

THE GOODNESS ENGINE

Driving Greater Social Impact in the Digital World

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I. INTRODUCTION

We are now more connected than ever before. Power in numbers — especially online — has become our everyday reality. Rallying, organizing and motivating are no longer hurdles, but life-changing opportunities. Passions become movements. Movements make impacts. Impacts re-shape our world. In the spirit of connecting for good, Microsoft's Bing and Hotmail teams brought together luminaries within the tech industry to help DonorsChoose.org address its ongoing technology and marketing challenges. Deep Focus attended the event and distilled the best ideas, tactics and creative solutions into an in-depth analysis that can serve both nonprofit and for-profit companies with corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

DeepFocus would like to thank Bing, Hotmail, DonorsChoose.org and all of the industry leaders listed at the end of this e-book who donated their time and provided the insight and knowledge necessary to help millions connect for the greater good.

A black and white photograph of a man standing at the front of a conference room, gesturing with his hands while presenting to an audience. The room has a drop ceiling with fluorescent lights and a projector mounted on it. Several people are seated at long tables in the foreground, some with laptops open. A small speaker is visible on the wall behind the presenter.

Rallying, organizing
and motivating are
no longer hurdles,
but life-changing
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What is a Social Hackathon?

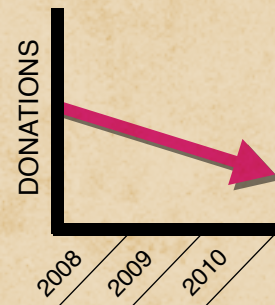
The Internet can be a nonprofit's biggest ally. Via the Web, a nonprofit can promote its causes, reach audiences and receive donations that allow it to survive and grow in the new economy. However, the high cost of marketing and/or technical services prevents many nonprofits from taking full advantage of what the Web has to offer. And like startups, a nonprofit has little margin for failure and has to make use of limited financial resources. Every dollar is precious.

Understanding this dilemma, Bing and Hotmail brought together giants from the interactive world for an altruistic brainstorm – a social hackathon – in San Francisco to provide creative technology and marketing strategies for DonorsChoose.org. Dedicated to funding classroom projects across America, DonorsChoose.org has raised over 75 million dollars and has helped more than 4.5 million students since it began in 2000. But the DonorsChoose.org team still faces challenges, which they were candid about in the interest of helping other nonprofits learn from their mistakes.

Since few organizations have the time, money or connections to engineer their own social hackathon, Deep Focus has produced this e-book of insights from the DonorsChoose.org event so other nonprofits may benefit from the marketing and technology insights within. Each chapter discusses a central theme from the day: driving Web traffic, converting visitors into donors, turning small donors into regular philanthropists and engaging the developer community for growth.

The challenges facing DonorsChoose.org

For a third year running, the average DonorsChoose.org donation has **dropped**.

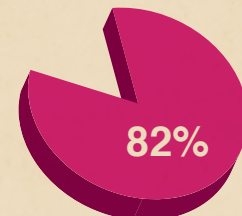


Current acquisition cost = **\$25**

Goal in order to become scalable = **\$15**



82% of DonorsChoose.org donors are from non-recurring events



The Social Hackers

The brainchildren contained in this book belong to the following brainparents, who selflessly donated their time and energy to thinking about DonorsChoose.org. Learn more about each in section IX. The Problem Solvers, page 47.

Andy Smith / **VonaVona**

Alan McGee / **DonorsChoose.org**

Angus Logan / **Hotmail**

Ben Parr / **Co-Editor / Mashable**

Bert Bates / **Author, Head First Book Series**

Beth Kantor / **Author, The Networked Nonprofit**

Betsy Aoki / **Bing**

Charles Best / **Founder & CEO / DonorsChoose.org**

Chelsea Howe / **Social Chocolate**

Chris Brogan / **501MissionPlace.Com**

Chris Messina / **Google**

David Recordon / **Facebook**

Duane Forrester / **SEO / Bing**

Hope Frank / **CMO / Webtrends**

Ian Schafer / **CEO / Deep Focus**

James Senior / **Windows Live**

Jonathan D. Colman / **SEO / REI**

Justin Kirstner / **Sr. Mgr. Product Marketing / Webtrends**

Kathy Sierra / **Creating Passionate Users**

Kristina Pifer / **Pifer Design**

Leah Buley / **Experience Designer / Adaptive Path**

Mark McBride / **Software Developer / Twitter**

Matt Harris / **Developer Advocate / Twitter**

Oliver Hurst-Hiller / **CTO / DonorsChoose.org**

Paul Ray / **Bing**

Rooley Eliezerov / **President / Gigya**

Sara Winge / **VP / O'Reilly Media**

Scott Porad / **CTO / Cheezburger Network**

Susan Etlinger / **Altimeter Group**

Want more good?

There's more to learn from the DonorsChoose.org Social Hackathon. Check out www.deepfocus.net/hackathon for resources including video interviews and graphical notes from the event.

II. DRIVING TRAFFIC

Driving traffic is difficult for any site and is particularly challenging for sites that solicit donations. The Internet has become a sea of good-doers, making it especially hard for nonprofits to stand out amongst the crowd. DonorsChoose.org is no exception, having struggled against the common issues of inconsistent and unqualified search results and lack of brand conversation among social networks.



The internet
has become a sea
of good-doers



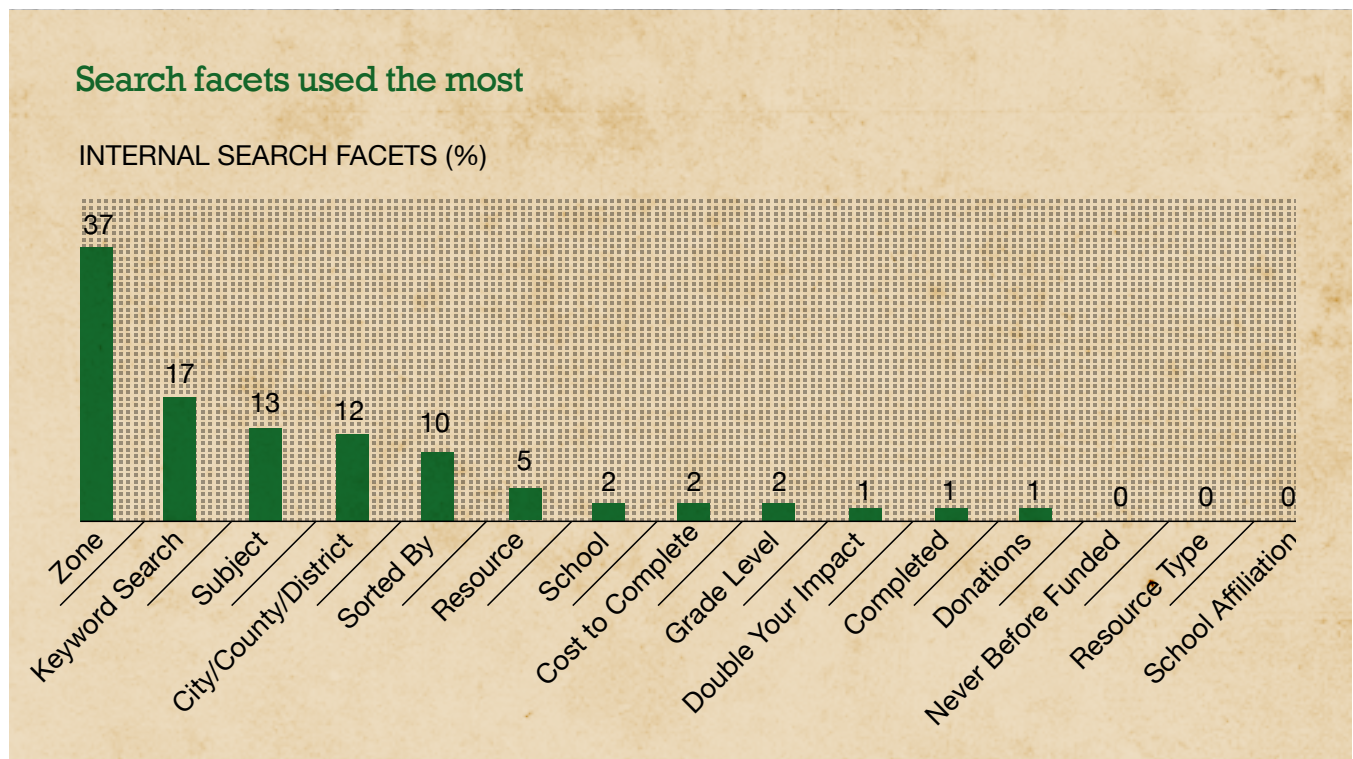
The Search Begins

Placing toward the top of search results requires strategy. It is important for a nonprofit to favorably narrow search results to find an audience. DonorsChoose.org had not invested significant time into the monitoring and optimization of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) or thinking much about Search Engine Marketing (SEM), which is necessary for search success.

