

The Non-Profit Guide to Internet Marketing

A Toolkit to Help Non Profits Launch Search Engine and Social Media Optimization Campaigns

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LawHelp.org/NY

Helping low-income New Yorkers solve legal problems 

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IOLA

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Forward

Who We Are

LawHelp/NY (www.LawHelp.org/NY and www.AyudalegalNY.org) is the sole Internet portal in New York State that provides low-income and vulnerable people with information about free legal aid offices in every county and every zip code in the state, thousands of Know Your Rights and self-help resources covering 16 areas of civil law, in English, Spanish and 34 other languages, information about the court system, and links to other kinds of advocacy and social services. In 2010 we added LiveHelp, an online chat service in English and Spanish so that people with legal questions or a legal crisis can get one-on-one real time assistance in finding the information they need. This is especially important since so many low and moderate income people are unable to get help from a legal aid office (too many client needs and too few attorneys available) and/or can't afford an attorney so they must face a legal crisis on their own. (New York State courts had more than 2 million *pro se* litigants in 2010.)

LawHelp/NY is the project of the New York LawHelp Consortium, a collaborative association of eleven organizations including Legal Services NYC, the Legal Aid Society (Civil Practice), Pro Bono Net, The City Bar Justice Center (the legal services arm of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York), Volunteers of Legal Service, the New York State Bar Association (Pro Bono Affairs Office), Legal Assistance of Western NY, the Empire Justice Center, the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and Nassau-Suffolk Law Services. The idea of providing online, plain language legal assistance for the legal services client community began in New York in 2001, but the idea quickly spread throughout the country, largely supported by website development grants from the Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) program. LawHelp/NY is part of the national LawHelp network and template developed and hosted by Pro Bono Net (www.LawHelp.org).

Why Focus on Search Engine Optimization and Marketing?

It is very frustrating, even depressing, to put literally thousands upon thousands of hours of work into developing a top-notch legal information website and yet know that hundreds of thousands of people in need of this information don't know it's there or how to find it.

So, five years ago we decided to put a major effort into outreach to the communities that are most in need—through in person legal education and training to social and community services that serve low-income people, such as senior centers, settlement houses, immigration groups, libraries, and constituency services staff of elected officials, about the most effective and efficient ways to use LawHelp.org/NY. We have participated in more than 500 such events. This is effective outreach but still limited because we don't have enough staff and volunteers to cover the entire state. Also, when LawHelp/NY began ten years ago, there was deep concern

about the “Digital Divide” – were low-income people, seniors, limited English proficient and other vulnerable individuals really using the Internet? So we focused on this person-to-person approach.

Times have changed. Low income people are indeed accessing the Internet, and it is our job, indeed, responsibility to help them find us rather than for-profit legal service companies when they search online for legal help. People in a legal crisis are vulnerable to exploitative practices, so we need to be as available as possible to prevent any exacerbation of an already difficult situation or crisis.

So we set out to learn how to apply known search engine optimization and social marketing techniques and strategies to the LawHelp/NY website, with a special focus on improving our rankings on Spanish language search engines—to maximize our outreach in a more efficient and technologically sophisticated way that complements our community-based outreach plans. With the help of Consortium member and fiscal sponsor, Legal Services NYC, we obtained a grant from the LSC TIG program to pursue this project. This toolkit describes the steps we took, the strategies we followed, the lessons learned and the experiments still underway. We hope this helps other non-profits, and especially legal aid projects whose mission, like ours, is to increase access to justice for people who are victims of the current economic crisis, or of the ongoing disparities in our society that make being poor a barrier to equal justice under the law.

We believe that this project is bearing fruit—although a lot of work remains to be done, and we are just beginning to collect and analyze metrics related to our work. In 2009, visits to LawHelp.org/NY rose to over 377,000, a big increase over 2008 data, and page views were at 2.2 million. By the end of 2010, visits increased to more than 461,000 and 3.5 million pages of legal information for the poor were viewed—with the biggest increases occurring since we began implementing the strategies described here. Clearly, search engine optimization and social marketing work will be integrated into all of our activities on an ongoing basis.

Given the social, political and financial constraints most legal aid programs are facing, using technology to help our client community becomes more and more crucial—using it smartly and wisely is essential.

We hope you will find this toolkit useful, even fascinating. We welcome any feedback, suggestions, additions, etc. as we will keep updating this resource over time. Please send your comments to info@nylawhelp.org, or to Wilneida Negrón, the staff person responsible for this project, wnegron@nylawhelp.org. You can also contact me.

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Introduction

These days we are all spending an increasing amount of time online. The Internet is changing the way we do our work, communicate with colleagues, and interact with clients and the general public. These changes present both challenges and opportunities for nonprofit organizations strapped for money and time.

This toolkit will provide information to help you maneuver around the challenges and launch Internet marketing strategies to take advantage of the opportunities. In this toolkit, we will describe Internet optimization and marketing strategies which can be launched with limited budgets and which can be combined with other community outreach and/or press marketing efforts your organization may already be doing.

The Internet is changing the way we do our work, communicate with colleagues, and interact with clients and the general public.

More specifically, this toolkit will show you how to:

- ◆ Get started on low-cost high impact search engine optimization (SEO) strategies
- ◆ Develop a robust keyword list and learn how to plug them into your SEO and marketing efforts
- ◆ Implement an organic link building strategy centered on community-building and awareness-raising
- ◆ Launch social marketing (SM) strategies to increase search engine rankings and community-building among relevant stakeholders, clients, and funders
- ◆ Measure and determine the impact of your Internet marketing strategies
- ◆ Use free search engine and social media tools to get started on this work
- ◆ Adapt sample templates to assist your efforts and measure your progress.

Before getting started here are some thoughts to keep in mind:

- ◆ The Internet marketing strategies discussed here are not meant to replace any current, marketing, advocacy, and outreach work your organization may already be doing; instead, Internet marketing reinforces and strengthens them. Harmonize Internet marketing strategies with other more traditional forms of outreach or marketing. Internet marketing is like Community Outreach 2.0.

- ◆ A strong Internet presence can foster positive associations with key stakeholders, the public, and funders.
- ◆ When trying to decide which SEO or SM strategies to pursue, keep in mind “quality over quantity”. Do not over-extend yourself and pursue all of them at the same time! This toolkit is the tip of the iceberg in terms of different Internet marketing strategies. Take a deep breath and do not get overwhelmed. Be clear about your Internet marketing goals and then select 2-3 marketing strategies to pursue for a given period of time. Every six months evaluate which strategies are working and which are not, and then decide if you want to explore additional strategies.
- ◆ If you have a donate button on your organization’s website, SEO is a cost-effective means of driving traffic to the site; and as many non-profits have found out, increased traffic is an important step in securing more donations.
- ◆ Have a clear idea of what your organization is trying to achieve. Do you want to increase your organization’s website rankings on the search engines? Do you want to concentrate your efforts on just online fundraising? Do you want to increase customer service? Do you want to reach out to your clients or build a community of advocates sensitive to your cause? Do you want to launch a new public advocacy campaign?

Having clear identifiable goals are crucial for identifying which strategies to pursue and for measuring any progress you have made. Use the sample Internet Marketing Action Plan provided in Appendix 1 to help organize your goals and activities.



I. Internet Marketing Strategy #1:

Getting Started with Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the ranking of your organization's website in search engines. The top three search engines are Google, Bing, and Yahoo so you should concentrate your efforts in improving your rankings in these search engines. To improve the rankings of your website, focus on using organic methods which generally are free or low-cost rather than paid strategies such as pay per click or paid listings. The SEO strategies discussed in this toolkit are free or low-cost and can be adapted to any budget. Generally, paid SEO strategies can be very costly and may require an investment of thousands of dollars. The strategies outlined here simply require time and perseverance to ensure a decent ranking for your organization.

Starting with accessible, high quality content, each step up the pyramid builds on a strong base:



(Image courtesy of SEOMOZ.org)

The two organic SEO methods we will focus on are **keyword maximization** and **link building**. The first step for both of these strategies is developing a strong list of keywords.



TIP:

Not sure what some of these terms mean?

Use this dictionary for easy to understand definitions of common Internet and search engine optimization terms:

<http://www.marketingterms.com/dictionary/>

Step 1: Developing a list of Keyword Phrases

a. Brainstorm: Come up with a master list of keyword phrases that describe the work that your organization does and the causes you focus on. Look at your organization's printed materials and see if there are any keywords phrases used to describe the work that you do. With other staff, review the list of keywords together, delete any keywords or phrases that everyone agrees doesn't really apply to your organization.

