



CASE STUDY 08

Save the Children and Second Life

What does Save the Children do?

Save the Children is a charity that fights for children in the UK and around the world who suffer from poverty, disease, injustice and violence, working with them to find lifelong answers to the problems they face.

What is Second Life?

Second Life is a 3D online world accessed by software installed on a computer. It's not a game but it looks like one and the virtual world's content is created by its users, who design all its buildings, objects and invent strange and wonderful avatars to represent themselves in this world. More than two million accounts have been registered, and there are estimated to be more than 100,000 active users. Second Life is one of many virtual worlds with its own in-game currency; businesses have recognised its popularity and booming virtual economy for some time, and now charities are targeting it too.

What difference did using Second Life make?

In the real world, Save the Children ran a gift programme for the public to buy yaks for Tibetan families. It was so popular they ran out of yaks so they decided to use Second Life to raise more money. Participants in Second Life can travel to its Yak Shack and pay 1,000 Linden dollars to own a virtual yak. They can milk, ride and even knit a woolly jumper from their virtual yak. Purchasers are encouraged to customise their yak using Second Life's object-creating tools.

The Yak Shack was created by Ogilvy Advertising. They worked closely with Second Life's community of users and took advice from Linden Labs, the

makers of Second Life.

The Linden dollars with which yaks were purchased were exchanged for approximately US\$3.50 in real money, so whilst being fun and raising awareness of the charity, this is a very practical way people can support their work. The event was heavily publicised both in the traditional and online media, the novelty itself helping to boost the charity's profile.

What was learnt?

There are many people for whom their virtual life is as important in many ways as their ordinary life. These people are likely to express their social concerns in different ways online and Save the Children tapped into this, offering fun and a serious message.

Because Second Life is built on a strong sense of community and shared values, it's an ideal environment within which a charity can raise awareness.

The software provides tools with which objects bought online can be built and modified - there is added value to buying virtual objects. Save the Children capitalised on this by holding a competition to find who could show the most imagination in customising their yak: the winner was the designer of a two-headed yak who was reported as saying "I can say without hesitation it's the most fun I've ever had with a yak - a terrific event".

Save the Children is following the lead of US charities that have recently begun to take advantage of Second Life, like the sponsored virtual walk which raised \$40,000 for the American Cancer Society.

Want to find out more?

Save the Children - www.savethechildren.org.uk.
Second Life website - www.secondlife.com.

CASE STUDY 09

Online Trading and the Woodland Trust

The amount of money spent on the web increases year on year and charities are starting to see their online trading activities grow rapidly, taking a healthy share of the overall online market.

The Woodland Trust is the leading woodland conservation charity in the UK. Its key aims are to protect and conserve native woodland. Only 2% of the UK is ancient native woodland, the lowest in Europe, and the trust has a number of projects and campaigns to improve this from Dedicate a Tree to purchasing your very own British native tree.

Fundraising is key to any charity and in addition to donations from supporters, the Woodland Trust has a thriving online trading project.

The organisation developed online trading organically. Starting from a simple website and paper catalogue, through the development of a simple online shop to the more complicated online trading arrangements now in place.

The trust has a number of different shops and these are often tied to particular projects. The shops have distinct product ranges and appeal to different types of customer or supporter. Customers can buy trees, gifts, pictures and memberships or make dedications, donations or legacies. You can even create your own t-shirt.

Online trading works

Online trading has a number of advantages.

- It creates lots of traffic for the website, bringing the trust's work to the attention of more people.



- It generates lots of revenue - targets are increased year on year but are consistently met.
- It increases the diversity of customers and supporters – many customers might not have been interested in, or even aware of, the work of the Trust before they shopped online.

