

Increasing Impact through Technology

Why are we having these events now?

At a time of real uncertainty for the voluntary sector, organisations need to review how they operate as efficiently as possible; how to reach people more effectively, how to deliver services at a lower cost and how to demonstrate impact to funders and the public.

Technology offers opportunities for voluntary organisations in all of these areas.

Who are these events for?

These events, supported by the City Bridge Trust, are for Chief Executives, trustees and people responsible for leading voluntary and community organisations.

The events will help you to develop a strategic overview of how technology can support your organisation.

Setting the scene

The voluntary and community sector is going to have a very difficult time over the next year. There are unprecedented cuts in public sector spending hitting organisations across the board, the way that charities are being contracted to deliver services is changing and all around people are embracing technology and using it to do new and amazing things.

- Cuts - £83bn reduction in public spending over the next four years
- The “Big Society”
 - Reformed public services
 - Devolved power and decision making
 - Increased transparency and accountability from government to citizens
 - A greater role for voluntary and community action
- Social technologies – www.3s4.org.uk/drivers/categories/technology

Any one of these things happening on its own would cause organisations to rethink how they deliver their services but all three at once means taking time to stop and consider their future is vital.

Understanding The Big Society – www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/thebigsociety

Coping with Cuts – www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/copingwithcuts



What are the specific issues organisations are facing?

These “Big Society” and technological drivers are manifesting themselves in some very practical issues being faced by organisations:



There are lots of issues here and technology isn't the only answer, below are other resources from NCVO that could help you:

Funding and money management: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/funding-finance/financial-management/financial-management

Keeping to mission: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/strategy-impact

Recruiting volunteers:
www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/recruitment/index.htm

Effective campaigning: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/campaigningeffectiveness

Skills and engagement of leaders: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/leadershipservices

Engaging with the private sector and individual philanthropists:
www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/funding-finance/income-sources/gift-economy

Supporting and managing change: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/strategy-impact/learn/change

Evidence: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/strategy-impact/need-support/can-we-help/resources#impact



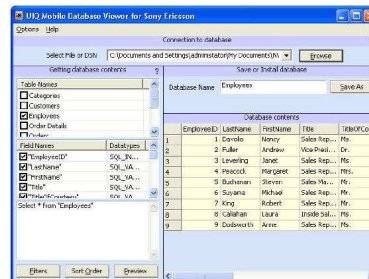
Summarising needs

All of these issues suggest some common technological themes.

Coordinating & managing information using databases

Useful for:

- Funding & money management
- Proving impact
- Data management
- Operational management



EmployeeID	Lastname	Firstname	Title	TitleOfCourtesy
1	Donolo	Money	Sales Rep.	Ms.
2	Feller	Andrew	Vp. Sales	Dr.
3	Levening	Janet	Sales Rep.	Ms.
4	Prezoch	Margaret	Sales Rep.	Mrs.
5	Burrows	Steven	Sales M.	Mr.
6	Soyana	Michael	Sales Rep.	Mr.
7	King	Robert	Sales Rep.	Mr.
8	Callahan	Laura	Inside Sales	Mrs.
9	Dubowicki	Anne	Sales Rep.	Ms.

Engaging & sharing using social media

Useful for:

- Recruiting volunteers
- Effective campaigning
- Engagement of leaders
- Internal & external communications
- Proving impact



Cloud computing

Useful for:

- Remote working
- Operational management
- Internal & external communications



Collaboration

Useful for:

- Collaborating to deliver services
- Remote working

Coordinating & managing information

Databases



Relationships

- Fundraising and donor management
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Customer relationship management
- Case management
- Membership



A lot of the challenges come down to how you can be more effective in managing information in your organisation, most frequently using some kind of database.

There are lots of different types of database depending on what you need it to do and it's important to understand what you need before you spend money.