For example, if you're organization deals with child poverty issues in New York, some keywords would be:

Child poverty New York, child hunger New York, family assistance New York, child care for low income families NY, etc.

As you may have noticed, I incorporated New York or NY in the keywords because searching generic keywords such as child poverty or child hunger are very **"competitive"**. By competitive I mean that if you Googled child poverty or child hunger you will get millions of search results in return. This equates to a very crowded market in trying to get your website to rank for keywords that millions of other websites are also pursuing. Instead, by inserting information about your geographical location (city, county, state) you can greatly narrow down the results. The more specific you can get about your location and similar relevant information, the more helpful your keywords will be. For example, if this child poverty organization was based in Elmhurst, Queens, you could also use these keywords:

Child poverty Elmhurst, Queens, child hunger Elmhurst, NY, child hunger Elmhurst, New York

b. Find the strength of your keywords using a keyword search tool: Use a keyword search tool to check the popularity of your keywords and identify any other keyword variations from the initial list you brainstormed. For example, if you identified "child poverty New York" as one of the keywords that describes your organization, you can enter this keyword phrase in one of the keyword search tools to find variations such as: nonprofits helping children, agencies help poor children, etc. So, keyword search tools can help to refine and expand your initial list of keywords. **When looking for potential keyword phrases make sure to look at local searches rather than global searches.** A local search looks at searches made in your country in your specified language. Global looks at searches performed around the world and in any language. Some of the best free keyword search tools are:

Google Keyword Tool: <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>. This tool gives you hundreds of keyword suggestions based on the keyword phrase you enter. It also provides you with information on the global monthly searches, local monthly searches, and local search trend for any keyword phrase. This data can help you find out which keywords are becoming popular over time and which have a good balance of high search volume and low competition. There are other both paid and free keyword search tools out there, but the Google Keyword tool is free and an effective means of finding the best keywords for your website. **Note:** *When using this tool, make sure to go to Advanced Options and set the locations and language to United States and English.*

TIP: *Spell out the name of your state and use the abbreviation. E.g. This means using both, New York and NY interchangeably for whatever keywords you identify as specific to your organization*

Google Insights for Search: <http://www.google.com/insights/search/#>. This powerful keyword search tool allows you to see how different keywords performed across time and locales. It also allows you to find out the most popular searches in your locale at any given time. The information provided via this tool can help you identify any “hot topics” that your organization can write about and identifies the current keywords that people are using to find that “hot topic” on the Internet. Writing about a current popular search item and using the keywords that people are using to search for it can greatly increase the chances that your online resources will be discovered by your clients and your community.

Google Wonder Wheel: [Google Wonder Wheel](#) is another fantastic free keyword search tool that identifies related keywords you can use. Wonder Wheel is an advanced Google search feature, so the tool doesn’t live on a static URL. To access it, perform a regular Google search and in the left side panel select “Show Search Tools” and then select the Wonder Wheel option under the “Standard View” tab. The red arrow in the picture below highlights where you will find Wonder Wheel after performing a simple Google search.



Free Keyword Niche Finder: <http://www.wordstream.com/keyword-niche-finder>. [This tool](#) is similar to the Google Wonder Wheel and identifies clusters of related keywords. The tool suggests the most popular keywords to target and also groups them into relevant keyword “niches” for your site. A “niche” describes keywords that are grouped semantically throughout your website. Writing content using niche keywords may make that content more relevant to a user’s query because the keywords are grouped around a particular niche.

Keyword Discovery: <http://www.keyworddiscovery.com/search.html>. For more advanced keyword research, you may want to consider purchasing this keyword search tool. It drills deep into search queries and can provide very detailed analytics. This tool does offer some limited free keyword searches which you should explore before you decide on purchasing one of their packages.

TIP

Does your website have competition?

There are many for-profit service providers that may also be trying to target your clientele. In order to help ensure that your nonprofit organization will rank as high as for-profit service providers, you can identify the keywords your competitors are ranking for and use variations of them in your own website.

To find out what keywords your competitor is ranking for use the free tool on www.semrush.com. Simply, enter the web address of your competitor and you'll get a limited report of the top keywords they are ranking for. If you want more detailed information you will have to subscribe to www.semrush.com paid services.

Wordtracker: <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/> . Like Keyword discovery this is another tool for advanced keyword search. It also offers a limited free keyword search for you to try out.

Note: Any of the free tools described above will be sufficient in helping you develop a robust list of keywords your organization should be pursuing. If you are considering doing more advance SEO paid strategies such as a Pay per Click (PPC) campaign, you will need to spend more time researching keywords and should look into purchasing a subscription with Keyword Discovery and Wordtracker. Also, look into the Google Grants program which provides free AdWords advertising to select charitable organizations. Visit <http://www.google.com/grants/> to apply for a Google Grant. Due to budget constraints, we opted to forgo using a PPC campaign, but there are many organizations out there that benefit greatly from this strategy.

Finalize your list of keywords: As you work on finalizing your list, keep in mind that you want to strike a balance between popular more generic keywords such as *child poverty* and more long-tailed keywords such as *child poverty in Elmhurst, Queens* which can have three or more words in them. As mentioned, the generic popular keywords are very competitive (i.e., a lot of organizations will rank for it and the search engine will return many search results) so it will probably be easier to rank high for long-tailed keywords.

Make sure to save your full list—as you develop your SEO campaign over time, you will need to refer to it often! Also, make sure to set up Google webmaster tools for your site in order to learn about the keywords people are using to find your website. This can help you identify new keywords, confirm the list you are building and help grow your list over time.

Once you have your keyword list in good shape, you are ready to move onto **Step 2: Using Keywords for Website Optimization**.

Do you maintain a non-English website and want to implement SEO strategies?

If so, take your English list of keywords then translate them into the target language. Do not use Google Translate for translation as it doesn't always offer proper translation in the particular idiom of your target audience. Instead, hire a professional translator. This person should be up-to-date with the shifts in language and cultural references. Make sure to alert the translator that the translations have to reflect the common language, dialects, and slangs that the target group may be using when doing online searches. So, not all of the translations should be formal; in fact informal translations may best capture the actual wordings that people use when searching online.

For more information on developing Multilanguage keywords read these resources:

Dialects, Diversity and Keyword Research: <http://searchenginewatch.com/3640743>

The Google Killer No One Dares Discuss: <http://searchenginewatch.com/3640656>

Thinking Beyond a Monolingual Audience: <http://searchenginewatch.com/3640517>

Step 2: Using Keywords for Website Optimization

Once you have compiled a solid list of keywords, it is now time to optimize each page of your website; essentially, you will be incorporating these keywords within the code or text of your website pages. This could be in the html code in the header of your web page or in the actual content on a web page. If you do not have access to the HTML code in the header of your website, you will require the assistance of the website programmer. The key sections of the website page where you need to incorporate the keywords are:

1. **Title tag:** The Title tag shows up on your web browser and the search engine results page. In your web browser the title tag is the title for the page that describes that page's content. For example, in the image below you will see that the title tag is underlined in red: "New York Law Help—Helping Low Income New Yorkers Solve Legal Problems."



In the Google Search Engine results page the title tag is the bolded blue text. In the picture below the title tags are underlined in purple.



To change the title of each of your web pages, you or your website programmer would have to change the title tag that goes in the head section of the page's HTML. It is in this title tag HTML page that you should embed keywords that also describe the content on your website page. This is how the HTML coding looks for the title tags.

<head>

<title>Information on food assistance for families in Queens New York</title>

</head>

[Click here to learn more about best practices for title tags, \(http://www.seomoz.org/learn-seo/title-tag\)](http://www.seomoz.org/learn-seo/title-tag).

2. **Meta description tag:** They are information inserted into the "head" area of your web pages. Meta tags go in between the "opening" and "closing" HEAD tags of the coding for each of your website pages: `<meta name="keywords" content=" " />`

Like the title tag, this tag is important because it appears on the Search Engine Results page right underneath the page title/ title tag, (see meta tag description highlighted in yellow below). For each page on your website, write 1-2 sentences describing the content on the page while at the same time incorporating some keywords from your list. [Click here to learn more about meta description tags, \(http://searchenginewatch.com/2167931\)](http://searchenginewatch.com/2167931).