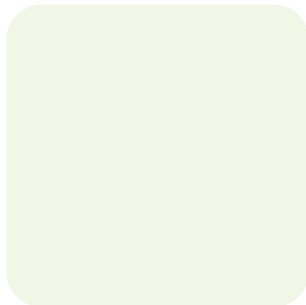
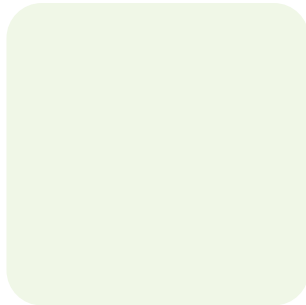
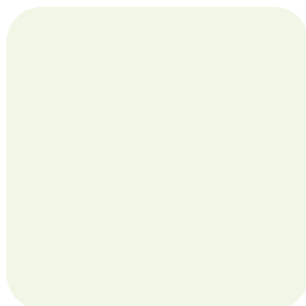
There are lessons to be learned. The range of shops means that customers can get segmented and don't always move from shop to shop or from shops to website – work is in progress on tackling this issue. Staff haven't necessarily found the move from a paper catalogue to e-commerce as smooth as they might have and support is still needed. Usability can always be improved and the trust is continuing to develop the website and systems behind it.

The trust acknowledge the need to establish a greater selling point and call to action to link purchases and campaigns. The focus on revenue is increasing and the benefits of the online shop being more commercially oriented feed back through increased revenues and funds for the organisation. Like any online project, there are always opportunities for development and improvement.

The difference it makes

Online trading has made a significant difference to the Woodland Trust:

- It has provided another route to market – attracting individuals who weren't traditional supporters
- The customers have increased the diversity of those using the website and ultimately the diversity of the supporter base
- The move from a paper catalogue means products can be introduced more quickly, enhancing the relationship with commercial partners who want to react quickly to market changes and new ideas.



CASE STUDY 10

Campaigning – I Count

The internet has huge potential to spread messages rapidly and effectively to large numbers of people. It can bring together communities, inspire individuals to action and through collaborative activity, make a difference in the physical world.

I Count is the public facing campaign of Stop Climate Chaos, the coalition of major non-governmental organisations committed to making a difference around climate change. I Count is now the main brand for the work of the organisation.

Coming together

Initiated by five founder member organisations, the coalition has grown to over 50 (at February 2007), including development, women's, student organisations and trade unions. The coalition launched in September 2005 and inspired by the success of the Trade Justice campaign, Jubilee 2000 and Make Poverty History - campaigns which genuinely engaged mass numbers of people – I Count was born.

I Count started from the concept that people knew climate change was happening but felt disempowered and didn't know what to do. The I Count movement is all about inspiring people, encouraging individuals to take action and bring collaborative pressure to bear on decision makers.

The I Count campaign featured a major event on November 4th 2006 – with 25,000 people gathering in Trafalgar Square (a three fold increase on any previous UK demonstration on climate change). The campaign and website had been launched earlier in September that year and backed up by newspaper ads and SMS campaigns.



Your step-by-step guide to
climate bliss

icount.org.uk is key to changing the tone around climate change – making it more dynamic and fresh, providing inspiration and making ‘turning things off standby’ exciting.

At any one time there are 3 main actions on the I Count website and these are changed monthly. They encompass actions that people can take in their personal lives and may be based on cultural or event themes (e.g. take holidays locally rather than abroad, buy local flowers for Valentines Day) as well as ‘political’ actions such as targeting decision makers (e.g. calling for a UK Climate Bill). Individuals can pledge online which actions they will take, and data is collected by the website. Action reminders are sent by email (and SMS) which stimulates more traffic back to the website. Personalisation is key – every visitor can have a ‘My Actions’ account which tracks and supports their activity.

The difference it makes

I Count dramatically increased the number of attendees at the November demonstration and has helped to build a movement around stopping climate chaos. Communications through email and SMS have been key to this. Through I Count, individuals feel part of something much bigger and empowered to make a difference.

There is no doubt it’s increased the diversity of supporters (and in some cases helped diversify the supporter base of member organisations). The site is still fairly new and I Count are about to review developments but the overall campaign has already attracted over 30,000 subscribers and this increases daily.

