



Helping Organizations Reach their Development Goals

Who is online? How does this matter to your organization? Can you expand your online presence without breaking the bank?^{1,2}

With special reference to Westchester County, New York

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by
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According to a study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, about 74% of American men and women now have access to the internet at home or at work. Adults with less than high school education, or living in rural areas, fare less well. About 93% of college graduates reported using the internet. The extensive study provides details on who uses the internet and for what purpose, with breakdowns by gender, race, age, income and education levels and rural or urban residence. E-mail is the most-used application.³

What does this mean to a non-profit? The internet is another tool in reaching out to your audience – potential and current donors, potential and current clients, and the public at large. Many non-profits now have their own websites. Research indicates that these vary not only in quality but in how frequently information is updated. The best provide full information regularly updated, excellent contact data, and interactive tools. There are also a number of opportunities to post information beyond an organization's own website, but these are frequently overlooked.

If we are doing things right, there is a close link between our public relations and development offices, and a non-profit's online presence is a tool for both promotion and fundraising. When the development office is small, or has both functions, this is particularly easy. It can be sometimes time-consuming though, and you may want to hire a consultant at least to set up initial contacts and pages or to train staff.

In the Westchester County area, several community websites allow non-profits to post their information on-line, free of charge, and several provide e-mail updates on request when information changes. Usually this information can be initiated and maintained by a staff member or intern. Some sites include:

American Towns Network, which allows non-profits to establish and maintain a free web page of their own, and to post events, documents and other organizational information and to link it to the main pages of villages, towns and cities with which ATN

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² This article focuses on outreach through community websites. Follow-up articles will focus on e-zines and on interactive websites, e-philanthropy and new technologies.

³ For the latest U.S. data, see http://www.pewinternet.org/trends/User_Demo_2.15.08.htm

works. On a recent count, ATN provided web pages for 41 villages and cities in Westchester County, and another 23 for villages and cities in Fairfield County.

www.americantowns.com

Westchester Wire, which allows non-profits to post news articles and announcements. See also the **White Plains CITIZEReporter**. Go to www.westchesterwire.com and www.whiteplainscny.com. The **Scarsdale Network** provides links to home pages for Scarsdale-based organizations. <http://www.scarsdalenet.com/>

Westchester County Government provides a **Calendar of Events** that can be searched by type of event (culinary, education, arts, etc.). A link is provided to register and upload your events. www.westchestergov.com/calendar/calsearch.asp

Westchester Alliance for Telecommunications and Public Access, Inc. (WATPA), a service of the Westchester Public Library System, provides links to Westchester non-profits. www.watpa.org/

Hudson Valley Net provides links to organizations throughout the Hudson Valley, with listings free of charge, which are listed by County. <http://www.hvnet.com/index.htm>

And don't forget the **Association for Development Officers (ADO)** website to list your events under Member Events. Events appear under Programs and Services at <http://www.adoonline.org>. You can list directly by filling in the form.

What are e-zines, what is an interactive website, how do we make e-philanthropy and new technologies work for our organizations? These are topics for future articles. If you would like information sooner, contact Jeanne Betsock Stillman (Ginger) at jbs@stratdev.com

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