Google child poverty queens new york

About 106,000 results (0.23 seconds) Search

Everything
 Images
 Videos
 More

Queens, NY
 Change location

All results
 Timeline
 More search tools

The Child Center of NY - programs and services for at-risk youth ... ☆
 Every day 526083 NYC children live in poverty of foster care children are below the ... The Child Center of NY 60-02 Queens Boulevard Woodside NY 11377 ...
[www.childcenterny.org](#) - Cached - Similar

new york city nonprofit jobs classifieds - craigslist ☆
 Bilingual Spanish Case Manager and CTR Specialist Needed ASAP - (Queens NY) img
 Campaign Jobs - Stop Child Poverty! - (Midtown) img ...
[newyork.craigslist.org/jobs](#) - Cached - Similar

Many NYC Asian American Children Face Poverty ☆
 Nearly 1 in 4 Asian American children in New York City lives in poverty. ... Astoria in Queens has an Asian American child-poverty rate of 26 percent ...
[www.modelminority.com/index.php?children-poverty](#) - Cached

Youth and Community Needs ☆
 Children under age 5 living in poverty is 965% more than Queens as a whole. ... The child immunization rate for New York City is 70.5%. ...
[www.theactioncenter.com/index.php?option=com...view...-Cached](#)

Queens Teacher ☆
 Dec 7, 2010 ... New York City schools and children do not need a world-class manager. "The United States today has a child poverty rate of over 20%, ...
[queensteacher2.blogspot.com/-Cached](#)

3. **Main site navigation:** For navigational directives on your site, where you write “*click here for more information*” or other instructions on how to navigate your site, try to be more descriptive and incorporate keywords in the anchor text of the link. For example, you could put “*click here to learn about our child care program in Elmhurst*”. Search engines pay attention to the anchor text in navigational directives so this is a chance to let the search engines know what those pages are about. [Click here To learn more about main site navigation, \(http://searchenginewatch.com/2167931\)](http://searchenginewatch.com/2167931).

What is Anchor Text?

Anchor text is the highlighted words on a hyperlink. See the dialogue below between two coworkers which shows the difference between a regular link and using anchor text:

Bill: “Hey Sarah, you should check out this website page with information on public benefit in New York, the link is: <http://www.publicbenefitsinfo.com/>.”

In this case, Bill just sent Sarah a direct link to the website page, he wanted her to visit. In the second example below, he uses anchor text over the link to the website.

Bill: Hey Sarah, you should check out this website page with information on public benefits in New York. –In this example, the anchor text he uses is, “information on public benefits in New York.”-

Putting keywords in your anchor text on your website pages or when promoting your website on other blogs, media sites, etc. is a great way to increase search rankings for different keywords.

4. **Alt attributes:** each image on your site has the ability to define "alternate" text, this is what we refer to as alt attributes. If you have pictures on your website, make sure to give them relevant names, such as, [NYchildpovertyinformationfair.jpg](#) instead of [Marchevent2010.jpg](#) and then use some of your keywords in the descriptive "alt" title text for images. This is also a necessary in order to comply with accessibility requirements for users with special needs. Keep in mind that "users with special needs" includes those with cell phones and smart phones as well those using screen readers or other assistive technologies; this is a much larger percentage of the population than most people think. The alt tag for graphics looks like this: ``

5. **Url:** Each of the pages on your website has a URL. Instead of having a generic not SEO-friendly URL for each of your pages, try to make these URL more descriptive. For example, if you have a website page called, "How to Get Help", and the URL for this page is: www.childpoverty.org/help3contacth344135.html , try naming it something more descriptive such as, www.childpoverty.org/Get-Help-NY.

6. **Content on the page:** As best as possible incorporate each keyword into the main body of content of its assigned webpage. When incorporating keywords into your content, make sure not to overdo it. You should make it natural. If a keyword works use it; if not, don't. Never force or over use. For a list of other sections of your website where you might be able to incorporate your keyword and keyword phrases, read over this list of "[Check List of Content Every Nonprofit Should Have on Their Website](http://nonprofit.about.com/od/online/a/checklistwebsite.htm)", (<http://nonprofit.about.com/od/online/a/checklistwebsite.htm>)

When can I expect to see results?

For keywords embedded in the Meta and title tags, you can expect to notice improvements in traffic to your site and your rankings in 1-3 months. You should also see an increase in the quality of the traffic, meaning that you should be seeing an increase in page views per visitor. A page view is the number of pages a user views per each visit to the site. Quality of traffic can also be measured by noticing an increase in the time that users spend on your site.

Step 3: Launching your Link Building Campaign

Link building is the process of getting other websites to link to your website. This both generates direct traffic and increases your search engine rankings. Link building is a key component of your organization's search engine optimization plan, and you will need to invest time in this key strategy. The reasons are:

- ❖ Links behave like votes for your site. The more votes you have, the better your rankings will be.
- ❖ You have to be selective about who you send link requests to. Search engines value the relevance of the link highly. Links from unrelated sites don't hurt you, but they don't help nearly as much as links from a relevant site.
- ❖ Link building is an ongoing activity. You have to continually search out and find new sources of links to your website. As you add more and more links over time, your site's position in the search engines will continue to improve.

There are many different ways to get websites to link to yours. To start off, you can request other partners and related organizations to place a link to your site and you can offer to put a link to their website on yours. Then you can start reaching out to other stakeholders, bloggers, etc. If you have a blog, don't forget to ask individuals and organizations to link to your blog as well!

Keep in mind; link building is about consistently building and nurturing relationships with relevant websites, bloggers, and influencers. If you don't, they aren't likely to link to your site!

Link Building Strategy #1: Send Link Letters

The first strategy in getting organizations, relevant bloggers, and other stakeholders to post a link to your website on theirs is to send them a link letter request via email. Develop a short and strong letter template with space for personalization, in which you describe your organization and why they and their target audience would benefit from knowing about your program.

Start sending these link letters to other groups who share your target audience but are not in direct competition with you and then reach out to relevant education, government, bloggers, non-profit organizations, charities, churches, etc. who would benefit from learning about your organization.

When you send a link request, make sure to use keywords in the link text (also called "anchor text"). For example, let's say your organization's name is called: Queens Community Center and your website address is: www.queenscenter.org. Rather than requesting that an organization put this link on their site, embed link keywords in the link text. So, it would look like this: [Community info for Queens Residents](http://www.queenscenter.org). The text says, "Community info for Queens Residents", but the link will take the person to the organization's website. Make sure you rotate the anchor text you are using in the links. For example, you might send a link request that will use the link text as: [NYC Community Info](http://www.queenscenter.org), [Community Info Queens](http://www.queenscenter.org), [Community Activities Queens](http://www.queenscenter.org), etc. You might try alternating anchor text by, for example, sending 15 link requests per different set of link or anchor texts. You should aim to send 15-30 link requests a month.



A word of caution

Even though link-building is a legitimate way to improve your search engines ranking, there are many people who abuse it. It is very common for unscrupulous SEO firms to send out mass mailings asking for links to their sites in exchange for links back to yours. Beware of many of these firms as they can also "spam" your blog or website pages with comments containing links back to their sites. Likewise, carefully screen any organizations that ask for you to place a link for their site on your website.

TIP

If you are able to get websites with .Gov or .Edu extensions to add a link to your website on their page, you have struck SEO Gold! Websites with .Gov or .Edu extensions are the best links you can build. These links have a strong impact in helping your website rank for targeted keywords.

Do note that getting your website link added to these types of websites will be hard. You and your staff will have to spend some time reaching out to staff and officials from government agencies or learning institutions, introducing them to your organization and telling them about your work.

Just take your time and do not get frustrated if they don't get back to you quickly. Simply introduce them to your organization and provide examples and reasons as to why the visitors of their website would benefit from finding out about your organization. Pursuing these links will take some time, but if you are successful, the payoff will be great at the end.

Link Building Strategy #2: Promote Your Expertise

There are several ways that you can use your organization's expertise to promote your keywords and get links back to your website. When implementing any of the strategies below, make sure to look for potential stakeholders (media, non for profits, bloggers, etc.) which are in your niche area and are therefore sympathetic to your organization's cause. These kinds of links are very powerful links because they come from websites or blogs with content that is similar to your site. It is not just a link from a media site or directory that covers every subject on the planet.

Strategies:

- a. **Offer Free Content—News, Syndication, Blogs:** Look for niche publications specific to your field, and then offer to submit content. On a monthly basis, try to write a brief article about an issue your organization is facing or a social issue affecting your clients that is relevant to the interests of the publications you choose to reach out to. Track analytics on your website and blog to determine which topics most people read, share with others, or comment on; this can give you an idea of what topics are popular to your readers and what you should write about. Make it as easy as possible for these websites to use your content. If a publication uses your content, you can receive a link back to your organization's website. This strategy works well for both print and electronic publications. You may be able to find potential publications easily by just typing the subject matter that your organization deals with into a search engine and reviewing the results. In exchange for the free content that you provide for publication on their websites, they allow you to insert links within that content. Your goal should be to have at least 20-50 sites that publish your content on a monthly schedule. To find blogs that focus on similar issues as your organization, go to <http://weblogs.about.com/od/blogreferenceguide/tp/Blog-Search-Engines.htm>
- b. **Forum Posting:** There are online forums for many different topics. Spend 2-3 hours researching appropriate forums for your organization. Start by identifying forums in your local community, such as a forum where residents of your town or city discuss local events or local issues and then work your way through broader communities and topics. Make a list of these forums on an excel spreadsheet and monitor what comments and questions come up that gave you an opportunity to answer back and promote your organization. For example, in an online forum for your community, someone may have asked about afterschool programs for children. If you are an afterschool program, you can reply and provide a link to your organization. By participating in relevant forums you can increase quality traffic to your website as well as improve your ranking in the search engines. Try to split this work among your staff by asking everyone to register with at least 4 different forums.