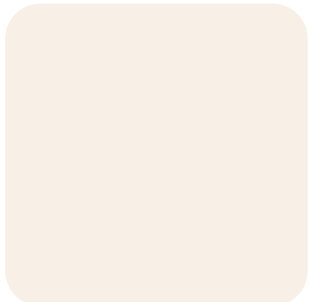
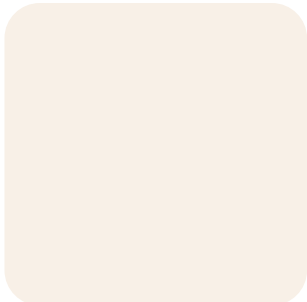
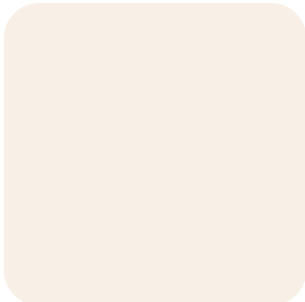
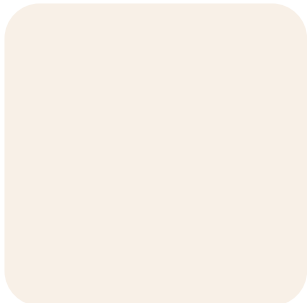
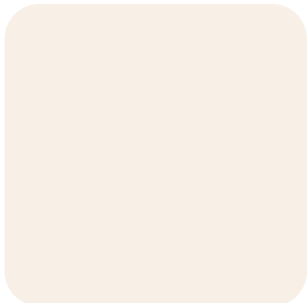
New developments planned include linking in with Google maps so supporters can identify other people interested in the issue and make local physical connections. The world wide web can be a

great tool to make local connections.

How do I make it happen for me?

Lucy Pearce has some words of wisdom for anyone wanted to replicate I Count. "Be bold, ambitious and adventurous but be clear on your aims, your focus and what you are trying to achieve."

For more information visit www.icount.org.uk



Be counted

For the first time in human history, we have the power to destroy our planet – and to save it.

Our politicians must act, but we can all make a difference through the choices we make.

If you care, count.



www.icountf.org.uk We can stop climate chaos

THE ICT HUB

– helping you make the most of new media

If you have been inspired by the case studies in this book, the ICT Hub offers a range of free and low cost resources to help you get started.

1. a series of conferences around the country sharing good practice on communicating using ICT
2. an online database of good practice briefings on topics such as how to develop a website, surfing with a purpose, and how to blog effectively.
3. a searchable online directory of more than 200 local multi media web and design trainers, consultants and agencies

The ICT Hub also publishes research into the future trends and impacts of technology on the sector as well as providing lots of other advice and guidance on how to manage ICT effectively.

For further information about the ICT Hub please visit www.ict hub.org.uk or for free ICT advice call 0800 652 4737.

To receive the ICT Hub's newsletter sign up on the website or email ictresources@ict hub.org.uk

www.ict hub.org.uk

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessibility

Accessibility is a general term used to describe the degree to which a Website is usable by as many people as possible. Accessibility guidelines have been established to ensure that a Website can be accessed by people with disabilities and thus dictates that Web pages should be designed to be equally usable in the latest versions of major browsers, in a voice-reader for blind users, or by anyone else with a non-"standard" means of accessing the Web.

Blog

A blog, short for Web log, is an online journal that is updated frequently and is easy to maintain and read. Blogs often provide commentary or news on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news. Some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. Most blogs are primarily textual although some focus on photographs (photoblog), sketchblog, videos (vlog), or audio (podcasting), and are part of a wider network of social media. A blog is usually updated over the Internet rather than using software on the computer desktop.

E-Commerce

E-commerce (electronic commerce or EC) is the buying and selling of goods and services on the Internet, especially the World Wide Web. In practice, this term and a newer term, e-business, are often used interchangeably. For online retail selling, the term e-tailing is sometimes used.

Forum

Forums (also called messageboards or bulletin boards) enable conversations online and typically use the World Wide Web for holding discussions and posting opinions and advice as well as user generated content. A sense of virtual community often develops around forums that have regular users and there are forums for a vast range of topics.

Podcast

A podcast is a media file that is distributed over the Internet often using RSS feeds, for playback on portable media players and personal computers. Like 'radio', 'podcast' can mean both the content and the method of delivery. The latter may also be termed podcasting. The host or author of a podcast is often

called a podcaster. The term 'podcast' is a combination of the name of Apple's portable music player, the iPod, and broadcast; Although some podcasting Websites may offer users the opportunity to manually download a podcast to use on their PC or Mp3 player podcasts can also be downloaded automatically, using software capable of reading feed formats such as an RSS reader.