- **Relationships** – manage your contacts and interactions
- **Fundraising and donor management** – knowing how you connect with donors and what types of contact successfully bring in donations
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – knowing what work you are delivering and the impact that it's having
- **Customer relationship management (CRM)** – managing your contacts with clients
- **Case management** – recording relationships with clients, the support they've had and from whom and any follow up contact needed
- **Membership** – managing your membership, contacts, interactions and subscriptions

Buying a database will be one of your biggest investments and it's important to get it right. It's not just an investment in terms of money but in terms of time, resources, morale and the potential impact on the organisation if it goes wrong.

As with all technology – but particularly a big project like a database – it's important that it's planned well. Spend time involving everyone that will use and benefit from it. Find out how people traditionally input information and what types of information your management need to get out at the other end.

Some key features of databases:

- They allow you to record your interactions with people and organisations
- You can analyse what types of interaction have an impact
- It allows you to connect the different functions within an organisation
- You can produce reports for management and funders



Making databases work for you:

- Spend some time reviewing how you keep and use information in your organisation. Involve staff at all levels across the organisation in this discussion.
- Think about who your relationships are with. Do you talk to individuals or organisations?
- What kind of information do you use in your organisation and therefore what do you need to record? Do you need contact details? Financial details? Events they attend? Services people have used? Case histories?
- What kind of information do you need to extract for management reporting? What is being asked of you by funders or trustees?
- Talk to everyone in the organisation about how they use data, particularly those that will be responsible for inputting it.
- Make it simple – no one will use an over-complicated system.

More information on databases:

- Databases - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict/managing-ict/databases
- Databases (continued) - [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict/managing-ict/databases-\(continued\)](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict/managing-ict/databases-(continued))
- Choosing database suppliers - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict/managing-ict/database-suppliers
- Buying a database - www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/buyingadatabase

People to talk to:

- NCVO directory of approved consultants - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/products-services/consultant-directory?tid=65&field_description_discount_value_many_to_one=All&keys=
- Suppliers Directory: databases - www.suppliersdirectory.org.uk/list.html?act=software&index=3

Products:

- NCVO brokered deals - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/software
- Charity Technology Trust - www.ctxchange.org

A large, stylized orange cloud with a drop shadow, containing the text "Cloud computing".

“Cloud computing”



Cloud computing is a change to the way we think about computing. The traditional office setup is that each person has a PC under their desk, possibly hosting individual copies of software and possibly to run as a standalone machine.

If you're a networked organisation you might have a server that hosts all of your files and runs all of your software. Your PC is just a box that connects to something else.

Cloud computing takes this to a new level, all it requires of the box now is that it can connect to the internet. Your files and processes are on the web so there are no issues of software licenses or minimum PC requirements. The other benefit of cloud computing tools is that because they're online they can be accessed anywhere, making remote working or collaborating across locations a lot easier.

There are many free cloud computing tools out there, such as those from Google, but a more professional – and backed up and supported – service can be paid for, usually per user, per month. This makes cloud computing a lot easier to budget for.

Some key features of cloud computing:

- Tools (such as word processing, files, email, database) are based on the internet
- Your information is accessible from anywhere with an internet connection
- All upgrades, licenses and issues are dealt with by the provider
- Paid for services are supported and backed up, there are also free versions
- Per person/per month costs rather than upfront cost – can be easier to budget for
- Can work on any machine with an internet connection

Making cloud computing work for you:

- Cloud computing may not be the right solution for you but it should be one of the options you consider
- It can work better for organisations with home workers and/or multiple offices



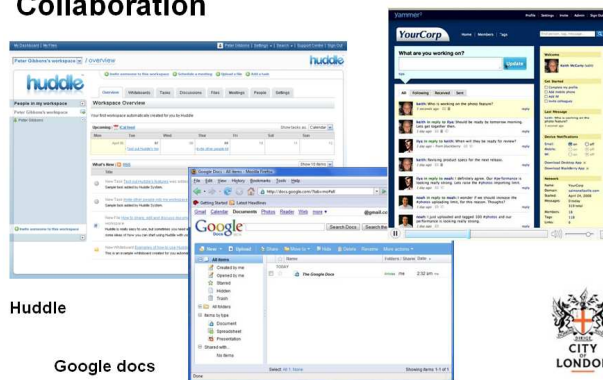
- Do an organisational review of how you currently use technology and whether it is meeting your needs. Is your technology going to meet your future needs?
- Talk to someone independent to compare options, an IT volunteer might be able to help