NOTE: Make sure to follow forum guidelines. Most people in charge of monitoring forums are very savvy about identifying spam links and people who sign up to just promote their program. They will find you and deactivate your account if they see that you are just commenting only to put a link to your organization's websites in the comments. When commenting, be impartial and do not always post a link to your site. If questions come up in the forum that do not directly pertain to your organization, but you know of resources or information that could help that person, then provide the information without trying to include a link back to your organization. The idea is to promote your organization, but also respect forum guidelines and be helpful to the people that are looking for information and assistance. Try to post regularly as well so that you earn reputation points. If possible, try to posts 2 times a day

and start one thread a week. Anytime someone on your staff starts a thread they should email the URL to the rest of the staff so everyone can promote / bump each other's threads. This will lead to more links and impressions.

Tip: Use Google to Search for Posting Opportunities

Here are steps to help you search for guest post opportunities in blogs or other websites:

1. Identify all the various ways people may use to invite guest bloggers (“Submit a guest post”, “Add blog post”, “Contribute to our site”, etc.);
2. Use the main terms or key words describing your topic;
3. Take advantage of wildcard (*) operator (to broaden your search while keeping it focused);
4. Use OR and ~ operators to better describe your niche;
5. Now connect all the previous steps into one search:

“submit * guest post” ~topic 1 or topic area 2

So if you wanted to search for posting opportunities in websites and blogs dealing with child poverty and child hunger, you would put in the following search query on Google:

“submit guest post”~ child poverty or child hunger*

- c. **Participate in relevant online discussions:** It seems like these days there is an online discussion for almost any topic you can think of. Most news sites, newspapers, and blogs now have comment sections where people can comment on any given story and discuss issues with other people who comment. Have your staff regularly scour the news or newspaper websites, blogs, and others websites which provide stories on topics relevant to your organization and comment on them. Make sure your staff make a list of all of the websites identified and make sure to document the topic and frequency of posting at those sites.

When you comment you can include your name and the name of your organization or a link to the website in your signature line. Not only will this improve your search rankings but it will generate dialog on the issues your organization is actively concerned with, and can create a community of interest in your work. When commenting on blogs, remember that blog spam like forum spam is frowned upon, so make sure that your comments are on-topic and relevant to the blog article.

TIP

Whenever possible, try to have the sites that link to yours use your keywords in the link anchor text, rather than always using your URL or organization name. At the same time, when you are participating in online discussions or forums, make sure to regularly put a link to your organization using keywords in the anchor text.

**Two tips in
one page;
we're on a
role!**



- d. **Reach out to bloggers:** Your staff should spend time reaching out directly to bloggers in your particular niche area and inquire if they are willing to do posts about your organization.
- e. **Answer sites:** Answer websites such as Yahoo Answers have been getting increasingly popular. These, too, are great opportunities to be helpful and promote your organization. You can also have staff post questions and answers relevant to your core audience. Not only will it drive relevant traffic, it will also provide you with many quality back links.
- f. **Press releases and article submissions:** Writing press releases and short articles with links embedded in them and submitting them to popular article sites such as E-zine, Go Articles, Now Public, Buzzle, PRWeb, PR Newswire, etc., is an effective means of link building. When writing a press release, don't only put the link to your homepage; also put internal links to relevant pages on your site. Make sure to call your release a "media" release, to include both print and electronic media. After you submit your press release Google the title of the press release to see if it was picked and featured in any websites.
- g. **Engage in Social Media:** The next section will discuss how social media ties into and reinforces your SEO. Generally, creating a Wikipedia page for your org and starting profiles in popular social networking sites can raise your SEO placement.

For outreach to the Hispanic community, there is Hispanic PRWire, <http://www.hispanicprwire.com/> to which you can submit English/Spanish press releases.

Link Strategy #3: Submit your website to Directories Paid & Free

By and large, web directories are the telephone pages of the Internet. Internet directory listings are a great way of acquiring links to the internal pages of your site. Doing slow and continuous directory submissions is an important long term strategy that helps you get strong back links using anchor text that you control while improving your sites ranking for many different search terms. Every six months submit to at least one directory. If you have a budget you can consider submitting your website to 1-2 paid directories. For a comprehensive list of the best paid and free directories, go to websites:

Best **Free** Directories: <http://www.best-web-directories.com/free-directories.htm>

Best **Paid** Directories: <http://www.best-web-directories.com/paid-directories.htm>

Note: In our opinion, the best directories are DMOZ and Yahoo

You can also look into getting your organization listed in community directories such as:

- ◆ **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** Google Places, <http://www.google.com/local/add/analyticsSplashPage?message=qbwelcome&hl=en-US&gl=US>
- ◆ Relevant city and state governmental websites
- ◆ Chamber of Commerce links
- ◆ Niche associations directories
- ◆ The Better Business Bureau
- ◆ Local library's Web site

Link Strategy #4: Create a website banner ad

Website banner ads can be effective at increasing traffic to your organization's website. This strategy will require that you budget a minimum of \$500 to try to place your website banner ad in strategic websites you think your target audience will visit. Keep in mind that running web banner ads for an extended period of time (usually 3 months or more) can easily exceed \$3000. If you are interested in developing a website banner ad for your organization here are the steps you can take:

Step 1 Identify your maximum budget. Knowing this will help you determine how large of a banner ad you can have, duration of the banner ad, the number of impressions, and what websites you can afford. Impressions are the number of times your ad will appear on the website.

Step 2 Identify your target audience. Is your target audience a very specific group or are you looking to reach out to the general audience of a website. If you are looking to target a very specific group, you should consider geo-targeting your banner ad. But if you are launching a public awareness campaign you may benefit from having the general public see your website ad. If you are targeting low-income people of a certain area, make a list of the zip codes of poor regions in your town, city, or state. You can use Wikipedia to identify all of the cities in your state and then the USPS site tool, <http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/citytown.jsp>, to look up all of the zip codes that fall under each of the cities. You can use the Census American Fact Finder to find median family income or poverty level by zip code. You will have to give these zip codes to the marketing company for websites on which you place a banner ad, so they can geo-target the ad. Geo-targeting your ad means that your ad will appear on the website only when visitors from those zip codes view their site. If you have a limited number of impressions (impressions cost \$\$), this will allow you to not "waste" your impressions on people visiting the site with your ad who are not your target audience.

Step 3 Lay out your goals. Are you looking for high *impressions or high click-through rates*? Because most websites are rotating many banner ads at the same time, having high impressions means your banner ad will get rotated more often and will appear more frequently on the website. Targeting a website banner ad for high impressions is good when you want to launch a public advocacy campaign and want to increase awareness about a given issue. For instances like this, you want as many eyes to see this ad and be aware of the issue as much as possible. On the other hand, click through rates are helpful when you want to target a specific audience and you want them to take an action; meaning you want them to click on the ad to be taken to your website or another online resource your organization may have. If you decide to pursue a banner ad campaign to get high click-through rates, you can still maximize the impact of limited number of impressions by geo-targeting your ad as mentioned above.

Step 4 Design the ad. If you don't have Photoshop, download an excellent free alternative to Photoshop called GIMP. You can download GIMP here: <http://www.gimp.org/>. If no one in your agency has advanced graphic design skills, don't fret; with basic graphic design skills you can create a simple and straightforward banner ad. To make the banner ad visually-appealing, search for "free stock photos" on the Internet for free images that you can add to your banner ad.

Step 5 Identify your approach. There are several ways you can pursue getting your banner ad placed on websites. The cheapest is to contact the website owners and request if they could place your ad for free or for a small charge. This may be time consuming, but if you are on a tight budget,

this may be your best bet. Make sure to let them know that you are nonprofit and request that they do this as a free public service ad. A number of websites may be willing to support your cause and post your banner ad for free or for a small charge for a limited time. A second approach is to employ an advertising agency such as PRNewswire. For Spanish website banner ads you can contact the Hispanic Digital Network. This approach will be expensive but for one fee these large ad agencies can simultaneously submit your ad to hundreds of relevant websites. Lastly, you can join a banner ad network. Depending on your goal for either high impressions or click-throughs you can select the appropriate agency as they specialize in different approaches.