RSS

RSS is now usually taken to stand for 'Really Simple Syndication', although 'Rich Site Summary' is an alternative. As the name suggests RSS is a simplified method of accessing the vast amount of information that now exists on the World Wide Web. Instead of the user browsing Websites for information of interest, the information is sent directly to the user. There are two halves to the RSS system that allows this to happen. The first is that the user needs to have an 'RSS reader' (sometimes called an aggregator). This is a program which collects XML based news feeds from Websites that are RSS-compatible and turns them into text and links that a user can browse at his or her leisure and allows users to scan the latest information from a range of sources without having to visit the Websites from which the feed originates. The second half of the RSS system is that RSS enabled Websites set up a feed designed to work with the news reader. Most big news Websites now have such systems - and the links are highlighted with the standardised orange 'RSS' logo boxes.

Second Life

Second Life is an internet based 3-D virtual world entirely built and owned by its residents. Since opening to the public in 2003, it has grown extremely quickly and today is inhabited by over 4 and a half million users from around the globe. Developed by a company called Linden Lab, a downloadable program enables its users, called 'Residents', to interact with each other through motional avatars – which are representations of themselves. Residents can explore, meet other Residents, socialise, participate in individual and group activities, create and trade items (virtual property) and services from one another.

Second Life's virtual currency is the Linden Dollar (Linden, or L\$) and is exchangeable for US Dollars in a marketplace consisting of residents, Linden Lab and real life companies. While Second Life is sometimes referred to as a game, it does not have points, scores, winners or losers, levels, an end-strategy, or most of the other characteristics of games. Despite being one of many such virtual worlds Second Life's huge number of participants and own in-game currency have seen real world businesses beginning to recognise its popularity and booming virtual economy and this is why charities are targeting it, too.

SMS

Short Message Service (SMS) is a service available on most digital mobile phones, other mobile devices (e.g. a Pocket PC, or occasionally even desktop computers) and some fixed phones that permit the sending of short messages between mobile phones, other handheld devices and even landline telephones. The terms text messaging, texts, or even txts and its variants are more commonly used in North America, the UK, Spain and the Philippines, while most other countries prefer the term SMS. Text messages are also often used to interact with automated systems, such as ordering products and services for mobile phones, or participating in contests and can be utilised as a 'call to action'.

Usability

The ease with which a user can interpret and respond to information. This is particularly relevant to Websites where the ease that users experience in navigating an interface, locating information, and obtaining knowledge over the Internet can be a key to success in online publishing.

XML

Standing for Extensible Markup Language, XML is the code used for defining data elements on a Web page and in business-to-business documents. XML uses a similar tag structure as HTML (the common language used to create standard Web pages). However, whereas HTML simply defines how elements are displayed, XML defines what those elements actually contain. While HTML uses predefined tags, XML allows tags to be defined by the developer of the page. This feature of XML has seen it become an important part of e-commerce as virtually any tagged data items, such as 'product' and 'amount due', can be identified.

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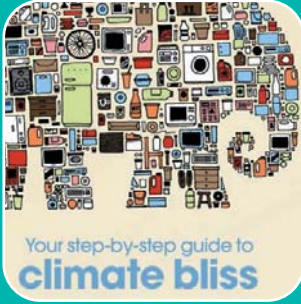
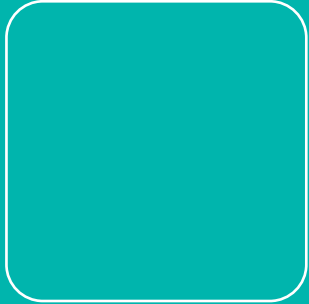
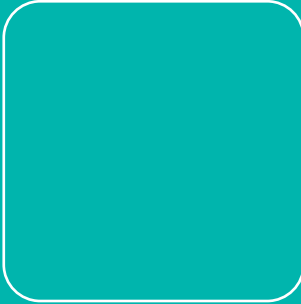
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