The DonorsChoose.org team had only passively looked at search; with 20,000 individual projects, they asked themselves, was it worth it to monitor these from an SEO standpoint?

They were advised to dig more into trends around the way people searched for and actually decided to donate to certain projects. What kinds of searches kept leading people to DonorsChoose.org? What kinds of searches led to completed classroom projects on DonorsChoose.org?

The following tactics should be considered when developing a strategic approach to improving SEO, assuming you have already covered the basics — created a sitemap file that

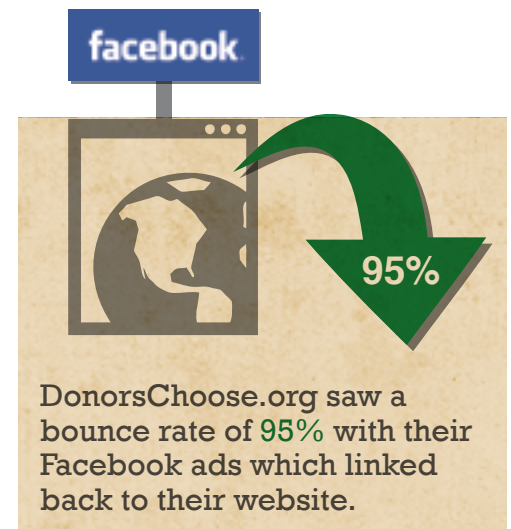


your search engines can crawl, registered your Web site URL with search engines so they can index your pages, signed up for the Webmaster tools provided by those search engines and have a working Web site launched.

- **Use targeted keyword phrases in search engine keyword ad buys** that correlate to the nonprofit's specific mission. Broad terms might be applicable but don't drive qualified leads. DonorsChoose.org has many classroom projects related to yoga, but the broad term "yoga" will not be as effective as the targeted keyword phrase, "yoga in the classroom."
- **Create lightweight pages with sectional, regional and topical content** related to the mission separate from the actual project pages themselves but that could then allow users to find related projects. The content will drive qualified leads through SEO and increase the site's relevance. DonorsChoose.org, for example, could develop topical pages about the importance of helping girls become interested in math and science since many of their projects pertain to this cause. This tactic will help drive qualified traffic and encourage sharing amongst social networks.
- **Become an expert in a specific field.** For example, DonorsChoose.org could present itself as an encyclopedia of local schools by creating school profile pages with smart, original content. These pages can attract new traffic to the site based on high visibility within a specific locale.
- **Acquire email addresses from new donors upon their arrival to the site.** Email marketing not only helps acquire new donor information, it also aids in social mapping to target new traffic generation.

Finding Friends You Never Knew You Had

DonorsChoose.org spent a year and a half working on social media outreach but struggled to find success. Facebook's micro-segmenting of its users motivated DonorsChoose.org to join Facebook Causes and begin advertising on the platform. However, its broadly targeted ads lacked the personal and social tone inherent to Facebook interactions and they drove traffic away from Facebook.com, which is where Facebook members expect to be interacting with brands and organizations. The tactics below comprise a more strategic and robust approach to leveraging the power of Facebook



- **DonorsChoose.org already had this, but it bears repeating:** create a fan page with enough content and updates that Facebook users will constantly be engaging with the brand. This serves as a base for all of your paid and unpaid outreach, and as a continued resource for people who look up your organization within Facebook.
- **Utilize Facebook's profile data to micro-target and geo-target an audience** predisposed to a specific cause. For example, if DonorsChoose.org is looking to push funding for classroom projects that involve yoga, it should target women who are both mothers and interested in yoga, instead of women who are interested in yoga alone.
- **Drive community participation.** For example, ask fans to share stories that relate to the nonprofit's mission. The stories will also appear as organic impressions in friends' news feeds.
- **Target Facebook ads towards friends of existing fans.** If they have already seen similar content displayed on their news feeds (as described in the example above) they will be predisposed to participate.
- **Implement an advanced "Like" button that allows users to comment on a project.** The comment will not only show up in the user's newsfeed, but so will the project's photo, description and, most importantly, a link from which the nonprofit can track and build in analytics.

III. CONVERSION

Converting visitors from passive content consumers to active participants and donors is a nonprofit's greatest challenge. In the case of DonorsChoose.org, conversion success relies on creating rich, engaging content that forges a personal connection with visitors. To date, DonorsChoose.org has focused too heavily on solicitation and has not capitalized on its ability to tell compelling stories. Once an emotional connection is made, donation requests will bring higher conversion rates.

A close-up photograph of a silver, cylindrical door handle mounted on a dark-stained wooden door. The handle is positioned horizontally and is attached to a circular silver base. To the left of the handle, a small metal latch or lock mechanism is visible on the door's edge. The background is slightly blurred, showing the texture of the wood and a hint of a dark interior space.

Converting visitors
to active participants
and donors is a
nonprofit's greatest
challenge.

Start with the magic. Not with the give.

Capturing the hearts and minds of users before asking for donations is a far more effective approach in driving conversion than leading with the ask.

- **Tell the story in a unique way.** For instance, DonorsChoose.org can leverage its teacher community to tell their own stories — stories no one else can tell. The “thank you package” that arrives on a donor’s doorstep after the donation is made was determined to be the most compelling reason to donate again. Bring a little of the “thank you package” magic forward in getting people to donate.

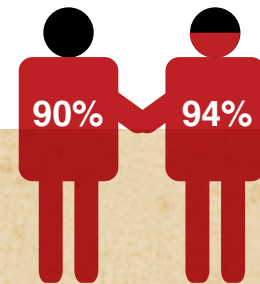


- **Lead with story; support with statistics.** Of course some donors will want to be assured that money is being accounted for and they are in fact providing a solution. DonorsChoose.org has this data, and they present it, but they weren't doing as well telling the story that accompanies the statistics. Other nonprofits may need to work to surface the supporting data.
- **Email marketing is alive and well.** It's a smaller ask to get someone's email than to open their wallet. Storytelling in the emails you send will continue to encourage conversion and you may also want to mobilize that email audience to do other things than donate (write in support of public funding of your kinds of programs, etc.).
- **Create urgency and show progress.** Thermometer or money icons that show how much has been donated and how much more is needed to reach the goal encourage conversion. DonorsChoose.org was also advised to help visitors “create their own urgency” by presenting projects targeted to that user if possible.

Make them the hero of the story

When a user engages with a story and makes an impact through donation, they are more likely to champion the cause through their own social networks. Creating a larger meaning for the user, enabling them with a voice and allowing them to share their philanthropic efforts with friends, will exponentially increase the measure of future conversions.

- **Create *Epic Meaning***, a way to make users feel like they are a part of something larger than themselves. Inspire the user to effect greater good in a way that they could not achieve alone. A word of caution: be sure the Epic Meaning does not distract from the nonprofit's mission, but builds excitement around the ultimate goal.
- **Create *Epic Win***. Give the user the same sense of accomplishment that hooks people on gaming. When a donor takes action, make them part of the win. Although games or gaming partnerships may not be right for every nonprofit site, game mechanics did work for Zynga in raising money for Haiti, so don't rule out the lessons of the gaming world entirely.
- **Encourage people to tell stories about their involvement** in your cause and the impact they were able to make through donation. Provide links for users to share their participatory content with friends. Facebook, Twitter and blogs are, of course, the most recommended choices for spreading the word.
- **Connect users with similar interests** and help them find new ways to champion your organization offline. Meetup.com is a great tool for bringing people together behind a cause without added expense.
- **Make it easy for volunteers and donation recipients to upload content to your site**. Create templates and forms that make it free and easy for people to spread the word about how they helped your organization.



DonorsChoose.org found that when a corporate partner funds 90% of a project there is a 94% completion rate.

