

### **3 Ways to Enhance Fund Raising Efforts with SEO & Social Media**

It only takes some simple math to come to the conclusion that the more exposure a fundraising project has, the sooner it will meet its goal. The internet has made it possible to streamline donations and connect to a global audience, but simply creating a website and waiting for the cash to roll in will get you nowhere.

In order to draw more people in, successful fundraisers employ specialized search engine optimization techniques to give their websites the boost in traffic that translates to more donations. The basic rules, such as using descriptive image tags and headers, emphasizing keywords and creating backlinks, still apply. However, websites that are nonprofit have several advantages, and these three simple tips should be utilized to improve search engine rankings.

#### **Use Social Media to Spread the Word**

Google is examining the trends on social networking sites more and more to establish its rankings. Gaining a foothold on websites like Facebook, Twitter and Google+ not only provides a wide audience for your site, but will also help your SEO. Commercial websites usually only attain minimal results through social networking, but people love to share a good cause and are more likely to pass on a fundraising link.

Facebook remains the best social network for SEO purposes, featuring plenty of room to explain your purpose and also being home to the most users. Individuals have to 'like' a page to subscribe to it, and this action is then shared with all of their friends. Because of this, even if someone does not choose to forward your page on their wall, you're still getting free publicity. This allows for a domino-like effect, where fans quickly multiply as more and more people see others liking and talking about the page.

Twitter has the same potential as Facebook to help your website explode in popularity. Twitter allows you to create an account and link to your site at the very top of the page. Post one or two tweets every day relating your progress or a quick fact about why your fundraiser is important to maintain interest. Send direct messages to or tweet at high-profile users that may be interested in plugging your site on their own feed.

Google+ is the smallest of the three major social networks, but it's growing so rapidly that having a presence there is advisable. Google+ users love unique content that sparks a discussion, so use your posts to highlight any opposition to your cause or the results of failed fundraising. Show them your plans and let users feel like they're invested in your project to get the most from Google+ members.

#### **Use Relevant Articles and Blog Posts to Expand Your Keywords**

Most people that land on a single-page website asking for money will click away out of habit. You may get some viewers who hand over their cash at the first page, but most will take some more work to win over. The internet is full of sales pitches and, no matter how pure of heart your fundraiser is, you won't be able to compete with the inherent skepticism most internet browsers have developed. To combat

this, flesh out your website into several pages and preferably a blog. Not only will this cause viewers to take a second look, but it will make Google take notice as well.

Part of the art of bringing in more traffic is to not rely on a single keyword, but also to not dilute those keywords by mixing them too much in one location. This is best accomplished by creating a new page for each topic. Use your home page as the initial pitch, outlining the problem, your proposal to fix it and a call to action. Then expand upon each of these. Perhaps include a page about the people behind your fundraiser, a page explaining the problem more in-depth and a page that covers the details of where donors' money will be going.

By doing this, you will not only boost your income but also have a wider presence on Google. Different keywords give you a better chance of bringing more people in, ensuring that potential donors aren't missed simply because they typed the wrong phrase into the search bar. Once you feel like you have enough static pages, a blog keeps your content fresh and makes sure that Google's bots come through often. Blog about your plans, progress and anything else relevant to the fundraiser. This also adds a human touch to your website that may convince more viewers to hit that 'Donate Now!' button.

### **Contact Related Blogs for Links and Exposure**

One of the most important aspects of SEO is building backlinks. When Google's algorithm is deciding rankings, it examines the number of links pointing to a website from other well-ranked sites. Plenty of links leads Google to think that the content of your site must be worth reading.

Many internet marketers have to resort to generating their own links, but as a project or nonprofit you are at an advantage. Many bloggers like to point out worthy causes in their areas of interest, so send some exploratory emails out to the top blogs in your field. Explain what you're doing and why, and then point them to your website and say that a brief mention on their blog would be very much appreciated. You may be surprised at how many bloggers will oblige with a link. As a result, you'll have that blog's readership's attention as well as scoring another point with Google.

Too many charities and start-ups fail for want of publicity. The many benefits of the internet have also led to its greatest disadvantage: the sheer volume of information competing for browsers. However, by playing Google's game, designing an attractive webpage layout and spreading the word along targeted routes, you'll be able to ensure that your site is the cream that rises to the top of search rankings. Search engine optimization for fundraising can seem daunting if you're new to it. Just remember that your content should flow naturally and be appealing to the human eye. Don't worry about cramming in as many keywords as possible or italicizing every other word. Produce good content and market yourself honestly, and Google will pick up on and reward you for it.

### **About the Author**

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