

## Book of Blog Entries Creates Memories, Raises Funds

Nick Huber (Alta, IA) started blogging when ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease) forced him to retire from his position as a university sports information director. After his death, a group of friends worked to publish a book of some of his 300 entries and honor his inspirational life.

Sales of "Running With Nick" — a 192-page, soft cover, bound book — raised funds for the ALS Therapy Development Institute (Cambridge, MA).

Project organizer Karna Converse (Storm Lake, IA) shares tips for tackling a similar project with success:

1. Edit minimally. "We edited careless mistakes but didn't automatically change every grammatically incorrect sentence, because we wanted readers to remember Nick's thoughts just as he wrote them. We also wanted to show how technology helped him write for as long as he was physically able — whether he typed words with a keyboard, spoke them into a microphone for translation by voice recognition software or blinked at individual letters via eye gaze software."
2. Decide on the book's format and appearance before setting a price. "We wanted a bound book with heavier-weight paper and a full-color, glossy cover. In other words, it was a project for a printer, not a photocopier — and, based on the number of copies we thought we'd sell, it was a project for a digital printer, not an offset printer. This decision played a major role in setting the book's price."
3. Take pre-orders. "This ensured there were funds to pay the publisher and assured Nick's wife that she wouldn't be left with boxes and boxes of unsold books. We sent press releases to local media but had the most success with a fan page on Facebook, which directed friends to an order form," she says. "We also priced the book to sell (\$12) and charged a shipping/handling fee (\$2) per order. Some orders cost more than \$2 to mail, but because we hand-delivered as many as possible, the shipping and materials cost per pre-paid book was under a dollar."

Source: Karna Converse, Storm Lake, IA.  
E-mail: conversekj@iw.net

## Nonprofit's Donation Creates Win-Win

Diane Fish, director of fund development, Adirondack Council (Elizabethtown, NY), says the Cool Park/Healthy Planet program, which allows donors to directly reduce carbon dioxide emissions with a \$25 donation, has attracted the attention of major universities and national environmental organizations. *The New York Times* even ran a piece on it.

To help spread the word about this environmentally friendly way to raise funds, Fish says, "we have donated several thousand credits for our local public radio stations' fund drives." This simple and unique strategy not only supports their media partners, she says, it also gains some additional exposure to a like-minded audience.

Source: Diane W. Fish, Director of Fund Development, Adirondack Council, Elizabethtown, NY.  
Phone (518) 873-2240. E-mail: dfish@adirondackcouncil.org. Website: www.adirondackcouncil.org

## COMMUNICATION METHODOLOGY

## Make the Message Match the Audience

Staff at the Performing Arts Workshop (San Francisco, CA) rely on social networking options to communicate important information. Anne Trickey, program and communications coordinator, says she has worked to glean which groups in the organization's constituency respond best to particular types of messaging. She shares some of her findings, and how she uses that information to better match the message to its intended audience:

- **Facebook and other social media:** "In our July 2010 newsletter, we sent out a request for our entire database to become fans of (or Like) the Performing Arts Workshop on Facebook (www.facebook.com). We've found it's a good way to get immediate response; people can see pieces of information that give them a good feeling about what we do (and) immediately RSVP to events or comment on what we're doing. It may not be as beautiful to look at as an e-mail newsletter, but an e-mail takes more work to put together — it has to be structured and messaged as a whole. A Facebook post can be brief. Here, we reach a smaller donor base (and) they are most likely to take action on the Internet."
- **Traditional mail and word-of-mouth:** "Older donors respond best to this type of communication — which, in our case, is most of our donor base. These donors are more likely to get behind a campaign than the people who are plugged into the Internet, so it's important to speak to them where they will hear it. For them, we focus on results and communicate youth outcomes — success stories from within the community. We involve site partners, schools and communities to communicate how the children are learning '21st century skills, creative expression and self-efficacy.' That's our message. It mobilizes people."
- **YouTube:** "People who have seen our videos on YouTube (www.youtube.com) tend to be outside of what we think of as our constituency, which is to say we haven't solicited them. But here, we are expanding our pool of supporters, which strengthens the organization." One of the biggest struggles for a group like theirs, she adds, is finding artists who are also great teachers "who understand what we want them to do, and are good in the classroom. When we attract artists who are really engaged in what we do, that gets results. And results attract donors."

Source: Anne Trickey, Program and Communications Coordinator, Performing Arts Workshop, San Francisco, CA. Phone (415) 673-2634 E-mail: anne@performingartsworkshop.org.  
Website: www.performingartsworkshop.org

### Seek Donated Video Services

For donated or inexpensive video, troll your community for start-up videography companies and producers seeking to build their portfolios, says Anne Trickey, program and communications coordinator for the Performing Arts Workshop (San Francisco, CA). "The people who put us in touch with our videographers were message-minded and familiar with the language that we use. It was easy to communicate that message to the videographers, and the end product — a combined development and communications effort — turned out really well. We got the product for free, and the videographers got a great example of their work."