Conversion: a UX perspective

A major factor in boosting conversion rates is search functionality within a nonprofit site. The DonorsChoose.org interface is geared toward directed searches; when users know what they are looking for, the search experience is positive. Exploratory browsing, however, is far less successful on DonorsChoose.org, which is particularly problematic for the organization. With over 20,000 active projects on the site at any one time, almost any general interest or keyword will return a long list of matches.

Streamlining the browsing process and providing suggestions based on profile data and tracking on DonorsChoose.org will enhance the user experience and increase conversion rates. It begins with the home page, but as pointed out in prior sections, a user may enter via search and start deeper within the site. Every page should indicate its place within the donation framework and allow the user to learn more.

- **Keep it simple.** The home page for DonorsChoose.org is currently burdened with two objectives: defining the organization and soliciting donations. Leaving donation solicitation to the project pages will relieve the burden on the home page and make for a cleaner, simpler engagement.
- **Personalize where possible.** Utilize profile data from social platforms such as Facebook or LinkedIn to pre-filter choices for the user when they arrive to the site. For example, DonorsChoose.org can use Facebook profile data to lead with projects pertaining to a user's interests and hometown.
- **Leverage collective intelligence decision making** to narrow choices for the user. In the back end technology of your site, create a setup that learns from what users want most when they drill down on certain topics as well as presents choices for them in a structured way. As an example of this kind of presentation, Hunch.com provides personalized recommendations on thousands of topics using social profile data and preference questions. As users rate results, the system learns and makes the results more relevant, and they are never confused about the choices because they are laid out so clearly.

- **Let people skip ahead**, or present alternate browsing mechanisms that cut quickly to an endpoint. Provide alternative routes with fewer decisions for those reluctant to engage in a long process. DonorsChoose.org does this well, offering users the ability to find projects pertaining to their specific interests as well as a quick option to support projects in need of urgent funding.

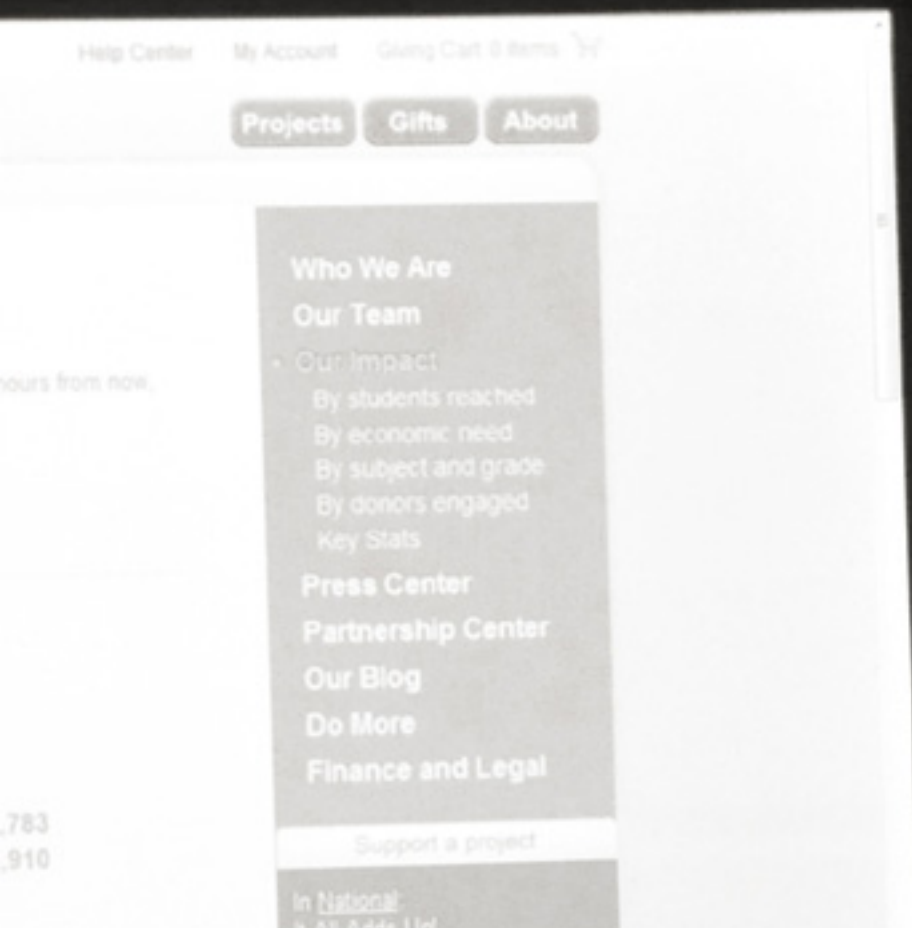
Stay limber while going out on a limb

Being nimble and adopting an always-in-beta approach to continually optimizing performance is critical to maximizing the objectives of nonprofit sites.

- **Adopt and deploy disparate tactics** and track what works. Shift resources to the best tactics to build scale.
- **Employ live testing, such as standard A/B testing**, in which a portion of traffic is directed to one version of a page (A) and the remainder to another version (B), and more sophisticated multivariate testing in which multiple variables are tested and tracked.
- **Create prototypes for ideas** that are more difficult to implement and utilize services like fivesecondtest.com to get rapid feedback on new design and message directions.
- **Text Testing.** Experimentation and testing should not be limited to visual elements; different text approaches to defining the nonprofit's mission or presenting projects should be tested as well. DonorsChoose.org was urged to look at its project pages, analyze the effectiveness of the teachers' writing and potentially create a template to simplify the work of describing each project.

IV. REPEAT ENGAGEMENT

They came, they donated, they left. Now, how do you get them back? Repeat engagement is vital in generating awareness and continual growth for a nonprofit. High return rates are the function of positive and satisfying user experiences.



Repeat engagement
is vital in generating
continual growth.

Make your home theirs

The more personalization and control users have over their experience within a nonprofit site, the more likely they are to make it a ritual destination. Keeping content relevant, fresh and customizable and updating users on the impact of their contributions will solidify personal investment and establish reasons for returning. Here are some tips:

- **Allow users to subscribe or “follow” content** (using RSS, a personalized widget, subscribing to a Twitter feed, or email) that interests them and make sure this feature is clearly visible on the page Too often users on DonorsChoose.org are unaware of the “follow” functionality, resulting in missed opportunities for driving return visits.
- **Create a sense of urgency.** If a time limit is placed on funding a project, people are incented to come back sooner check on the progress. Designing widgets that inspire urgency are covered later in the developer community section.
- **DonorsChoose.org has recently implemented the following tactics** to encourage repeat engagement, but have not yet gauged their efficiency.
- **Emails notify donors that photos of their completed project have been posted online.** The emails end with actual thank-you notes from the students and teachers, providing the donors with a feeling of pride and a reason to repeat the experience.
- **Emails sent to most active donors** highlight current projects in need of funding and feature heartwarming photos of the students.
- **Modest tracking of interests** and past projects of high and frequent donors allows DonorsChoose.org to give them a more filtered experience.

Approximately **30%** of DonorsChoose.org donors are just supporting a friend and have low loyalty to the brand.



My Dashboard

Additionally, the panel suggested the implementation of a ritual landing page for DonorsChoose.org called My Donors Dashboard. This page would feel like a destination for the user, displaying their profile and recent donation information and inspiring them to build on the page during future visits. Incorporating the page's URL within donor thank-you emails and letters was also suggested as a means of driving repeat traffic.

Fun for the long run


Most nonprofits deal with serious causes, such as eradicating disease, abuse and poverty. While these are all weighty issues, a nonprofit should not necessarily eschew elements of fun. Tasteful entertainment devices can help inspire the donors to prolong their engagement and encourage their friends to join in the fun.

- **Create partnerships with platforms** that encourage peer groups to assimilate and fund nonprofits, such as Facebook and Foursquare. These platforms create an opportunity for advocates to influence their friends via social and gaming components.
- **People may have more fun donating in the context of a community**, following, admiring, or creating groups of donors, like investment clubs, in which they can discuss where to put their money next.
- **Donors also may find it more fun if there's an "all about me" page** — a thank-you page from DonorsChoose.org that lists all the projects they've donated to, something that creates sharing or bragging rights.
- **Keep in mind that repeat donors have different triggers**; some want to feel serious and epic, while others want the process to be light and fun. Addressing all of them will help the nonprofit achieve greater odds in maintaining an attentive and active audience.



