Unpacking Websites

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Why does your website matter?

1. For many people it's the first place they'll go if they want to know more about your organization. It's a key public face of your organization and people will make judgments about your organization based on your website.

2. People who want more information about your issues are likely to go there – you want them to be able to find what they came for.

3. It's the network hub for your communications activities – Facebook, Twitter, Videos, photos... all show up there.

4. It's a place, and these days it may be the only place, where you get a chance to show the totality of what you do. You have full control over it. You get to create the story of your organization that you want people to know. Use it intentionally and strategically.

What are some of the make or break elements of a website *for your audiences*?

1. Does it work?
2. Does it look good?
3. Can people find what they want…and can they find it fast?
4. Is the content written in a clear, concise, punchy way?
5. Is it up to date and does it appear like an *active* site?
6. Can people access it on a range of devices?

What are some of the make or break elements of a website *for your organization*?

1. Ease of use for administrators;
2. Complexity of the website should match your internal capacity to keep it updated;
3. Should broadcast the most important information about your organization effectively;
4. Should effectively capture important information/data about your users;
5. Design it for the things websites do well, don't expect it to do everything.

Let's look at some websites together:

Consider:

- Does the website serve the organization's needs? Does it capture key data and feed it into your database to help in basebuilding, organizing, and fundraising?

- In term of the information architecture, can a user quickly find what they are looking for?

- Does the visual design reflect the vitality and personality of the organization? Is there brand consistency with other organizational materials?

- Does the website seem vibrant and up-to-date?

- Is the website responsive? Does it adapt for use on mobile devices?

Evaluate Each Other's Websites

Pair up with another organization and use these questions to evaluate each other's `websites. Prepare a reportback to the group. You have 10 minutes.

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Take Aways:

1. A strong information architecture process is vital
2. Start by thinking about your goals, priorities, and audiences
3. Design it for ease of use for the user
4. Design it for ease of use for your organization
5. The overall design and visuals matter
6. Keep it current, keep it lively
7. Writing Matters
8. Get feedback, test it before it goes live
9. Use assets in multiple ways
10. Be realistic about your capacity

Website Analytics / Metrics

What are website analytics?

Web analytics is the practice of collecting, measuring, analyzing, and reporting of web data in order to understand and optimize the usage of your website (or email, or social media, etc). Web analytics is not just a tool for measuring statistics like web traffic but can and should be used as a tool for assessing and improving the effectiveness of your online work.

Why are analytics important?

- Tells you important information about who uses your website and how
- Scientific evidence that tells you if what you are doing is working or not
- Only useful if you use that information to inform what you do

What are the useful tools?

Start with Google Analytics. Its free and very robust. Here are some of the reports you should start with:

- Behavior Overview
- Site Content Pages
- Acquisition Overview Report
- Keyword Report

Lets walk through these reports together with a real life example.