



Internet Marketing Tips for Non-Profit Organizations

A non profit organization by definition is ‘an organization formed for the purpose of serving a public cause other than simply accumulation of profits for the owners or investors.’ There are over 1.2 million such organizations that have registered with the IRS and it is anticipated that several others exists at various scales that have not registered themselves.

But, while it is clear that non profit organizations do not work for monetary gains only, it is also important to understand that these organizations do need funds to carry out their motives. They need to not only educate prospects about their cause but also require converting them into contributing to the organization. Needless to say this requires effective marketing. However since funds are to be used sparingly, it is crucial to adopt strategies that are cost effective too.

27 % of non profit organizations have web presence and this number is rapidly growing now as more and more realize the effectiveness of the strategy. The internet does offer these non profit organizations an opportunity to reach several prospects via a website, without having to invest hugely in the process. However, ignore the internet marketing SEO demon and it will most likely eat into the website rendering it completely futile. So as a non profit organization, it is imperative that that certain internet marketing SEO tips be kept in mind and worked with, in order to maximize the benefits of the website in question.

- 1) **Blog** – This is a golden word for almost anyone on a shoe string budget and yet wanting to increase traffic to a targeted website. Non profit organizations specially stand to gain by this tip since a blog can be personalized tremendously to carry across the message of the organization in question. Appealing to the prospects emotions is crucial to a non profit organization and this can be done aptly, not to mention free of cost, via a blog. The trick is to ensure that fresh and meaningful content is posted on the blog at least three times a week. The content must inform the reader of the latest happens and strategies of the organization in question, so as to raise the donors confidence in the organization. Personal stories of plight and hope along with strategies built for working towards the cause do well as a blog.
- 2) **Link Build ups** – There are several other website owners who will be happy to allow the non profit organization site to post link advertisements on their site since it does increase their goodwill too. Look for web owners who are willing to support your cause and instead of monetary aids are open to providing web space on their site. Similarly there are several other non profit organizations that work independently yet support another cause too. So an animal welfare organization is likely to support a ‘save the forest’ cause also. Locate other similar organizations that could support your cause too and offer them web space in exchange for add placement on their site. This serves a dual purpose of increasing traffic to the



- main website in question along with offering assistance to the other cause being supported. Both these strategies help build links. Link development helps better page ranks and this automatically leads to increased traffic to the site. Keep in mind that the crux of any internet marketing SEO strategy is to attract traffic to the site and link ads are a perfect method to achieve this end result. High page rank translates to increased visibility, which in turn could mean more donations and increased volunteers.
- 3) **Quality content**- Never make the fatal mistake of presenting the target with sub standard content. Internet marketing SEO strategies help in directing the prospect towards the site, however it is the content offered to the prospect that will aid in the final conversion. So, when developing content for the site ensure that details of the non profit organization are made available to the prospect. Not only should the site be easy to navigate through but the literature placed on the site should put forward the organizations goals in the best light possible. There are times when the temptation of achieving a high keyword density overwhelms the content, but it is essential that this hara-kiri be avoided at all costs. Gibberish content will not only repel the prospect but also affect the goodwill of the organization tremendously. The hard copy broacher literature can be transferred to the site to save cost of developing literature for the landing page of the site itself. However the other link pages must offer more content over and above the brochure too.
 - 4) **Content approach**- When a non profit organization develops a marketing strategy, it often makes the fatal mistake of assuming that the cause is important to the prospects. Instead of a 'this is what we do' and so 'send us money' approach, it is more feasible to state, 'this is what we have achieved', 'this is how our cause effects your lives', 'send us money', 'this is what we will do with your money' and finally 'this is how what we do with your money will positively effect your life'. When developing content for the blog or the website keep this approach in mind.
 - 5) **Site map** – Manually check the website and develop internal links so as to ensure that visitors do not loose their way here. Use keyword rich headers to attract the search engines as well as the visitors. Allow the visitor the option to convert at any time during the visit and for this add the appropriate tab at all the pages of the website. As a non profit organization, it is essential that the site you put up lists all the achievements of the organization and allows the prospects to check the authenticity of the organization. Pictures that appeal to the readers' emotions will also go a long way in making a conversion. So keep these tips in mind when developing the website for the non profit organization.
 - 6) **SERP** – The foundation of an internet marketing SEO strategy lies on the search engine results page. A website needs to maintain a high page rank in order to increase visibility. Most web surfers do not go beyond the first page and Yahoo and Google constitute for the major chunk of researches. Armed with this information, it is important that a non profit organization also realizes the persistent need for keyword optimized content. Researching the correct keywords and then developing content that will optimize the chances of featuring on the



- initial SERP is critical for the success of the site. While this process is a technical and tedious one, it is possible for the non profit organization to undertake it in-house also, with proper guidance.
- 7) **Google Grant** –This is a program specially designed by Google to help non profit organizations to promote their websites. Clicking on the link <http://www.google.com/grants/details.html> will help the organization go through the guidelines and eligibility criteria's on the Google grant. The grant helps save money on the advert and yet reap the benefit and increase flow to the website of the non profit organization. The organization has nothing to loose and yet stands to gain increased traffic. So all in all creating a win-win situation for the organization.
 - 8) **Free web hosting** – There is free web hosting being offered by a few providers for certain non profit organizations and locating these will help save a bundle on the hosting charges. A simple search can bring up these results. So before paying for the web hosting it will help to find out if the organization in question is eligible for free web hosting.

While most non profit organizations try and make their currency go as far as possible, it is mandatory to remember that a balance must be created between DIY and hiring. While some jobs can be undertaken in house, there are those that do require an expert and so demand hiring a professional. Though internet marketing SEO strategies are made out to be a cake walk, they do require an experienced and dedicated SEO firm. As a non profit organization or NGO, locating such a firm, which is also affordable, will go a long way in achieving the goals of the website. One of the most crucial aspects of an SEO strategy is its ever changing nature and therefore a firm, which is able to provide regular support to the site and manually check the effectiveness of the content created in a timely fashion, is necessary. An ethical SEO firm, which does not over charge, may actually be an essential and safe investment even for the non profit organization. There are professional SEO companies who are willing to work in collaboration with an in house staff too. So dividing the work to result in minimal cost with optimal gains is the trick to hiring a SEO firm for a non profit organization.