V. ENGAGING THE DEVELOPER COMMUNITY

Enticing developers with APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) can be an effective method of engendering partnerships and scaling development and reach. Well designed APIs have the potential to do everything from driving traffic to developing new features and business models. Surfacing data from your Web site can take the form of advertising donation drives, listing links to new campaigns or projects, or presenting an individual donor's stats like a scoreboard as a reward for high donation levels. That being said, providing interfaces to that kind of data is not a panacea. Without a clear strategic and tactical approach, the creation of APIs can quickly become a waste of precious time and technical resources.



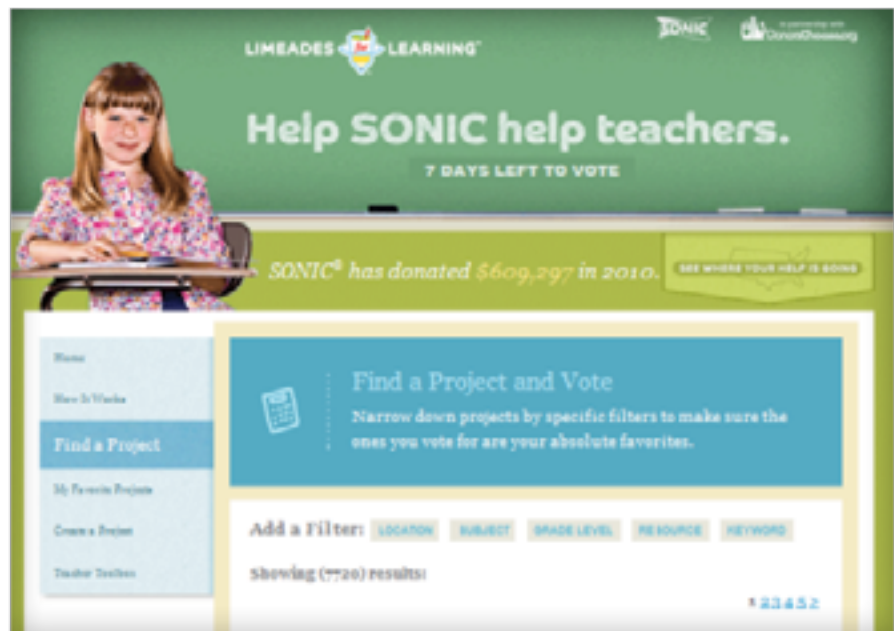
Well designed APIs
have the potential
to do everything
from driving traffic
to developing new
business models.

Maximizing your API

The dream of creating an API that garage developers will manipulate to help a business evolve is seductive. It also rarely works. DonorsChoose.org built an API four years ago, exposing a lot of rich data from their site and active donation projects, but did not find success with the garage developer market. Today, their API is almost exclusively used for corporate partnerships.

Developers using the DonorsChoose.org API are able to reach the site's database of over 20,000 projects in need of funding and they can input criteria to receive a list of projects that meet specified requirements, including subject, keyword and location. The API also allows users to buy gift cards and fund a project from a third-party site, but these new transactional features have yet to be implemented. The following are examples of how the API has been used.

Sonic Drive-In. Sonic rebuilt most of the search UX on their site and added voting capability, which isn't available on DonorsChoose.org.

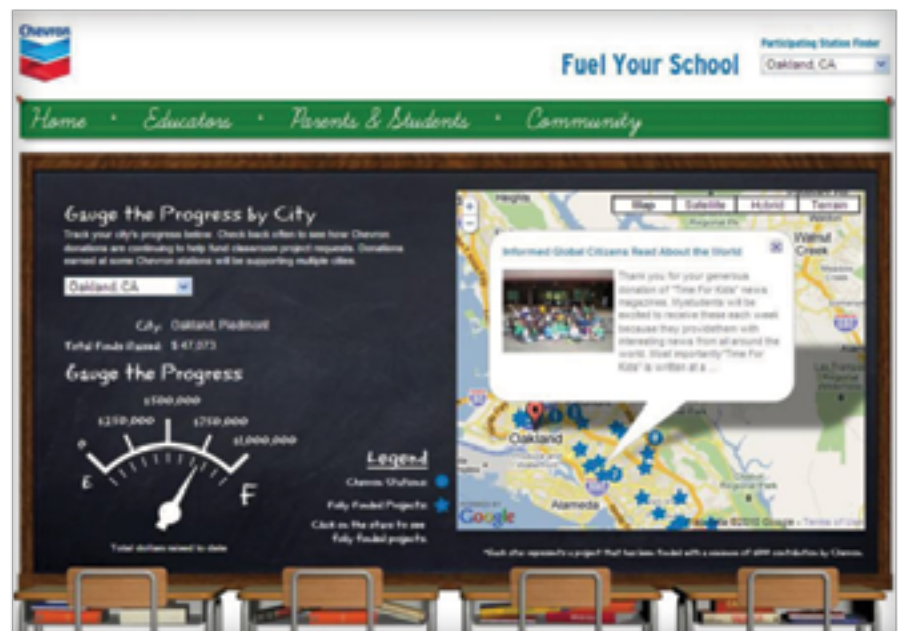


FEED USA and Gap.

FEED USA built a microsite that only featured projects around sustainable and healthy eating.



Chevron. Chevron implemented a project in the San Francisco Bay Area where users chose which projects to fund by pumping gas. Different gas stations funneled money to certain projects in the area.



Starbucks. Starbucks used the API to display local projects that needed funding when users logged on to wifi in-store.



These examples illustrate how the DonorsChoose.org API helps corporate partners heavily customize their cause marketing campaigns. A successful API would also tap into marketplace giving by finding ways to entice garage developers into it to reach a wider audience. The following recommendations will assist in developing a sound API strategy.

Create API appeal

Developers need an intrinsic motivation to get involved in an API. The more attractive the API, the better the adoption rate. When building an API, it is critical to treat it like a consumer-facing product and give careful consideration to the needs and desires of the target audience.

- **Tackle the problem of API usability like Google.** Break it into the four “1s.” Within 1 minute developers should recognize what the API can do; within 1 hour they should be able to download the SDK and get something working; within 1 day they should be able to complete their first app; and within 1 week they should be able to integrate the results of the API into an app they already built or are currently building.

IT SHOULD TAKE...



MINUTE to convince developers that it's worth their time.

HOUR to grab the SDK and hack up a functional sample app.

DAY to build a complete app that demonstrates what the API can do.

WEEK to hack the output of the API into an app they already built or are currently building.

Chris Messina. Google.

- **Save developers time and be intuitive.** Don't require the developer to maintain a large mapping of your app's constant values in their own app (e.g., the Subject ID for “Health & Wellness” is 27). Use standard formats and identifiers whenever possible (e.g., reference locations using established metrocodes instead of your app's internal constructs). Avoid confusing developers by having API endpoints misrepresent the data format (e.g., JSON requests have .html extensions when the format is obviously not HTML).

- **Simplify documentation and front-load code samples.** Developers need to taste success in order to keep moving to the next step. If they have to read through a lot of documentation before they can get some simple functionality working, they may disengage.
- **Make it pretty.** Facebook detects when its JSON is being viewed in-browser via the request's user-agent and then specially formats the JSON layout to make it easy for developers to eyeball and see what data is coming back. Then, under normal circumstances, the API responses are condensed for optimal performance. Another complementary option is to create an API explorer page that allows developers to interact with the site's UI and see the corresponding API requests and responses.
- **Offer copy-paste drop-in options to address the most common scenarios.** At developers.facebook.com, social plug-ins are offered first and can be integrated by a non-developer in minutes. Facebook also provides a customization tool that allows users to input their URL, size and color choice and receive code to copy and paste.
- **Know your verbs.** Make an inventory of the verbs and objects in your system and get a clear understanding of the how people interact with them. "Like" and "Tweet," for example, are the essence of Facebook and Twitter distilled into single verbs. Identify your verb and encourage its use through API implementation.

Marketing your API

Making developers look good makes a nonprofit look smart. When marketing directly to developers, target vibrant developer communities and market to their interests with a sponsored challenge (e.g., building an app) that incorporates the nonprofit's data. To increase awareness and excitement, consider convincing a donor, ideally within the tech field, to pony up some prize money.

Brands and agencies often leverage philanthropy in their consumer campaigns, which can considerably benefit a nonprofit with a solid API. People often exhibit brand loyalty because they associate the brand with giving back, so a nonprofit should help them rev up their good engine. Touting statistics of the organization's impact when marketing an API to brands and agencies can help seal the partnership.

