

# 20 Ways Non-Profits Can Leverage Social Media

Like their for-profit brethren, many non-profits understand that using social media can help them **reach and engage their audience, create momentum and build community.**

However, there's uncertainty around how to create a sustainable social media campaign, although the tools are plentiful and often free.

**Here are 20 ways non-profits can leverage social media. This article was released on the Popular social media blog The Social Media examiner..**

## #1: Use a blog to tell your story

Treat your blog like the digital printing press that it is. **Use text, photos and videos to tell stories** of the people you've helped, those who are still suffering and the impact you're having on the community or the world.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2010

### United Way's Fall Day of Caring 2010

On Friday, September 10 over 950 volunteers joined forces with United Way Capital Area for their Fall Day of Caring event. Day of Caring is an opportunity for people from the community to come together to create change in Central Texas.



Volunteers were given the opportunity to take part in meaningful activities that focused on the education, income, health and environment of our community. Together, community volunteers worked alongside United Way Capital Area to create long-lasting change in our community, leading to a better life for all.

Volunteers came from over 28 companies in town and worked to complete 41 projects in and around Austin. Total volunteer time equated to \$122,379 in service back to our community. Teams volunteered because it was a great way to team-build, because their company wanted to support a specific impact area and some because volunteering was a great way for their employees to see where dollars donated during their workplace giving campaigns are being put to work.

Engage your audience with storytelling on your blog.

## #2: Make sure your stories are shareable

Use tools like the retweet button, Facebook like button, and [Share This](#) to **allow your blog visitors to quickly share your story** with their networks.

## #3: Make it easy to subscribe to your stories

Make your RSS feed impossible to miss by putting it “above the fold” and highlighting it. Since RSS isn’t as widely adopted as it could be, make sure you **use a third-party RSS feed provider with RSS to email options** like [Feedburner](#), [Feedblitz](#) or [AWeber](#).

## #4: Use video to tell your story

Videos of volunteers building a house or driving a school bus to collect school supply donations can be incredibly persuasive. Be sure to leverage [YouTube’s Nonprofit Program](#) that offers such benefits as call-to-action overlays, listing on the nonprofit channels and the ability to **drive fundraising through a Google Checkout “Donate” button**.

*Donate links can be embedded right in your videos.*

## #5: Create a Facebook page for your non-profit

Organizations doing good works are infinitely more “likeable” than traditional businesses, so **get involved with the half-billion-plus people currently using Facebook**. Make your page more engaging by including a [custom-designed, branded landing page](#) that includes photos and video. Make sure your wall is set to show posts not just from your organization, but also from your fans so they’ll be more likely to engage you.

For more detailed information on tricking out your Facebook page, read [How to Customize Your Facebook Page Using Static FBML](#).

## #6: Get into the Facebook news feed

“The future of Facebook is the feed,” says social media consultant [Jaica Kinsman](#). In other words, people may not visit your page every day, but they may see your news in their news feed. Getting people to *like* or comment on your Facebook content improves the chances that more people will see it in their feed, an algorithm referred to as “EdgeRank.” [TechCrunch goes into more detail about Facebook’s EdgeRank here](#).

## #7: Post photos or videos, and “tag” volunteers

You can take photos of fundraisers, blood drives and bean suppers (popular here in Maine!), post them to your Facebook page and tag volunteers to thank them for their help. This will **draw attention to their good work and spread your message to their friends**. Use this strategy judiciously. This can also work on [Flickr](#), but it doesn't have the same reach as Facebook.

### Maine Children's Cancer Program's Photos – M CCP Maine Marathon Team Oct 2010

Photo 1 of 8 Back to Album - Maine Children's Cancer Program's Photos - Maine Children's Cancer Program's Profile

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Tagging volunteers shares their contribution with their friends.

## #8: Create a Facebook Group for your cause

Facebook Groups have some advantages over Fan pages, such as the ability to send emails to members. Although there's some chance you might be diluting your non-profit brand, you could **create a group around your cause**, whether that cause is to end poverty, feed the homeless or support women's rights worldwide.

## #9: Use Facebook ads to raise awareness

[Goodwill Industries of Northern New England](#) used targeted Facebook ads using gender, age and location filters to affordably promote new store openings. Calvin Gilbert, who runs much of Goodwill NNE's social media, reported that they used Facebook *exclusively* to promote the opening of a store in South Portland. The ad campaign netted them 929 new fans, 2,776 clicks to the Facebook page, and created a record turnout at the grand opening.