Some major impression networks are:

- [DoubleClick](#)
- [Flycast](#)
- [BURST! Media](#)
- [ContentZone](#)

Some major click-through networks are:

- [Banner Brokers](#)
- [ValueClick](#)
- [BannerSpace](#)
- [eAds](#)

Link Strategy #5: Pursue your competitor's links

Many nonprofits may not like to think about the idea that they have competition, but most do. With 16,000 nonprofits listed on Idealist.org, it's safe to assume that there may be other nonprofits providing similar services to yours and may be in competition for funding. In addition, there are also for-profit companies targeting your clients for services that you provide for free. This issue comes up often with legal aid organizations that provide free legal services to those who meet certain income requirements. since some for-profit legal companies try to lure low income people into their offices; some even try to charge for legal forms that legal services and the courts provide for free.

If you find a for-profit company is doing something that you think may be detrimental to poor people, feel free to make a direct complaint. Colleagues have done this with companies that charged for otherwise free resources, and at least one for-profit company stopped this unethical practice following the complaint.

Identify your competition in the nonprofit and for-profit worlds and see who is linking to them. To identify the websites linking to your competition's website, visit www.linkdiagnosis.com and put in the URL of your competitor's website. Run the report and save the results as an excel file. The file will list all of the websites linking to your competitor. With this information, you can now contact these websites and request that they place a link of your organization's site on their site as well.



A Last Note about SEO:

It may take you some time and much practice to get these strategies down, so don't be discouraged if you do not see immediate results. As you practice and learn, keep the guide below handy which provides pointers on what you should **NOT** to do when launching SEO strategies: <http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=35769#3>

II. Internet Marketing Strategy #2: Social Media (SM)

You may not realize it, but if you have read the previous section on SEO, then you are already one step ahead in implementing social media (SM) strategies! Much of the work that you have done with keyword search and link building ties in with SM. The main difference between the two is that social media will place a greater emphasis on building relationships and a sense of community. Who are you building relationships and communities with, you might ask? Well, it's many of the same folks that you

may have already reached out to for your SEO work, like other nonprofits, community leaders, bloggers, press, and others sympathetic to your cause.

Don't forget to incorporate social media into your existing communications or marketing plan.

Instead of creating a separate SM plan, integrate social media as a component of your marketing plan so that SM becomes one of the tools that you use for marketing.

With its growth in popularity, social media has become one of the hottest topics in the nonprofit sector for organizations of all sizes. What started out as a way to connect with friends and family has grown into a means for nonprofit organizations to spread awareness about key issues, mobilize supporters, raise funds and create online advocacy movements.

Social Media can help you with:

- Increasing traffic to your website
- Outreach to clients and other stakeholders
- Developing a positive brand association
- Creating buzz about events and information
- Building awareness and driving action on issues important to your organization
- Community-building
- Raising funds

These activities are harmonious with your SEO work because social media tools help you build relationships with clients, organizations, and the media; and provide another avenue to promote your organization, exchange links, and focus on those keywords that will drive visitors to your website.

As you start using social networking tools it's important to develop a list of rules for the communities you will be involved in such as Facebook, MySpace, Ning, etc. so that your staff and subscribers are on the same page about the purpose of your profile and the rules of conduct between friends, and between your friends and your organization. For example, an important rule of conduct for legal aid organizations participating in social media is not to share particular details regarding a client's case. But certainly don't forget to customize your various profiles, share pictures, and overall just make it memorable!

In the following pages, we will highlight key free SM tools that will help you achieve your social media goals.

Listening? Why is Listening Important?

Before you dive into social media, spend some time “listening” to what your constituents and other stakeholders are saying about the issues relevant to your organization and about your organization. **Note**, this process of active listening must continue for as long as you engage in social media. Active listening provides you with information on common themes, key actors driving the dialogue, etc. If you encounter negative comments about your organizations, its programs or performance, be sure to plan an adequate but not defensive response. These instances may provide you with an opportunity to reach out to anyone who has a misconception about your organization and make them a supporter!

To get started on this, sign up for Google Alerts and enter to get Google Alerts when your organization’s name is mentioned as well as when topics relevant to your organization comes up.

Below are some useful listening tips courtesy of Convio. To read more on social media tips by Convio, check out their excellent Social Media Guide for Non Profits: http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/files/Convio_Social-Media-Guide.pdf



Listening Tips to Get You Started

- Set up listening tools, such as Google Alerts, for terms or keywords associated with your mission and organization, and public-facing staff.
- Use free social media monitoring tools, such as Google Alerts or Social Mention, to track keywords associated with your organization and mission.
- Sign up for the major social networks as an individual, and join all of the discussion or fan groups associated with your cause and organization.
- Monitor the mood of comments on the social media properties where you see activity and note how trends correspond to your organization’s activities.
- Follow or add to your list of friends: advocates, influencers, bloggers and mainstream media. Use segmentation tools to create a feed or list on Twitter or Facebook to monitor their activity for collaboration opportunities.

Once you’ve mastered the Basics, try these more Advanced Listening Tips

- Go deeper on the keywords you monitor by adding brand terms, campaign-specific terms, and names of key staff members, public figures or competitors.
- Monitor real-time conversations through hash tags on Twitter that you have created and/or that are pertinent to your mission.

Listening Tools

- **Addictomatic** <http://www.addictomatic.com>
- **Google Alerts** <http://www.google.com/alerts>
- **Hootsuite** <http://www.hootsuite.com>
- **Radian 6** <http://www.radian6.com>
- **Scout Labs** <http://www.scoutlabs.com>
- **Spredfast** <http://www.spredfast.com>
- **Social Mention** <http://www.socialmention.com>
- **Technorati** <http://www.technorati.com>
- **Twitalyzer** <http://www.twitalyzer.com>
- **What the Hashtag?!** <http://wthashtag.com>
- **Tweetdeck** <http://www.tweetdeck.com>
- **Twitalyzer** <http://twitalyzer.com/>

Online Communities

Online communities sites such as **MySpace** (before its current incarnation as an entertainment social site), **Facebook**, **Ning™**, **BuddyPress™**, **Jive**, **Chatter** may be the first thing that comes to mind when you think about social networking. What once started as a way for friends to connect around shared interests has now become a cost-effective medium for marketing and outreach. Online communities are also valuable for “active listening”, which is an ongoing activity you must engage in as you take part in social networking. A new social network for non profits called **Jumo** was launched in early 2011. There is little we know about it at this time, but it seems to provide another avenue for non profits to partner and collaborate on common issues. You can visit their website here: <http://www.jumo.com/>.

You should frequently update your online communities’ pages with relevant news, events, and any promotions the organization is having, so that subscribers and followers can be kept in the loop. There are many things you can do on Facebook to foster a community and build relationships. For example, use the “Favorites” function to acknowledge your partners, add a “Like” box on your website or blog to encourage users to sign up, ask your community questions to spark conversations, and much more. Make sure to check for any promotional programs and services for nonprofits, like Facebook’s pages for nonprofits: www.facebook.com/nonprofits.

Blogs/Microblogs

Blogs: A blog is a public journal published online. Blogging is at the heart of many online internet marketing strategies because it provides regularly updated keyword-rich content and helps to build your organization’s online reputation. There are many free templates which are available from www.wordpress.com and www.blogger.com. It will take you only a few minutes to get started. Make sure to add links to other blogs relevant to yours on your blog. Bloggers regularly check who is linking to their blog and they will take notice of your blog and may reciprocate by adding a link to your blog on theirs. **Wordpress**, www.blogger.com, and **TypePad** are the most common free websites that allow you to create a blog in just a few minutes. Note, if you want to develop a blog in a language other than English, you can still use these programs.

When writing content for your blog, keep in mind that your blog should be personable and less formal than your organization’s website and that you should provide content regularly (at least one time a week if not more).

Be creative about how you deliver fresh content to highlight. Some creative blog posts ideas are:

- Recruit volunteers and/or seek donations
- Spotlight any sponsors of your org
- Mention upcoming community events relevant to your target population
- Discuss any outreach or advocacy activities your organization is embarking on
- Mention any staff accomplishments
- Launch public awareness campaigns
- Showcase foundations and other organizations that have supported you
- Have a weekly story showcase which highlight a story from your organization’s work

Lastly, don’t forget to include relevant keywords in the blog post and links back to your organization’s website. Use blogsearch.google.com to find the most popular blogs in your niche area. You can start your search broad and then narrow down to blogs that specifically cover causes pertinent to your organization. You can also use Technorati to find popular blogs that cover issues you are interested in.