Adapt to attract

If an API comes to be used in a different way than originally intended, it may make sense to shift efforts to supporting the new focus. The Cheezburger Network found that while striving for broad garage developer adoption, their API was primarily being used to develop mobile apps, so they evolved their API (found at developer.cheezburger.com) to further support mobile applications. If DonorsChoose.org tailored its API to help its corporate partners build cause marketing campaigns, the API might invite less innovation from the garage developers but achieve greater utility in its most common use cases. Each organization has to consider where it is placing its bets, and if they don't pan out, be flexible enough to adapt to what is working well and abandon what's not.

VI. CREATING COMMUNITIES AND EXCITEMENT THROUGH DYNAMIC CONTENT TECHNOLOGIES

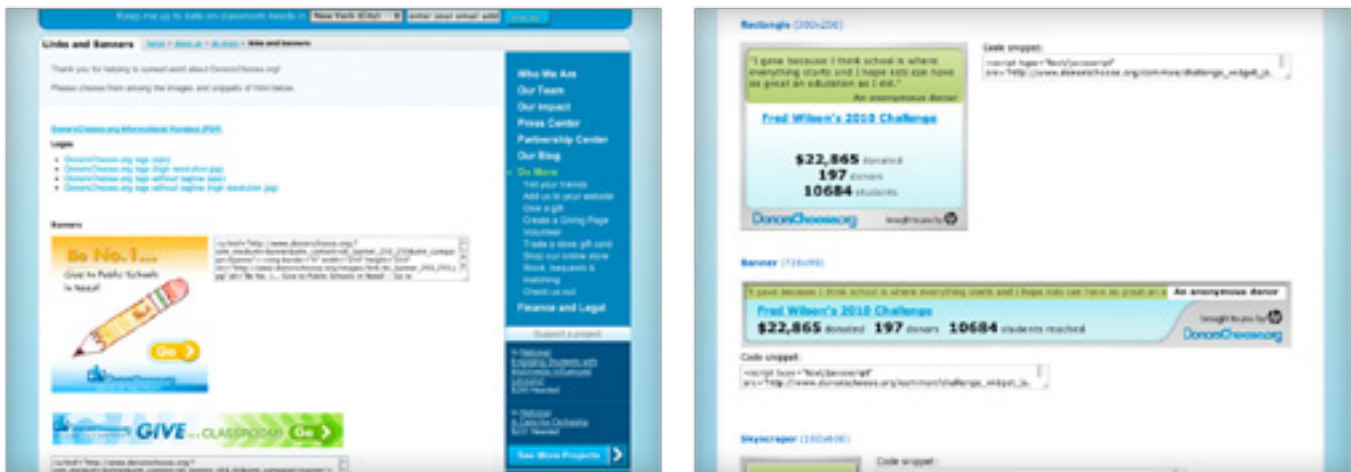
Some nonprofits may find success in developing embeddable units like widgets (modules that run on one site but may draw data and content from another), plugins and dynamic banners that users can co-opt to promote the cause. As is the case with APIs, an organization should carefully weigh the potential results against the resources necessary to develop and maintain a successful widget strategy.



If you build it,
they may come.

Mastering the art of widgetry

Currently, DonorsChoose.org has a range of embeddable content available to users, from flat gif banners to dynamic ads touting projects relevant to the content on the host site (below, left) to Flash banners/widgets that display a donor's accomplishments and link back to their giving pages (below, right).



In the past, a neat WordPress plugin was created for DonorsChoose.org that suggested projects based on blog posts, but it wasn't adopted organically nor promoted aggressively. DonorsChoose.org also experimented with a widget that recommended projects on GreatSchools.net, a resource for information about local schools, but it didn't perform successfully. To date, the widget approach employed by DonorsChoose.org has not returned on investment. To that end, the following tactics were suggested for revamping DonorsChoose.org's widget strategy:

- **Focus resources on developing tools** for targets that are already energized around a cause. Teachers are DonorsChoose.org's most energized supporters, so the embeddable content should be geared toward helping them share their passions with others.
- **Team up with other nonprofits** to develop functionality that allows one embeddable unit to promote multiple nonprofits. Sites like the New York Times would rather deal with one widget than 20 different widgets from multiple nonprofits.

- **Offer customization in-between the extremes of an API** enabling total control of the UI and hard-coded Flash widgets that cannot be altered. Not everyone will have the same level of UI or developer savvy, so provide choices along the spectrum for more than one level of expertise. Configurable widgets may be the way to go, with a friendly customization “wizard” that’s accessible even to non-technical Web site owners.
- **Pay attention to the execution.** As in other forms of advertising, details can communicate volumes.
- **Find the right balance** between encouraging users to ask for help solving a problem and allowing them to show off what they’ve accomplished.
- **Utilize the skills of a developer community** that has already formed around the cause. If an API strategy is attracting developers, reach out to them for help and suggestions for building widget functionality. Think about niche developer groups such as academics who might want to study your nonprofit data, “hacker journalists” or students who may be interested in using you for a class project.

Stay up to speed

The Internet changes rapidly. What is considered standard today differs greatly from the standards of a few years ago. Make sure widgets, plug-ins and other embeddable units are up-to-date, and keep the following in mind:

- **Think about keeping your widgets simple;** try basic DIVs and IDs that users can style with CSS. The advantage of creating behaviors via CSS is that it downgrades nicely to mobile devices.
- **Consider using oEmbed format (oembed.com),** which allows users to turn a normal URL into structured data that can be embedded on their site. The Twitter details pane is currently using it so when someone tweets a link, the blog knows how to use it.
- **For dynamic banners, use JavaScript to look at the SEO data** for a page and pass it along as arguments to the iframe, to update the page content dynamically based on the information. This alleviates the need to implement a roll-your-own Google AdSense to parse the content of the pages.

Thermometers: Play up the urgency without being discouraging.

The thermometer visual has long been used for building a sense of urgency and momentum, and is a common motif on fundraising sites. DonorsChoose.org, however, found that thermometers proved discouraging for its audience as users consistently overestimated their ability to raise money. In such cases the thermometer backfired and became a badge of shame. The tactics below were suggested for creating urgency without risking discouragement.

- Wait until the goal is 4/5 of the way complete and then display the thermometer.
- Set attainable milestones and re-calibrate the thermometer after every milestone.
- Change the scale. Twitter found that the need for accuracy decreased as the numbers got larger.
- Consider showing the number of people positively affected as opposed to the number or dollar amount of donations.
- Leveling and weekly leader boards are viable alternatives to the classic thermometer metaphor.

Think before you widget

Widgets may not be the most effective use of marketing dollars for every nonprofit. Consider the benefits of shifting from a technical strategy to an advertising strategy. Experimenting with creative communications may bring greater ROI than introducing new functionality; images and messaging are easier to implement, easier to test and often create just as much impact. Ultimately it's not about widgets or plug-ins, but finding the most direct path to helping people feel connected to the cause.

Affiliate and referral programs

Affiliate and referral programs give participants a monetary reward for generating transactions from the banners and widgets embedded on their site. Although these programs have been successful for major brands like Amazon and eBay, DonorsChoose.org's basic affiliate program has so far been ineffective in acquiring new donors.

Creating dynamic content through social media

We've all seen the Facebook "Like" button and icons for "tweet this" or "share" with a selection of platforms upon which to promote a piece of content. Rolling out your own widget lineup may ultimately be less productive than using what's already out there to tie into social networks.

The DonorsChoose.org team considered their API and widget portfolios separately, but they should think about how both might work with geo-location services like Gowalla or Foursquare, or tied into the rich data of the Facebook API.

One mechanism suggested to DonorsChoose.org was badges, which would be the result of a combination of technology approaches.

- **Use the Facebook API** to display a user's friends who have already donated to a specific project or cause.
- **Mine Facebook profile data** for information that will help build like-minded communities around topics.
- **Create badges and/or awards that are lightweight** and allow users to display accomplishments to their friends. To be successful, the badge should be displayed across many contexts, establishing its own identity as well as promoting visits to its parent site.

Social data is a powerful marketing tool but not every tactic will not work for every nonprofit. DonorsChoose.org, for example, found that schools serving the highest-need communities are often the least likely to have a Facebook page. This insight does not mean the organization should shift strategy away from Facebook; it simply requires DonorsChoose.org to craft a different approach to the platform that creates other ways to show those schools' presence.