## #10: Use Facebook Events and LinkedIn Events to spread the word



The screenshot shows a Facebook event page for "Comedian Bob Marley Guinness World Record Attempt". The event is scheduled for Wednesday, September 22 at 7:00am - September 24 at 11:30pm, at The Comedy Connection, 16 Custom House Wharf, Portland, ME. It was created by Bob Marley Comedy. The event description states: "World Record Attempt by Comedian Bob Marley To Benefit The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE BARBARA BUSH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL BUY TICKETS AT: <http://www.mmc.org/bobmarley>". Below the description, there are several comments from attendees:

- Willie Dumont: "Go get'em Johnnie Johnson!" (20 hours ago)
- Reinette Buzzell: "Sorry Sweetie, I am working, otherwise I would attend, Bob Marley is awesome!" (September 18 at 11:23am)
- Jessica Jacques: "This is SO awesome of you!" (September 17 at 8:43pm)
- Becky Hewett: "Are you going? I have an extra ticket from 5p-3a!" (Tuesday at 11:13am)

The left sidebar shows the event's attendance status: 70 Attending, 125 Maybe Attending, 293 Awaiting Reply, and 185 Not Attending. A list of attendees is visible, including Hayley Griffin, Bryan McLeod, Jaica Kinsman, Meagan St Laurent, Mike Anderson, Friscilla Farrell, Amy Hall, and Willie Dumont.

Events are easy to share and get further promotion as people RSVP.

These powerful social networks allow you to **promote your events for free** and make it easy for people to share events with friends and colleagues.

## #11: Use Foursquare, Gowalla or Facebook Places to promote your events

[Alex Steed](#), a consultant to non-profits, recommends creating events on popular location-based apps and having volunteers check in as they arrive. This is a good idea for conferences, but also for things like clearing trails, purpose-driven marches and volunteer beach cleaning events.

For more advice on promoting your event, check out [12 Ways to Promote Your Event with Social Media](#).

## #12: Go local with Twitter's advanced search

Since many non-profits do their best work close to home, it's important to **listen to local conversations**. Use the [Advanced Search at Twitter](#) to find, listen to, and engage with nearby "tweeple." At a meeting with a non-profit organization last year, one of the board members told a story where someone he was following on Twitter was sharing how he was being unfairly evicted from his apartment. The board member reached out to him and got him the information he needed to avoid eviction.

## #13: Start conversations around hashtags

If your audience is active on Twitter, **start a conversation around a hashtag to get people talking**, whether it's #climatechange, #endhunger or #beatcancer.

## #14: Ask for the retweet

Metrics show that when you end a tweet with "please RT!" you're more likely to get people to retweet your message. Since most non-profits are cause-based, a "please retweet" request seems less self-serving. Still, use judiciously.

## #15: Create a banner that stakeholders can add to their avatars



### #NoKidHungry

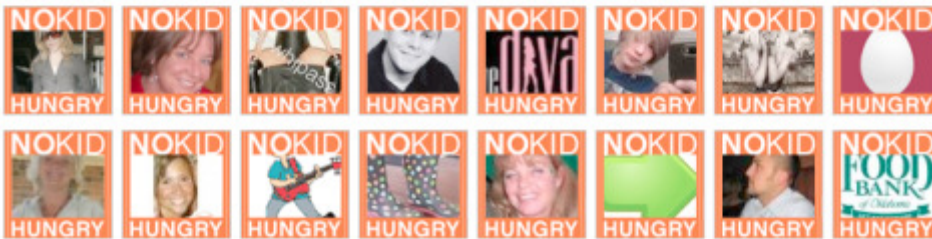
What is the No Kid Hungry Pledge? The No Kid Hungry Pledge is a national effort to mobilize individuals in the fight to end childhood hunger - to give people real, tangible actions they can take to connect kids facing hunger with nutritious food every day. The No Kid Hungry Pledge is for people who believe they can make a difference in the life of a child facing hunger. The No Kid Hungry Pledge is where good people tackle a big problem and win. The pledge is where it starts.

#### Support #NoKidHungry

Show my support now!

- To view a preview and position the Twibbon exactly, [login](#) first.
- When you support this cause your avatar will be overlaid with the Twibbon above and a support Tweet will posted on your behalf saying: Support #NoKidHungry, add a #twibbon to your avatar now! - <http://twibbon.com/join/NoKidHungry>
- We'll also have you follow @Twibbon. You can always unfollow us if you want.
- By clicking "Show my support now!" you agree to the Twibbon [Terms of Service](#)

#### recent supporters



Let your followers carry your message forward with every tweet.