Make sure to comment on other blogs. Most of these comments will not provide much direct search engine value, but if your comments are useful, insightful, and relevant they can drive traffic. Placing the links of other blogs on your blog and commenting on blog posts will help bloggers become aware of you and they may start reading your blog and/or linking to it. You can also use Technorati to try to have your blog posts featured. Look at the tags of popular posts on Technorati and tag your posts with any relevant popular tags.

You can also submit your blog to a few of the best free and/or paid blog directories. You should submit your blog to a directory once every six months. You can find a list of these directories here:

- <http://www.searchenginejournal.com/20-essential-blog-directories-to-submit-your-blog-to/5998/>
- <http://www.best-web-directories.com/blog-directories.htm>



The picture above highlights some of the most popular and free social media tools available for nonprofits. Notice that each social media tool is good for achieving different kinds of marketing and outreach goals. What are your marketing goals and which of these tools seem most appropriate for helping you achieve those goals?

Microblogs: These are one of the most popular marketing tools out there. Why you might ask? Because it's easy to use, free, and gives you an opportunity to reach out to a large and broad audience. **Twitter** is the most popular type of microblog out there but there are also **Tumblr**, and **Plurk**. All you need to do to get started with these tools is create a free account and reach out to potential allies and other stakeholders who are also using these tools. Most importantly, don't forget to let people know you are out there-make sure you do regular updates about any news and happenings with your organization or that are related to your causes. It is not always easy to constantly update your microblogging accounts but consider this as an avenue for endless free promotion for your program. Below is a list of some cool and impactful things you can do with any of the microblogs above:

Do Research

- Pose questions or do an online poll on ways that you can improve your program and services.
- Ask questions on which issues are most important to people and engage them on developing solutions to problems.

Engage the Public

- Engage the public by allowing them to post a question of the day for your staff to answer.
- Start public advocacy campaign. Two services named [Twitition](#) and [TinyPetition](#) are dedicated to organizing people on Twitter for advocacy efforts or to raise money for a cause.

Collect and Share Information

- On Twitter, curate information relevant to your organization into subtopics using hashtags. A hashtag is a way to combine global Tweets about a particular topic. They can help people interested in your issues find your tweets. Click here to read more on how you can do this: <http://twitter.pbworks.com/Hashtags>
- Post a question to your followers on community needs that are relevant to your organization and compile the answers in your outreach publications and other advocacy materials.

Video Sharing Sites: These days most people have heard of **YouTube**, but have you heard of **Vimeo** and **Blip.tv**? The latter two are also video-sharing sites, which like YouTube provide an avenue for promoting your services and information by providing real-life video clips about your programs and the social causes you are involved in. With affordable video recording or video producing software currently available, most nonprofits can create simple informational videos to post on these sites. Nonprofits can also recruit interns specializing in video production from local colleges for assistance. Make sure to check to see if these sites offer any special programs and services for nonprofits. Check out YouTube's nonprofit page, www.youtube.com/nonprofits for information on what special services may be available to you.

Photo-sharing: You can use photo-sharing sites like **Flickr**, **Picasa**, and **PhotoBucket** to upload pictures and publish them for the general public to view. Start a profile and share pictures of any events, meetings, or community outreach your organization is doing. Make sure to incorporate keywords into the description for each picture. Flickr also offers services for non-profits so check out their page, Flickr for Good, www.flickr.com/good for more info.

Geo-location Based Services: Geo-location social networks such as Foursquare, Gowalla, and Whrll are like a combination between a social networking site and Smartphone app, in which users on the go can "check-in" to places and offer suggestions on things to do in the community. Many for-profit businesses have developed unique ways they can be used to engage customers and for promotional purposes; and nonprofits are getting savvy at adapting these lessons to the nonprofit world. If you are curious about using geo-location social networks for your organization but are unsure of how to use them, check out the cool and easy ideas below.

Get Inspired!

Ideas to get you started on the geo-location social network—Foursquare

Make Your Non Profit a Venue on Foursquare

Make your organization a “venue” on Foursquare so that when people are in your area, a notification about your organization will show up. You can take advantage of this feature by adding advocacy action alerts that will show up when others view your organization to alert people to any advocacy needed or even to recruit volunteers, etc. Also encourage your staff to start individual Foursquare accounts so that they can promote their activities. For example, if you have an outreach or community education component to your work, your outreach staff could check-in at venues where they are holding a workshop, attending a task force, or participating in any other community meetings or events.

Bring Awareness to Resources in Your Community

Use the “tips” feature on Foursquare to bring awareness about resources available in your community. Have your staff create individual Foursquare accounts and have them leave tips about locations in the community that could be helpful to your client population. You can also encourage local community leaders to leave tips as well. Your staff can also include facts about your organization, hours of operation, nearest subway or bus stop.

Promoting and Enhancing the Donation Experience

Consider this idea to enhance the donor giving experience and support local businesses. Talk to local stores and businesses and see if they will make a tax deductible donation to your organization if a number of people come to their store. For example, talk to your local coffee shop and see if they will make a donation to your organization if 50 people will “check” into their shop within a period of time. You can promote this arrangement in your other social networks accounts such as Twitter, Facebook, etc. and let people know that if they check in at this store, the shop will make a donation to your organization. This is a win-win situation for all- you can promote your organization and raise funds; local businesses also get promotion and business, and customers feel involved and glad they made a direct contribution.

Community Education and Public Awareness

Many organizations have been using Foursquare to educate the public and bring awareness to issues affecting the community. For example, the National Wildlife Foundation developed a campaign where every time someone “checked” into an outdoor space like a park or natural landmark, they would receive NWF sponsored tips of the wildlife they should look for, or views to not miss. The idea is to make visiting outdoor spaces interesting and informative and increase awareness, while at the same time increasing awareness of NWF.

Communicate With Attendees at Advocacy Events

If you organize advocacy events such as rallies, public meetings, etc. use the “check-in” feature on Foursquare to have attendees “check-in” to the event. You can then use this feature to communicate with attendees and send logistical and other information.

Generate Goodwill: Support Your Allies

The amazing day to day work that nonprofit organizations do often goes unnoticed. Use the “shout-out” feature on Foursquare to congratulate and praise other organizations, community leaders, etc. every time you “check” into a venue. This little act can go a long way in generating good will and strengthening community ties.

Social Bookmarking: Social Bookmarking is a service that allows you to bookmark content, share it with the world and get recommendations about content that you might like based on what people with similar interests to yours have bookmarked. Organizations have also used it to build communities around common interests. For example, if your organization posts a resource that is interesting, other people can comment on it and start an online conversation around it. If your organization creates informational handouts for the community you can upload them to social bookmarking sites to generate some buzz. For a list of social bookmarking sites [click here](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_bookmarking_websites#Social_bookmarking), (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_bookmarking_websites#Social_bookmarking).

LinkedIn: Originally LinkedIn served as an online resume, where individuals could create business profiles and network with others in their field. Over the years, LinkedIn has added many new tools which nonprofits can use to promote their organization and staff. Create a LinkedIn profile and create a group; when you do this, make sure you create the group under the “Nonprofit” category and select “Yes” to both being listed in the “Groups Directory” and for being displayed on “Profiles”. Groups in LinkedIn can be very powerful, but they do need to be monitored and managed at least once a week. You need to watch out for spammers and overzealous experts, and you need to feature the best discussions. You might want to consider creating a Group for a Cause/Issue in addition to one for your nonprofit. Lastly, create a company page. Through LinkedIn you can recruit staff, volunteers, post questions to ask your community, share your presentations via SlidShare.com, answer questions in the nonprofit category, etc. And, there are many apps which you can download to make your profile interactive.

Slideshare: SlideShare allows you to share your PowerPoint or other presentations with the public. This is a good way to share your expertise with the world and build your organization’s reputation and positive brand association. [Click here to read about other creative ways you can use Slide Share](http://www.slideshare.net/kanter/slideshare-4459108), (<http://www.slideshare.net/kanter/slideshare-4459108>).

TIP

Ask your staff to add links to your various social network profiles in their email signatures.

By now, you're probably wondering, **"How am I supposed to manage all of these different social network accounts?"**

Thankfully some people have already thought that problem out for you! There are several tools to help you sync your different social network accounts into one account; making it easier and faster to post information and keep the content fresh. For example, if you use Hootsuite and sync your blog with your social networks accounts, any new posts you make will automatically be posted on Facebook and Twitter.