Badges

Badges can have different meaning depending on the context. A Foursquare badge has different meanings, or no meaning at all, on Facebook. The Foursquare "Hook-Up" Badge was given out at the SXSW 2010 for checking in at two different hotels during the conference. It was humorous in the context of Foursquare but had the potential for misunderstanding when posted on Twitter and Facebook.

VII. BUILDING THE NONPROFIT OF THE FUTURE

The primary goal of the DonorsChoose.org social hackathon was to solve the problems DonorsChoose.org faces on a daily basis. There were, however, sessions in which the broader theme of equipping nonprofits for the future was discussed and developed.



These ideas may
provide insights
for nonprofits
seeking to make a
bigger impact.

A foundation for good

The following ideas may provide invaluable insights and solutions for nonprofits seeking to make a bigger impact in the years to come.

- **Consider growing areas of the nonprofit** that are considered small parts of the charter or expanding into areas just beyond the current scope of the organization.
- **Start soliciting donations of time.** Matching projects to volunteers or creating a donation platform where time rather than money is the currency could spark major growth.
- **Branch out into content creation,** content publishing or manufacturing for the cause. Go beyond generating money for relief and create the relief itself.
- **Broaden the ambition of the organization to change societal norms,** such that doing good for the cause becomes a social imperative. People are expected to bring gifts to a birthday party. Imagine if the expectation were adjusted to require donating to charity. Pursue the logic of how a nonprofit could bring about that kind of change.
- **Create a global community around the cause and expertise,** expanding beyond the current region or country. In the case of DonorsChoose.org, become a global PTA.
- **Take on large scale projects and/or implement a subscription model** for donations. For example, allow users to sponsor a class for an entire school year.
- **Pivot the nonprofit and move toward becoming a research organization.** Developing proprietary insights into solving societal problems becomes the new business model.
- **Produce entertainment properties based around the nonprofit.** Partner with a network, studio or production company to develop a film, reality show or Web series with the nonprofit at the center of the action.

VIII. HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN SOCIAL HACKATHON

S marts. Brilliance. Open minds. And a healthy sense of collaboration. Mix well and bake thoroughly, and you've got your own Social Hackathon. As interesting as what DonorsChoose.org learned during the social hackathon was the process by which the knowledge was created, and that process is available to anyone who wants to put in the effort.



Fully bake your own
Social Hackathon with
the right ingredients.

Ingredients

To fully bake your own Social Hackathon, you'll need:

- **Competitors who can put egos aside for the sake of the social good/final outcome.** The “no jerk rule” applies in an event this focused and small since commentary will often, by necessity, stray into areas where opinions differ. It helps if the participating experts have worked cross-industry enough to navigate tricky waters.
- **3–5 experts per problem session for a variety of experience and approaches in the brainstorm.** Some experts can handle more than one session, but to ensure critical mass and not a single dominant point-of-view, involve a mixture of people in each session.
- **A full day for brainstorming.** It's amazing how strangers can gel into a team with only a few hours of interaction and full participation. When people leave the room to email or join conference calls, the flow of the day is disrupted. That said, since work emergencies may arise, keep the schedule fast-paced with chances to chat and rest between sessions.
- **A comfortable, open space.** It doesn't have to be fancy but an Internet connection, whiteboard, projector and access to coffee and snacks are all beneficial. Don't be afraid to put chairs in a circle to encourage participation and collaboration. Multiple rooms were required for the DonorsChoose.org Social Hackathon because we explored two tracks, business and technology, that needed to be handled by different experts.
- **A nonprofit that has identified key problems and is seeking to solve them with help from industry experts.** The DonorsChoose.org team understood their problems and were transparent about where they were failing and succeeding. If the nonprofit isn't willing to be honest and open with the experts, the social hackathon won't be as effective.

- **A planned outcome.** Decide how the insights, ideas and solutions generated during the event will be recorded and disseminated. In the case of the DonorsChoose.org Social Hackathon, videos and an e-book were produced to share the learnings among other nonprofit organizations. It may make sense for a nonprofit to conduct a social hackathon in private, but for others, live streaming the event could bring welcome publicity.
- **An established budget.** Professional video production, transcription and graphical note taking accounted for the majority of costs for the DonorsChoose.org Social Hackathon. Cheaper methods (Flip cameras, graduate student notetakers, etc.) will bring costs down; employing a live-stream service could inflate the budget significantly.

IX. THE PROBLEM SOLVERS

We are deeply thankful to the following participants who made the DonorsChoose.org Social Hackathon an enlightening and heart-warming event.



Alan McGee
DonorsChoose.org

Alan leads web analytics and digital marketing for DonorsChoose.org. Prior to joining the team, Alan was a consultant with Accenture before realizing that nonprofits are much more fun. Taking a leave of absence

from consulting in 2007, he took a Kiva Fellowship and spent three months in Kenya studying the effects of microfinance lending in rural communities. Alan has a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Clemson University.



Betsy Aoki
Bing

Betsy Aoki is a 15-year veteran of Web technology and online community applications. Mary Jo Foley of CNET called her a "Microsoft Woman to Watch" for her work in launching Microsoft's

corporate blogging platforms, the Live QnA consumer question-and-answer site, and the Xbox Live Indie Games platform. Lured to the marketing side for Bing, she devised its social media strategies and recently launched the education reform platform, <http://www.bing.com/redu>.

URL: <http://www.bing.com>

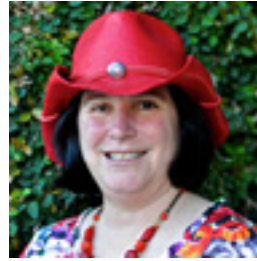
Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/baoki>



Angus Logan
Hotmail

Angus runs a partner marketing team focusing on driving adoption of Windows Live and partner offerings. He works with device manufacturers, mobile operators, service providers, and top web

sites. Prior to this Angus was the technical product manager for the Windows Live partner offers including but not limited to Messenger Connect, Hotmail Active Views, and Windows Live ID. During this role he participated in the development and championing of emerging standards and specifications within Microsoft.



Beth Kantor
Author, *The Networked Nonprofit*

Beth is the author of Beth's Blog (<http://www.bethkanter.org>), one of the longest running and most popular blogs for nonprofits, and co-author of the highly acclaimed

book, *The Networked Nonprofit*, published by J. Wiley in 2010. Beth is the CEO of Zoetica, a company that serves nonprofits and socially conscious companies with top-tier, online marketing services. In 2009, she was named by Fast Company Magazine as one of the most influential women in technology and one of Business Week's "Voices of Innovation for Social Media." She is currently the Visiting Scholar for Social Media and Nonprofits for the Packard Foundation. She is a 2010 Society of New Communications Research Fellow for 2010.

Beth's Blog
Social Media and Nonprofits
<http://www.bethkanter.org>

The *Networked Nonprofit* is available on Amazon Now!
<http://bit.ly/networkednp>

Connect with Beth on Twitter @kanter
Connect with Beth on Facebook
<http://www.facebook.com/Beth.Kanter.Blog>



Chris Messina
Google

Chris Messina is a well-known advocate of the open web, starting as a leader of the community marketing of the launch of the popular Firefox web browser in 2004. He is a board member of the

OpenID and Open Web Foundations, and plays an instrumental role in advancing OAuth and safer online computing. A frequent speaker at technology conferences such as Web 2.0 Expo and SXSW, he has been quoted in The New York Times, Business Week, LA Times, Washington Post, ReadWriteWeb, and Wired. In 2008, Chris received the Google Open Source Award recognizing his community work on initiatives like microformats. He also co-founded the coworking and BarCamp communities, and is credited with introducing hashtags on Twitter. He currently works at Google as an Open Web Advocate and resides in San Francisco.



Chris Brogan
501MissionPlace.Com

Chris Brogan consults and speaks professionally with Fortune 100 and 500 companies like PepsiCo, General Motors, Microsoft, and more, on the future of business communications, and social

software technologies. He is a New York Times bestselling co-author of *Trust Agents*, and a featured monthly columnist at Entrepreneur Magazine. Chris's blog, [chrisbrogan.com], is in the Top 5 of the Advertising Age Power150. He has over 11 years of experience in online community, social media, and related technologies.