Whether adding a green tint to support democracy in Iraq, [the yellow LIVESTRONG](#) banners or ribbons of every color for every cause imaginable, people love to wear their causes on their sleeves or at least on their avatars. Services like [Twibbon](#) make it easy to jump into.

## #16: Use Eventbrite to handle event registration and money collection

Although there are many event marketing tools out there, [Eventbrite](#) has one of the easiest-to-use interfaces out there, and has plenty of built-in social media sharing tools. They also offer [a non-profit discount](#).

### Eventbrite for Causes



Eventbrite for Causes is a program for non-profits who want to manage, promote, and raise money through successful events. Eventbrite is committed to helping non-profits leverage technology and best practices to raise money and build sustainable programs.

**Apply Now!**  
It's amazingly easy and free

#### Publish:

Create a customized, professional event page  
Easily collect donations  
Create as many ticket types as desired

[Learn More](#)

#### Promote:

Promote your event online and reach new donors  
Spread the word through a multitude of social channels.

[Learn More](#)

#### Sell Out:

Collect payments securely through credit card, Paypal, or Google Checkout  
Watch as your event sells out with real-time tracking and reporting

[Learn More](#)

Take advantage of Eventbrite's non-profit discount and put the savings to good use!

## #17: Find potential board members on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is full of successful entrepreneurs with non-profit board experience. Be sure to **join local or cause-based LinkedIn Groups** and start engaging with future board members now.

## #18: Improve conversations and collaboration with a wiki

Many non-profits must overcome the challenge of an all-volunteer board whose members are spread out through the region or even throughout the country. Other non-profits struggle without a physical office space. By using a free or inexpensive wiki, board members can be kept up-to-date on changes and work collaboratively from remote spots.

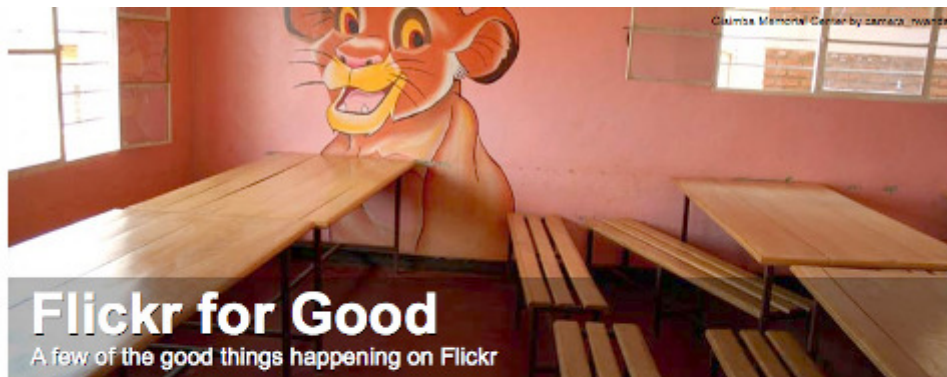
## #19: Put your presentations online with SlideShare



Your presentations can be viewed, shared and embedded through SlideShare.

If your organization puts on presentations to raise awareness and increase donations, make that work go further by posting your slides to [SlideShare](#), the “YouTube of presentations.”

## #20: Get more out of your photos with Flickr for Good



### Getting Involved

A photo gives us the ability to see what goes on in the world, but can also move us to care, or motivate us to help. Many individuals and organizations use Flickr to share their mission to make the world better, and this is just a sample of what's going on on Flickr.

We've partnered with [TechSoup](#), a US-based non-profit technology resource, to donate 10,000 1-year Flickr pro accounts for good causes. TechSoup and its international partners will distribute these to qualifying non-profit organizations.



**techsoup**

TechSoup is the trusted technology resource for the non-profit sector. Founded in 1987, it helps other nonprofits around the world acquire and use technology to better serve their missions.

Get more out of Flickr for your non-profit with a free Pro account.

Flickr, the popular photo-sharing site, is donating 10,000 one-year Pro accounts to non-profits. You can learn more at their [Flickr for Good page](#).

So there you go. As a not for profit organisation these have been a few of the things you can do to help you promote yourselves using Social Media.

If you haven't got a website that allows you to do some of the things advocated in this article, then we suggest you contact us and have a discussion about using Wordpress which is a free Content Management System, to help your organisation really get a web presence for very little money...Our hands on workshops will teach you how to build a site from the ground up..