Below is a list of some free tools to make your social networking faster and easier:

Tools	Social Media Channel(s)	Utility
Hootsuite, Tweetdeck	Twitter, Facebook, blog	Managing all social media activity
Spredfast	Twitter, Facebook, blog	Managing activity and tracking social media metrics associated with all accounts
Social Mention	All social media	Real-time search and alerts
Addictomatic	All social media	Automatically personalized dashboard of all social activity
Bit.ly	Links in social media	Clicks, conversions
TwitterCounter	Twitter	Followers, following, retweeters, community info
Twitalyzer	Twitter	Finding influencers, retweeters, community info
Klout	Twitter	Influencing, influencers, type of user
Twitter Analyzer	Twitter	Charts of mention, friend trends, subjects, hashtags used
What the Hashtag?!	Twitter	Number of tweets
Facebook Insights	Facebook	Fans, demographics, interactions
Technorati	Blogs	Linkbacks, blog rank

The above table of social network coordinating tools was originally published in the Convio report, Going Social: Tapping into Social Media for Nonprofit Success: http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/files/Convio_Social-Media-Guide.pdf

III. Measuring Metrics

Tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) is a critical step that enables you to measure the impact of your SEO and SM strategies, as well as improve each aspect of your link building efforts. This will help you to determine what's working best so you'll know where to concentrate your efforts, and identify what's not working and should be stopped. The information you gather can also be used in your grant and marketing reports to demonstrate the impact of the outreach you have done. Make sure to focus your efforts on the top 3 search engines: Google, Bing, and Yahoo and add the analytics programs for each of these sites to your website, blog, or social network profiles. You can find the analytics programs here: *Google Analytics* (<http://www.google.com/analytics/>), *Bing Analytics*, (<http://www.bing.com/toolbox/webmasters/>), and *Yahoo Analytics* (<http://web.analytics.yahoo.com/>). Additional free web analytics programs you can explore: <http://getclicky.com/>, <http://piwik.org/>,

Keeping track of SEO and SM metrics can be as basic as creating an excel spreadsheet for recording metrics on a monthly basis. If you have no way of measuring your organization's website metrics, consider installing Google Webmaster. This tool will provide you with detailed information on the number of visits, page views, length of visits, number of unique visitors, and keywords people use to find the website.

The key SEO metrics you should be measuring are:

- 1. Visits** – A visit is each time someone comes to your website, regardless of how many pages they view. If the same person leaves your site and comes back later that day, week or month, it is counted as a new visit.
- 2. Unique Visitors/Visits** –A unique visitor is access from a single IP to a web server that generates page views and hits during a particular visit. This is a good metric but it also has its limitations as it can come from multiple computers sharing the same IP address, or a variety of other complications. However, keeping these limitations in mind, it's a helpful metric to get a general idea of the number of new visitors checking out your website.
- 3. Page Views** – This calculates how many individual web pages visitors view over a given period of time. The metrics vary from a day, a month, a year, etc. It can also show how many pages a visitor views per visit. You can see how many times each particular page was viewed to see which parts of your site are most popular. It is also helpful to track the average number of pages viewed each visit to measure whether viewers find your site interesting; if the average visitor views only one page and leaves, you may have a problem. If this isn't listed in your analytics package, you can calculate it yourself by comparing the total number of page views to the total number of visits; if the numbers are fairly close, then most of your users aren't viewing multiple pages of content on your site. On the other hand, if visitors are viewing multiple pages during a visit, a higher number arguably demonstrates the quality of each visit.
- 4. Length of Visit:** visit length reports show how long visitors spend looking at your site. This is calculated by taking the time they looked at the first page to the time the last page request was made. Length of visit and number of page views can give you metrics to measure the "quality" of the visit. For example, if people are spending on average about 5 minutes on your website and viewing many different pages this means visitors are finding your website interesting. If visitors visit your website for 2 minutes and only look at two pages then this is a good sign that

you need to reevaluate both the content of your website and the design, and redesign layout to make it more appealing for visitors.

5. **Referrer** – This metric list the site the visitor came from, i.e. which site they clicked from to get to your website, often one of the major search engines. Also known as the referring source or referral.
6. **Keyword Phrases** – List of keywords that were searched on to find your site. Very helpful in analyzing the effectiveness of your search engine optimization efforts, since you can immediately determine which keywords are bringing traffic to your site. It’s good to compare this list with the keywords list you developed at the start of your SEO effort. **Use the sample form in Appendix 2 to help you keep a track of the top twenty keyword phrases that trigger results to your website and/or blog.**

On your excel spreadsheet, also create a page related to your link building efforts. In this page, you should track link opportunities by **type**. For example:

- Directory listings
- News/PR
- Guest posts
- Link exchanges
- Forums
- Membership organizations
- Donations
- Syndication
- Related content sites

Two other metrics to measure during your link building work are “**Average Link Quality**”. As mentioned earlier, links from websites with .edu or .gov are the holy grails of link building, so you can rank these as high quality. Links from well-known and reputable nonprofits websites can also rank high in link quality. For example if the RedCross.org posted a link to your site, this would qualify as a high quality link because this nonprofit is nationwide and reputable. Links for state and local government agencies can also rank as high quality links. Links that may be considered low in quality would be from small local programs that may have a very basic website and do not keep their websites updated. You can use the Page Authority tool, http://www.prchecker.info/check_page_rank.php to find the authority of a website as interpreted by search engines. Websites that rank a minimum of 6 out of 10 or better have high page authority and are optimal for making a request that they add a link to your page on their site

Social Media metrics that you want to measure are:

Blog Metrics

- # of Blog comments and responses
- # links back to your blog
- # of times any of your blog or social media posts were picked up by reputable thought leaders in your niche. Also, keep track of the topics which were picked up.
- # of times media picked up any of your blog content

Facebook Metrics

- # of Facebook “likes” (previously fans)
- Money raised through Facebook Causes

- # of people who RSVP'd to any events you posted on Facebook
- # of Facebook “likes” on specific posts

Twitter Metrics

- # of times your organization is mentioned
- # of Twitter retweets
- # of Twitter followers over time
- # of times your tweets were picked up by influencers
- Money raised through Twitter-sourced donations

IV. 27 tips to try now!

1. **Use your expertise:** Find a topic that your organization specializes in and write a brief article and submit it for review and feature at: <http://ezinearticles.com/> and <http://www.ehow.com/>. If your organization has already written informational materials for the community consider submitting those to these websites.
2. **Maximize your SEO knowledge:** Download these free toolbars and always have valuable information about website rankings, keywords, and more at your fingertips. Install Google toolbar by going to <http://www.google.com/toolbar/ff/index.html>. If you use Firefox as your web browser you can install Firefox Add on Tool Bar, using [<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/56804/>]. If you do not have Firefox but are interested in using this toolbar you will first have to download Firefox as a browser before downloading the toolbar.
3. **Know where you stand:** Find out how search engines are analyzing your website or a competitor’s website. With <http://www.submitexpress.com/analyzer/> you can learn about any fixes that you may need to make to your meta tags, website file size, and how you are distributing your keywords on your website, also known as keyword density.
4. **Analyze the impact of your Tweets:** If your organization has a Twitter account, use <http://tweetreach.com> to analyze the impact of your tweets. Review and store these stats regularly on your metrics spreadsheet (/) and pay close attention to any particular patterns such as topics that have the greatest impact or who are your biggest supporters.
5. **Get inspired.** Visit Twitter's Hope 140 program, <http://www.hope140.org/> to learn about all of the creative ways not-for-profits around the world are using Twitter for advocacy.
6. **Promote your organization:** Create a branded page in Foursquare or other geolocating sites and promote any community outreach or activities that your staff may be engaging in.
7. **Be a storyteller:** Download the Facebook stories app and share with the world all of the wonderful work that you do. If appropriate, share your success stories or encourage your clients to share their story on your Facebook profile.
8. **Make it easier for yourself:** Reduce work by signing up to connect your Twitter feed to your blog and Facebook accounts: <http://twitterfeed.com/>. Make sure to review the table of social network tools on page 25.