Justin Kistner
Sr. Manager Product Marketing, Webtrends

Justin Kistner is the Sr. Manager of product marketing for social at Webtrends. During his time at Webtrends, Justin has led the development of Webtrends'

Facebook Analytics as well as their end to end Facebook campaign solutions. Kistner joined Webtrends from Voce Communications, where he helped architect social strategy for clients such as Intel and Oracle. He previously spent time as a Social Engagement Coordinator at Jive Software, and was the owner of Metafluency, Inc., an independent web presence consultancy. In addition to his role at Webtrends, Kistner founded Beer and Blog — a blogging meet up hosted in 18 cities from Portland to Tokyo. Kistner also holds a bachelor degree in advertising from the University of Oregon.

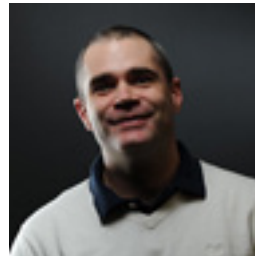


Duane Forrester
SEO, Bing

Duane Forrester is a Senior Product Manager with Bing's Webmaster Program. Previously, he was an in-house SEM running SEO program for MSN in the US & Americas. He's also the founding co-chair of

SEMPO's In-House SEM Committee, was formerly on the Board of Directors for SEMPO and is the author of two books: *How To Make Money With Your Blog & Turn Clicks Into Customers*.

Duane was a moderator at www.searchengineforums.com and maintains his own blog at www.theonlinemarketingguy.com. When writing for Search Engine Land, Duane's main focus was on in-house search marketing, both what it took to manage it, and who folks were in the industry.



Mark McBride
Software Developer, Twitter

Mark McBride is a software developer at Twitter Inc., building APIs that allow developers to access Twitter capabilities. He is also on the board of ECOCEAN

USA (<http://www.ecoceanusa.org/>), a nonprofit working on whale shark research, conservation and education. He is interested in all aspects of software development, as well as sustainability and conservation.



Leah Buley
Experience Designer, Adaptive Path

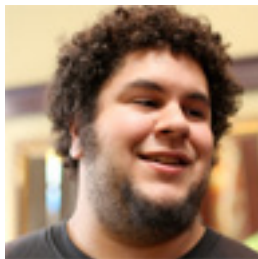
Leah Buley is an Experience Designer for Adaptive Path. She writes and speaks regularly on tactics for inviting people into the user-centered design process.

Leah is currently working on a book entitled *The UX Team of One*, to be published with Rosenfeld Media.



Matt Harris
Developer Advocate, Twitter

Matt is a Developer Advocate at Twitter. He is also a hacker and British expat who is married to @cindyli and lives in San Francisco.



David Recordon
Facebook

David Recordon enjoys creating and writing about technology that makes the web more open and useful for everyone. He grew up in Portland, did a short stint in upstate New York for a year of college (as a Criminal Justice major), and now lives in San Francisco where he works for Facebook leading open source and open standards initiatives. You can contact David by emailing recordond@gmail.com, as [daveman692](#) on [Twitter](#) or via [Facebook](#).

Over the past few years David has helped to create OpenID and OAuth. He volunteers on the boards of the OpenID Foundation and Open Web Foundation, and is involved in the Activity Streams, Portable Contacts, PubSubHubbub and WebFinger communities. He is also an advisor to the startup [Superfeedr](#), which is creating infrastructure technology for the realtime web. In 2007, David was recognized by Google and O'Reilly with an [Open Source Award](#) for his efforts with OpenID, and is the youngest recipient in the history of the award.



Oliver Hurst-Hiller
CTO, DonorsChoose.org

Oliver is responsible for the technology and user experience that power DonorsChoose.org's unique philanthropic marketplace. Prior to joining the team, Oliver managed product engineering

projects for Microsoft's new Internet search engine, now called Bing. He also helped start Microsoft Live Labs, an applied research laboratory for Internet technologies, and is the co-inventor of 11 issued U.S. patents related to Internet search technologies. Oliver joined Microsoft when the Windows division acquired EQuill, a venture-backed startup that he co-founded and led for three years as CEO. He earned a Computer Science degree from Brown University and spent the first 13 years of his academic career attending New York City public schools.

Oliver also sits on the Web 2.0 Expo NY advisory board.



Andy Smith
VonaVona

Andy Smith is the Author of *The Dragonfly Effect* and a tech marketer. At VonaVona Ventures, he advises and bootstraps technical and social ventures with guidance in marketing, customer strategy

and operations. Over the past 20 years, Andy has served as a tech executive leading teams at Dolby Labs, BIGWORDS, LiquidWit, Intel, Analysis Group, Polaroid, Integral Inc. and PriceWaterhouseCoopers. He guest lectures at Stanford's Graduate School of Business, speaking on social technology, engineering virality, and brand building, with a focus on applying technology to address real problems. Andy contributes to *GOOD Magazine*, and blogs at *Psychology Today* where he writes on ideas and businesses that embrace and integrate a social mission. He has also appeared on radio and TV, spoken at events including The 140 Characters Conference, Social Media Breakfast, World 50, Marketing Week, TechCoire and Interbrand. Andy is on the boards of 140 Proof, ProFounder, LIF Brands and One Family One Meal. Born in Connecticut, Andy grew up in New Jersey but has called California home since college. In the process, however, he managed to study in The Parthenon, lived in a converted South African prison, and shared a local pub with a regiment of Windsor Castle's Scots Guards. Andy is a gardener, gadgeteer and a serious tech geek who periodically tests himself to make sure he's still "got it." A few New Year's ago he established "The No Cookie Diet" which he is still on two years later. Andy was once bumped from a flight that tragically crashed, and it made him learn to accept travel mishaps, and most everything else, with equanimity. He earned an MBA at UCLA's Anderson School and holds an Economics degree from Pomona College. Andy lives with his *Dragonfly Effect* co-author/ wife, Jennifer Aaker in Lafayette, California with their two little dudes and a princess. He is on Twitter entirely too much.



Paul Ray
Bing

Paul has been building user experiences for the Web since 1995. He's currently a User Experience Manager at Microsoft's Bing.com. He's been with Microsoft since 1998 and has driven the

design of many complex Web products across MSN and Windows Live.



James Senior
Windows Live

James works on simplifying how developers build compelling apps that use the Windows Live developer platform and access the rich social graph and data of 500 million users.

With a rich history of web development including spearheading Microsoft's open source contributions to jQuery, launching WebMatrix, Razor and ASP.NET MVC 3, James has worked at Microsoft for five years both at headquarters in Redmond, WA and also in the UK.

A published author on the topic of software quality, James writes a blog focussing on technology at <http://www.jamessenior.com>. You can also connect with him on [Linked In](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and, of course, [Windows Live](#).

Outside of work, James is a keen golfer, skier, basketball player and is a singer/song writer - although not all at the same time. He also enjoys spending time traveling and sampling new and interesting cultures.



Kristina Pifer
Pifer Design

Kristina Pifer is a user experience designer with more than a decade of industry experience. Prior to working with startups as an independent advisor, she most recently built and led the product

design practice at Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners, an award-winning agency in Sausalito, CA. Her portfolio of work includes projects for Williams Somoma, Charles Schwab, Priceline, Safeway, and Kinkos, among others.

Kristina is also passionate about cause-based programs and has provided design leadership for projects with Hopelab, CommonSense Media, and George Lucas' Edutopia.

Kristina lives and works in the Bay Area. You can follow her at twitter.com/diavolina.



Ian Schafer
CEO, Deep Focus

Ian Schafer, CEO and Founder of Deep Focus, is one of advertising's most influential voices in interactive marketing and social media. Prior to founding Deep Focus in 2002, Ian was Vice President of the New

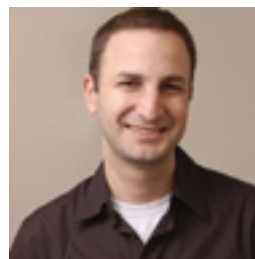
Media division of Miramax Films.

Deep Focus is an award-winning engagement, social media and innovation agency boasting a client roster that includes brands such as AMC, Microsoft, Sony, Diageo, WellPoint, MoMA, and Nintendo. Deep Focus is a part of Engine USA.

Under Ian's guidance, Deep Focus has been lauded for its expertise and excellence at using digital media, technology, creative, and communications strategies to create engaging, value-driven experiences that get people talking. The Emmy®-nominated firm has been responsible for many memorable, award-winning efforts over the years including 2009's MadMenYourself.com, and has been the recipient of numerous distinctions, including several Webby Awards and a Cannes Gold Lion.

