

Facebook

THINK BEFORE YOU ACT

Facebook is the most popular social networking site on the Web and a developing community that has something to offer the nonprofit realm. A Facebook presence can complement a campaign and be an important part of online strategy. However, it's not for everyone.

Before you get involved, consider these important criteria for success:

Your audience is on Facebook

There's no doubt about it. Facebook is no longer just for teenyboppers and co-eds. Facebook is picking up speed among older adults, but it may take time for them to truly embrace social networking. As of September 2008, the average Facebook user was 23 years old. Consider this as you weigh the benefits.

You can get people involved

A Facebook endeavor won't be successful if you don't offer easy opportunities for involvement with your cause. Facebook is all about the interaction. In order to foster involvement, you'll need to motivate and inspire people. Can you start a conversation? Can you connect people with your mission?

You have the resources

Maintaining a Facebook presence takes time, understanding and commitment. Does someone on your staff have the passion to see it through? Can you handle another item on your to-do list? Maintaining a Facebook presence will likely take 2-4 hours per week. If you can't swing that, don't take the risk.

You have something to say

What do you want to share with the world? Linking your message with factual supports and a direct call to action is imperative for finding success with Facebook. This is easier said than done.

Facebook connects people, offering a million possibilities to share stories and create experiences. Just don't forget that your organization must speak for itself with a unique and compelling voice.

Before you commit to any new media tech tool, make sure your organization has something to say and the resources to say it loudly and clearly.