More information on cloud computing:

- Interview, cloud computing for charities - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/networking-discussions/blogs/18088/10/11/23/interview-stony-grunow-cloud-computing-charities
- Cloud computing 101 - www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/cloudcomputing101
- Third sector and the cloud - www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/thirdsectorandthecloud

Collaboration

Yammer



Collaboration is increasingly important for the future of voluntary organisations, not just the formal end of merger and joint service delivery but also informal networks and project partnerships. Collaboration can also be working across offices, across organisations and in different geographical locations.

There are many free and low cost tools out there that can help you, such as Huddle (www.huddle.com), Google docs (<http://docs.google.com>) and Yammer (www.yammer.com).

If you are going down the formal collaboration route you need to make sure that your systems talk to each other, and merger might mean you need to develop a system that works for you both. This can be a complicated process and it's best to get a specialist in to help work through your requirements. It can be a costly exercise but doing it right will be worth more.

Some key features of collaborative tools:

- Allow people to connect within organisations and outside
- Can also work jointly on creating documents
- Mostly based on the internet so can be accessed from anywhere
- Private to only the people you want to include

Making collaboration work for you:

- Decide what it is you need to do collaboratively first; don't lead with the tool
- Write a list of what you need from your technology and then compare what is out there
- When large scale collaborations occur – such as merger – technology should be one of the last steps



More information on collaborative tools:

- Huddle for NCVO members - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/ncvo-huddle
- ICT tools to support collaborative working - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict/publications/tools-to-support-collaborative-working
- Remote working - www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/virtualoffice
- Tools to make more effective use of ICT- www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict/publications/collaborating-to-support-ict-needs/introduction

Engaging & sharing



Proving your impact, engaging with potential donors, campaigning and giving a voice to your beneficiaries can all be achieved with social media.

Social media (or new media, web 2.0) is a move away from a traditional broadcast-based internet, one where the user was expected to visit their favourite web pages every day to see whether there was anything new, to one where content is tailored around the user and sent directly to them at a time and in a way that suits them.

Social media tools – Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, blogs etc – are excellent for sharing stories, raising awareness of your work, connecting with people, recruiting new supporters and lots more.

The only cost involved with social media is staff time, but there does need to be an investment in this if it's going to be given enough time to succeed.

Some key features of social media tools:

- Allows you to connect directly with supporters and service users
- Allows you to engage in a dialogue about your issue
- Makes use of the expertise of others
- Raises awareness of your organisation
- Give opportunities for people to interact with you and your cause

Making social media work for you:

- Think first about what you're trying to do – connect with service users? Run a campaign? This will help you to decide what you need from your social media tools. Different demographics of people use different social media sites so it will also help you to focus on the most effective
- Get the right people involved – it's more valuable to build on the passion of social media enthusiasts than to force it onto someone with an existing communications role



- Don't expect an immediate return on investment, effective social media takes time
- Engage in the conversation – if you've taken the time to take part then don't waste the opportunity to talk to others
- To show how social media can be of benefit, start by using it help you do your job
 - Get information sent to you automatically
 - Connect with people in your field
 - Reach out to the people with influence

More information on social media:

- ICT tools to support collaborative working - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict/publications/tools-to-support-collaborative-working
- Social media planning guide - www.ictchampions.org.uk/wp-content/plugins/download-monitor/download.php?id=15
- Social media guidelines - www.ictchampions.org.uk/wp-content/plugins/download-monitor/download.php?id=11
- Social media websites and tools - www.ictchampions.org.uk/wp-content/Quick-List-of-Social-Media-types.doc
- Web 2.0 for the voluntary sector - www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/web2forvoluntarysector
- The importance of “listening” on the web - <http://bit.ly/iduXmb>