Named a 'Media Maven' by Advertising Age and one of Adweek's "Young Ones," Ian has been featured in Wired, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, BusinessWeek, Adweek, Advertising Age, USA Today, New York Magazine, Variety, CNN, Fortune and The Hollywood Reporter. Ian also sits on the executive board of the Social Media Advertising Consortium.

An avid technologist, Ian blogs at <http://www.ianschafer.com> and can be followed on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/ischafer>.



Rooly Eliezerov
President, Gigya

As President of Gigya, Rooly supervises overall product strategy and development. He is a veteran of the Internet advertising and marketing industry, with a focus on product development. Before

joining Gigya Rooly served on the board of Metacafe, held the position of General Manager at SmartShopper, and was the VP of Products & Marketing at Hotbar. Rooly holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the Pratt Institute in New York City.



Susan Etlinger
Altimeter Group

Susan Etlinger is a Consultant at Altimeter Group, where she focuses on helping organizations adapt and thrive in a changing technology landscape. For the past twenty years, she has worked

at the intersection of people, processes and technology, in organizations such as KPMG, Charles Schwab & Co., Inc., and on the agency side at firms including Horn Group and Edelman.

Susan focuses on helping clients develop strategic, actionable plans that support their unique objectives and organizations through periods of rapid change. Her experience across the enterprise in information technology, marketing, customer service and retail enables her to assimilate the needs of multiple constituencies and apply them pragmatically to real-world business requirements.

Susan has a deep grounding in interactive marketing and social technologies, advising organizations of all sizes on social media best practices and strategic plan development. She has launched dozens of companies and products, and counseled businesses through crises, liquidity events and large-scale organizational initiatives.

Recently, Susan has been conducting primary research in the areas of mobile, cross-channel and collaborative commerce, as well as in social media measurement, in preparation for a series of research reports to be published by Altimeter Group.

Susan's personal blog, The Family Room, has been profiled in several national publications, most recently in Parenting Magazine's "Moms we Love." She has been quoted in outlets including Business Week, ZDNet, Fast Company, The New York Times, The San Jose Business Journal, Mashable and the BBC. She is a published translator and has a B.A. in Rhetoric from the University of California at Berkeley.

Blog: Thought Experiments

Twitter: @setlinger



Hope Frank
CMO, Webtrends

As Chief Marketing Officer, Hope Frank leads worldwide marketing efforts on behalf of Webtrends. With more than 20 years of working in all facets of marketing, including B2B, B2C, brand, enterprise, digital,

social, mobile, broadcast, public relations and investor relations, Frank brings a welcomed global focus to the company.

Prior to joining Webtrends, she led marketing at Motricity, THX Ltd, SBC, Vivitar as well as digital partner programs with AEG and ESPN. As a founding partner of a San Francisco branding and digital media firm, she established global brand retail standards for NIKE, launched the Starbucks Wi-Fi network and delivered digital programs for enterprise and financial clients. She is a founding member of "The CMO Club," as well as an advocate for "Women in Technology" in APAC and emerging markets.



Scott Porad
CTO, Cheezburger Network

Scott Porad is the CTO of the Cheezburger Network, the company behind the hugely popular I Can Has Cheezburger? and Failblog.org. The Cheezburger

Network is a collection of web sites where every day millions of people share moments of joy through the humor and wonder of LOL. Since 1995, Scott has been building industry leading web sites, including launching drugstore.com, working on ESPN.com at Paul Allen's Starwave Corporation, and for Seth Godin at Yoyodyne Entertainment. Scott lives online at <http://scottporad.com> and in real life with his family in Seattle.



Jonathon D. Colman
SEO, REI

Jonathon helps people find what they're looking for. Whether it's through search engine optimization (SEO), paid search engine marketing (SEM), social media or web analytics, he finds great joy in

helping people find theirs. For more than a decade, Jonathon has designed, developed, promoted, and advertised web content for large corporations and nonprofit organizations, including REI, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, and IBM. Jonathon's online marketing strategy; leadership and ability to coordinate a strong team earned The Nature Conservancy two Webby Awards for "Best Charitable Organizations/Nonprofit Web Site" in the 13th Annual Webby Awards, including a People's Voice Webby Award. Jonathon served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Burkina Faso, West Africa, where he lived in a small village performing rural health development work including education and building health infrastructure capacity with local partners.

A runner, cyclist, treehugger, and EcoGeek, Jonathon D. Colman lives in Seattle, Washington with his wife, the glass artist Marja S. Huhta.

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/jcolman>

Personal portal: <http://flavors.me/jcolman>

Presentations on Internet Marketing, Social Media, and SEO:
<http://www.slideshare.net/jcolman>

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jcolman>



Chelsea Howe
Social Chocolate

Chelsea is the Director of Design at Social Chocolate. She recently arrived from Zynga where she helped design their top social game, FarmVille. Prior to that she worked at motion gaming studio

ActionXL as their producer, cofounded Proper Walrus to develop indie style mobile games, and was an outreach instructor for Cornell University, where she graduated summa cum laude with a custom-made major in Interactive Multimedia Design. Find her on twitter @manojalpa.



Charles Best
Founder & CEO,
DonorsChoose.org

Charles Best founded DonorsChoose.org at Wings Academy, a public high school in the Bronx where he was a social studies teacher for five years. He

thought up DonorsChoose.org during a lunch conversation with colleagues, and his students volunteered to help start the organization. To entice his fellow teachers to try out the new website, Charles offered them his mother's famous pear dessert. DonorsChoose.org has been growing since.

More: http://www.donorschoose.org/about/meet_the_team.html#charles



Sara Winge
VP, Radar, O'Reilly Media

Sara Winge is VP, Radar at O'Reilly Media. She focuses on company and brand strategy, and, with Tim O'Reilly, co-created Foo Camp in 2003. Before she joined O'Reilly, she was Director of a management

training and consulting program for nonprofits. Other previous jobs, which include furniture refinishing, firefighting, and job counseling, prepared her for working at O'Reilly in non-obvious but crucial ways. Follow Sara at @sarawinge, radar.oreilly.com, <http://www.linkedin.com/in/sarawinge>, <http://www.facebook.com/sarawinge>

X. FROM THE SPONSORS

Bing & Hotmail

DonorsChoose.org has been a great partner to both the Bing and Hotmail teams, and we were grateful they were willing to be so transparent as well as excited to implement the suggestions out of the social hackathon. As more and more nonprofit organizations explore Web 2.0 technologies and interactive business strategies, it made a lot of sense to explore and record solutions to the problems that these do-good organizations will face. We hope the honesty of DonorsChoose.org will spark more “social hacks” and encourage people who would not normally join forces to do so for the benefit of charity.

Too often technology conferences are about one-upmanship or high gloss; we wanted a simple, focused and smart one-day event that would allow us to distill and share what DonorsChoose.org learned from some of the best competitor companies in the industry. Everyone left feeling savvy and energized, having shared and learned things useful to their regular day jobs. We know this Web 2.0 playbook will be especially useful to nonprofits, but we hope that startups and other online businesses may find nuggets in here of use as well.

We also hope that you will try out having a “social hackathon” of your own and share your findings with us.

Betsy Aoki, Bing
Angus Logan, Hotmail

Deep Focus

As an engagement agency, we're passionate about people who rally, organize and motivate each other to connect for the greater good. And like Oprah, we believe in the power of DonorsChoose.org to effect positive social change. We're also big fans of sharing, open-sourcing, transparency and building things together. That's why events like the Social Hackathon are so interesting to us.

So naturally we were thrilled to be involved in the Social Hackathon in making this playbook and its companion videos (see www.deepfocus.net/hackathon) as valuable and as available as possible.

We hope that this book and the companion site has been as eye-opening for you as it was thrilling to create for us, and that it's just the start of your journey into dreaming of smart, creative ways to use digital in clever, measurable ways that extend your brand and create results—good results. This is the stuff that gets us up in the morning. We'd love to geek out on it more with you, so keep in touch at www.deepfocus.net.

Ariel Broggi, Editor

Chet Lombardo

Christian Borges

Cory Everett

Daniel Shaw

David Irons, Co-author

Dooeol Lee

Ellen Karas, Co-author

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Sean McGaughan

Steve Evans

THE GOODNESS ENGINE

Driving Greater Social Impact in the Digital World