9. **Find out who is linking to your home page:** Use **Google's link: query modifier** in front of your domain name, for example, [link:www.ChildrenCenterQueens.com](#), to find out who is linking to your homepage.
10. **Find out how many websites mention your domain:** To do this type your domain address after the word site: into the Google search box. For example, [site:www.ChildrenCenterQueens.com](#). This will show all the documents that mention your URL in regular text.
11. **Keep track of your organization:** Do Google Alerts for your organization's name and other key staff members to get reports every time their names are mentioned on the internet.
12. **Check Your Link Popularity:** Use the website "[Who Links to Me](#)" to get a quick summary of web sites and blogs that link to you. These results are more comprehensive than those produced by Google's *link:* modifier and it even displays your Google page rank.
13. **Find out who is visiting your website:** The Microsoft Demographics-Prediction tool, <http://adlab.microsoft.com/Demographics-Prediction/DPUI.aspx> predict a user's age, gender, and other demographic information, based on their online behavior, such as what queries they search for online and what web sites they visit.
14. **Explore people's search patterns:** <http://www.google.com/insights/search/?hl=en-US#> Google Insights for Search analyzes a portion of worldwide Google web searches from all Google domains to compute how many searches have been done for the terms you've entered, relative to the total number of searches done on Google over time. You can use this tool to find out what people from certain locales are searching for in order to do targeted outreach. For example, if you see a pattern where people in Buffalo, NY for the past two months have been searching the internet a lot for information on how to deal with a consumer debt case, this might be an alert that community education or a workshop may be needed in order to educate the public on their rights in consumer debt cases. At the same time, this information could help you develop new program and services to meet the needs of your community as you notice certain topics of need or interest show up on Google Insights.
15. **Play around with free SEO tools:** <http://www.seomoz.org/tools>: The SEOmoz toolset includes over twenty SEO tools designed to help with every aspect of search engine optimization. Many can be used for a limited time before you will be asked to sign up for a membership, but for those interested in advanced SEO techniques, this website is definitely worth exploring.
16. **Enhance your website:** Visit this site to get tips on how to enhance your website so that Google can find it, index and rank it better:
<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=35769>
17. **Launch public awareness campaigns with Twitter:** If you want to bring awareness about a cause important to your organization and you have a Twitter account consider launching a Twibbon. Simply visit <http://twibbon.com/> select a cause and a ribbon and promote your cause on your Facebook and Twitter accounts.
18. **Find out who is reading your tweets:** Use <http://tweetstats.com/> to create a simple graphic on the viewership of your twitter account.

19. **Create a “how-to” presentation:** Use <http://screenr.com/> and their free program Jing to record screenshots of resources on your computer and then broadcast them on your website or other social network profiles.
20. **Learn, learn, learn:** Read these excellent resources on additional social media tools for you to explore: [SlideShare Presentation on Digital Social Media for Nonprofits](#) and [101 Social Media Tools for Social Media Marketing and More](#).
21. **Create a customized listening dashboard** using iGoogle. Pull in RSS feeds of Twitter mentions, blog searches and other news relevant to your organization. If you are the staff in charge of marketing, consider having this dashboard as your homepage so that you can easily monitor your online brand and the activity of your supporters.
22. **Protect Your Website’s Domain:** In order to prevent for-profit organizations from purchasing website domains similar to your organization’s consider purchasing additional domains that resemble yours. Once you have purchased these domains, do 301 redirects, which are the most Search Engine Friendly way to redirect traffic to your website. To read more about how to do 301 redirects, [click here](#).
23. **Get your organization listed on Wikipedia.** Wikipedia has specific criteria in who they list, but if you are reputable and can write a compelling and objective narrative about your organization, you could get listed. The key is to be objective and stick with information about your organization that can be validated by 3rd party reports, resources, etc. If you are unable to get your organization listed, try to add links to your website to existing Wikipedia pages that discuss issues relevant to your organization, relevant state or national advocacy events your organization was a part of, or that lists organizations which are similar to yours or you have partnered with at some point.
24. **Make “sharing” your website easier:** Visit, <http://www.addthis.com/>, and download an “add this” button to your website or blogs. This will allow for others to easily share your information across multiple platforms such as email, social network sites, blogs, etc. Make sure to also sign up for their free analytics program so you can track usage, etc.
25. **Sign up for social media alerts:** Go to <http://socialmention.com/> and sign up to receive alerts when your organization, staff, or issues you are interested in come up in social media platforms.
26. **Share your images, brochures, pdfs, and other files on Twitter:** <http://twileshare.com/> now lets you upload and share files on Twitter. Do you have a new resource or brochure that your organization did that you are proud of? If so, share with your followers and see how widely it is distributed among your network.
27. **Start a Jumo Non Profit Profile:** Watch out Facebook and Ning, there is a new social network in town, and it’s called Jumo, <http://www.jumo.com/>. Jumo is a social network for non profits organizations that tries to enhance advocacy efforts by connecting individuals and organizations around common issues and goals. It was just launched in early 2011, so there is little we know about it, but it’s definitely worth exploring.

**Dashboard 1:
Sample Internet Marketing Action Plan**

Search Engine Optimization and Social Media Marketing Action Plan	Date	
	Next Review	

<p>Internet Marketing Goals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve website rankings 2. Launch a public advocacy campaign 3. 4.
--

SEO ACTIONS

Goal	SEO Action	Who	When	Status
Improve website rankings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Keyword Analysis b) Link building c) Site Review and Analysis d) Develop quality content 	JM	Starting 1/20/11	Pending

SM ACTIONS

Goal	SM Action	Who	When	Status
Improve website rankings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Start a blog to promote content on our web and our organization b) Start a Twitter account 			

Dashboard 2:

Top 20 Keyword Phrases triggering results to your site; per month

Use this form to track the top twenty keyword phrases triggering results to your site (your organization's website and/or blog). Using either Google Analytics or another website usage tracking system, each month put down the total number of visits that keyword phrase brought to your website.

KEYWORD PHRASE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Legal aid NY	5,000 visits	5,540 visits											

Total													

Dashboard 3: Ranking of Selected Keywords Form

Use this form to keep a track of how you are ranking for the keyword phrases you've selected. Make sure to check this every **three months, (4 quarters)**.
Please note: You don't need to get keyword rankings for all of the three search engines. It is recommended that you look at your rankings in all three, but if you decide to focus your SEO efforts on the top 2 search engines (Google and Bing) or just Google, delete the rows for those search engines you will not be collecting information on. This is just a template; feel free to adapt it to your needs.

How to fill out this form:

Step 1: In the first column put in your keyword phrase.

Step 2: Every three months put down the local monthly search volume for the keyword phrase using any of the search engine's analytics programs. Put this figure in the columns labeled, "**local monthly search volume quarter 1, local monthly search volume quarter 2**", etc.

Step 3: In columns labeled, "**Ranking Quarter**", put down your website's ranking for that keyword phrase. You can get this information by putting that keyword phrase in the given search engine and then where your website shows up in for the search results. As an example, if you type in the phrase, "new York free legal help in Google", the website, www.legalhelp.com comes up as the 5th search result.

Step 4: Finally, in the "**Landing Page**" column put down the link that the search result from a search engine takes people to. This is called the **landing page**. In many cases the landing page in search results may be the home page of your website but many times, the search result link may take someone to other parts of your website. Make sure to document the landing page for each keyword and search engine you are looking at in that last column.

****There is a free program that allows you to find your ranking for selected keywords for only Google. This is a free program and may be unreliable at times, but you can use it with some discretion. The program is called CleverStat and you can download it here: <http://www.cleverstat.com/en/google-monitor-query.htm>****

		Local Monthly Search Volume Quarter 1	Ranking Quarter 1	Local Monthly Search Volume Quarter 2	Ranking Quarter 2	Local Monthly Search Volume Quarter 3	Ranking Quarter 3	Local Monthly Search Volume Quarter 4	Ranking Quarter 4	Landing Page
Keyword	New York free legal help									
	Google	320,000	5	350,000	3					www.legalhelp.com
	Bing		3		1					www.legalhelp.com
	Yahoo	400,000		450,000						
Keyword										
	Google									
	Bing									
	Yahoo									
Keyword										
	Google									
	Bing									
	Yahoo									
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**Dashboard 4:
Link Opportunities**

Use this form to track the websites that have linked to your site and to track the links that you still have to pursue.

#	Page Title/URL	Page Authority	Type	Anchor Text/URL the link goes to	Contact Info
1	Queens Community Center	6/10	Non profit	A Community Center in Elmhurst, Queens	
	www.queenscommunity.org			www.queenscommunity.org	
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

**Dashboard 5
Website Metrics**

Month	Visits	Unique Visitors	Page Views	Length of Visit	Activity by Search Engine	TOTAL
January						
February						
March						
April						
May						
June						
July						
August						
September						
October						
November						
December						
Monthly Totals						

**Dashboard 6
Social Media Metrics**

Month:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Blog													
# of posts													
# of comments and responses													
# of times your post was picked up by others													
# of subscribers													
Facebook													
# of posts													
\$ raised through Causes													
# social media posts picked up by others													
# of likes of specific posts													
Twitter													
# of times org mentioned													
# of retweets													
# of new followers													
\$ raised through Twitter													
YouTube													
# of friends or subscribers													
Flickr													

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