Introductory video guides: (demo copies only so you may get a watermark on the screen)

- RSS - www.commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english
- Social media - www.commoncraft.com/socialmedia
- Twitter - www.commoncraft.com/twitter
- Twitter search - www.commoncraft.com/twitter-search

Further information

NCVO publications



“A Guide to Managing ICT in the Voluntary and Community Sector”

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/managing_ict_guide.pdf

“How to Cost and Fund ICT”

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/How-To-CostFund-ICT_web.pdf

“From Nightmare to Nirvana: an ICT survival guide for trustees”

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Nightmare_to_Nirvana.pdf

Information

NCVO website - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/ict

ICT Knowledgebase - www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk

Products

NCVO products and services - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/products-services

CTX scheme - www.ctxchange.org

People

NCVO directory of approved consultants - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/products-services/consultant-directory

Suppliers Directory - www.suppliersdirectory.org.uk

Access Professional IT Support

Find volunteer IT Professionals through i4Communities

How i4Communities can help

We introduce volunteer IT professionals to charitable organisations needing IT help.

We break down the 'techie' barrier by discussing your needs with you in plain English and supporting you and your volunteer from introduction to 'job done'.

Many voluntary and community sector organisations have problems with IT. With help from our volunteers and ongoing support from i4C you can get on top of everything from simple stuff like backups and buying PCs to advanced technologies.

Register for just £85 for a year of i4C support and as many volunteer requests as you need!

Our volunteers can help with

- IT Strategy
- Servers & Networks
- IT Buying Advice
- Database Development
- Websites
- Telephone Systems
- Training

...and more!

For more information, please visit www.it4communities.org.uk or phone 020 7796 2144

About i4Communities

i4Communities was set up in 2002 and has delivered £3.5 million worth of IT services to charities and voluntary & community groups. Our 5,500+ registered volunteers are experienced IT professionals. They have at least one year's IT experience with relevant IT qualifications or three years professional IT experience.

i4Communities

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Building Bridges to ICT Excellence – free ICT funding advice for qualifying London voluntary organisations

Lasa is working with The City Bridge Trust, Cripplegate and Wates Foundation over the next year to provide support to voluntary and community groups based in London on all aspects of ICT, elements of funding bids to the Trust and others. The project is also supported by the Wates Foundation.

Lasa can help:

- increase the efficiency of current ICT equipment, saving time, money and resources;
- plan and assess major new systems that will improve the delivery of services;
- budget for and assess quotes and purchasing options;
- establish sound arrangements for ICT support;
- gain a greater understanding of ICT strategy, management and best practice and making ICT accessible to all.

Lasa's Building Bridges to ICT Excellence Project Consultant Ian Goodman said "We're delighted to be able to offer this service to London's voluntary sector. By providing advice on proposed ICT developments and current issues we can pass on the skills and knowledge organisations need to manage their ICT and build capacity. We can help by talking through issues and signposting to online resources."

This advice service is available to organisations who considering or are in the process of applying for funding to The City Bridge Trust or Wates Foundation or, by referral from the funders, already in receipt of a grant. Referred organisations can take advantage of a more 'hands-on' Circuit Rider service including, where appropriate, an ICT healthcheck, technical consultation and follow up work.

All material for the Project has been funded by The City Bridge Trust, Cripplegate and Wates Foundation. However, this in no way means that applicants using this information to apply for funding from the Trust or Foundation are guaranteed success or to be funded for the full amount requested. Organisations are therefore encouraged to utilise the advice when applying to other funders, for example, statutory bodies.

To access the service or for more information see www.lasa.org.uk/circuitriders or contact Ian Goodman at Lasa on 020 7426 4473 email igoodman@lasa.org.uk



Cripplegate Foundation Helping since 1500

wates
foundation

