Nonprofit 911 – January 23, 2008
How to Use Social Networking Websites to Recruit New Supporters
with Katya Andresen, Ben Rattray and Heather Mansfield
Sponsored by Network for Good

The MP3 audio transcript can be found at
www.Fundraising123.org or www.nonprofit911.org

Katya Andresen: Hi, everyone. Welcome to the January 23 Nonprofit 911 call sponsored by Network for Good. This is Katya Andresen, and I am the Vice President of Marketing here at Network for Good. We are very happy you joined us today.

Before I introduce our speakers, I just want to let you know a little bit about Network for Good if you are not familiar with us. We are a nonprofit just like most of you on the phone and our mission is to help other nonprofits, like you, raise money online.

These calls, including the one you are participating in today, are one of the many free resources we have to help nonprofits like you raise money online and increase your online fundraising results.

In addition to these calls, we also provide online fundraising services. So, if you're not raising money right now on your website or if you don't have a way to do that that you are happy with, we hope you will consider us to help you with those services. We also have email outreach and donor database services.

In fact, last year over 18,000 nonprofits raised over $53M through Network for Good services. So, that's about all to say about Network for Good because this isn't a sales call, but if you want to learn more about any of that you are welcome to visit www.Fundraising123.org to learn more about how you can take a 60-day free trial of our online donation processing service which is called 'Custom Donate Now'.

We had over a thousand people register for this series on 'Energizing Your Outreach and Fundraising through Social Networking', so we're very excited about that. If you joined us for Part one a couple of weeks ago you will remember that I focused on tips for using Network for Good's charity badges to fundraise and raise up to $50,000 through America's Giving Challenge.

I just wanted to let you know that the challenge is still going on. It's not too late to get involved. It actually runs for eight more days, and so if you missed that first call, feel free to go to www.Fundraising123.org, click on training. You can listen to the transcripts. You can read the transcripts as well and find out how to get involved. The website for signing up for the Giving Challenge is www.parade.com/givingchallenge. So, that was the last call on social networking.

Today we are going to shift gears a bit and think outside of the immediate America's Giving Challenge and look more expansively at how we can use the social networking websites, like Change.org or MySpace to recruit new supporters. So, we have some great speakers on that topic

today.

Now, all the lines have been muted and we are recording the calls, so don't feel that you need to scribble notes. They are going to be available at www.Fundraising123.org/change. If you'd like to follow along and if you're not in front of a computer, don't worry you can continue your learning there at www.Fundraising123.org/change after the call. As usual, you will be able to access an audio transcript beginning tomorrow morning.

If you'd like to reach us during the call - if you're having problems hearing or you have questions for our speakers - please email us at any time. We are going to be allowing the folks from Change to speak for a while, but they are really happy to take your questions. You can ask questions by emailing fundraising123@networkforgood.org.

Enough from me, I want to introduce Heather Mansfield and Ben Rattray from Change.org. We are very excited to say that Change.org is a new partner of Network for Good, and Ben is the founder. Change.org hosts a community of social networks for over a million nonprofits, enabling organizations to better engage their supporters, recruit new donors and spread vital fundraising and advocacy campaigns across the Web.

I'd also like to welcome Heather Mansfield. She is the online community manager for Change.org and has over 10 years of nonprofit fundraising and online community organizing experience to the world of social networking. We're delighted to have them here with us today to educate us some more about all the social networks out there and about Change.org specifically.

Without further ado, here are Ben and Heather.

Heather Mansfield: Hi, there. Thank you so much.

Ben Rattray: Hello, Katya.

Heather: That was a nice introduction. I appreciate that. Today I'm going to speak about 30 or 40 minutes, and I'm going to try to leave a good amount of time for questions because I know a lot of people have questions. It's always the most interesting aspect of these sorts of talks. I'm going to talk about 20 minutes about MySpace and then 20 about Change.org.

If you could and if you are in front of a computer, please do go to www.Fundraising123.org/change because there are a lot of links there that I would like you to look at while we're doing this. But, if you're not in front of a computer that's fine.

I'm going to start by giving some background information, mainly with defining Web 2.0. I give trainings all over the country about how to use MySpace, Facebook, YouTube and Change.org, and the audience always varies, from people who are already using these sites to people who have never even heard of the term "Web 2.0".

Web 1.0 happened in the 90s when we were all getting our websites up and our e-newsletters and our "donate now" buttons. And Web 2.0 is something that started in the last four to five years,

and it basically refers to this second generation of web-based communities and services, like social networking websites, wikis and blogs. The obvious examples are MySpace, Facebook, YouTube and Change.org.

And one point that I want to make: when I talk to a lot of nonprofits who are overwhelmed by this second-generation Web 2.0 in general, they get a little confused in thinking, "Well, wait. Are you telling me my Web 1.0 tools aren't relevant anymore, and I need to shift away from all of that and move into Web 2.0?"

And what I really try to focus and tell nonprofit professionals, particularly the communicators and the fundraisers, is that your Web 1.0 tools, being your website and your e-newsletter and your ability to accept online donations, are still the core and the most important aspect of your web communications campaigns.

And if you can imagine this as a bicycle wheel, and you have your website and your e-newsletter and your online donation or your "donate now" button in the middle. And then, around it, you have spokes, and each one of those spokes are sites like MySpace, YouTube, Change.org, Facebook, Digg, Blogger, Wikipedia, Twitter, Flickr. They're all rotating around that center aspect, that center spoke, driving traffic back to your website, getting you e-newsletter subscribers, and finding new donors.

So I just really always try to communicate that point, particularly to nonprofit professionals who are overwhelmed, is that Web 2.0 is just an addition to Web 1.0 and not meant to replace your Web 1.0 tools. So the last 10 years that you've spent perfecting Web 1.0 was definitely not a waste of your time and resources.

I'm going to shift into talking, now, about the top five social networking websites in the world. And I'm going to begin by throwing out some statistics. And I want to start with a quote by Mark Twain, who said, "There are three kinds of lies: there are lies, damn lies and statistics." And stats are all over the place on social networking websites, as far as age and who's using them and where, and so take these stats with a grain of salt.

The top five social networking websites, the first being MySpace, with 221 million registered users, which is equivalent to the 11th largest country in the world and two-thirds of the United States. There is a disclaimer there, in saying that probably only half of those are actually active. So we're looking at maybe 110 million active users on MySpace.

The second most visited, most popular social networking website is called Orkut. And it's owned by Google, and it's got 67 million registered users. It's very popular in Europe and Australia.

The third is Facebook. It's got 62 million registered users. And their stats, they track a little bit differently, so you can actually count on 62 million people on Facebook being active. And of course, it's growing.

The fourth most visited, most used social networking websites are two new ones. Actually, one of them is new, and one of them disappeared for a while and seems to be coming back. The new

one is hi5.com, and Friendster seems to be coming back, and they're at 50 million.

And then Bebo is the fifth, and it's very popular in Europe: bebo.com. And it's got 40 million registered users.

I'm going to shift, now, into talking a little bit about MySpace. I got on MySpace about two years ago. At the time, there were maybe 50 nonprofits on MySpace, and I just got this idea to start a portal to nonprofit organizations that were using MySpace. So, if you are in front of the Internet, in front of your computer, you can go to www.MySpace.com/nonprofitorganizations, and you'll see the portal there that I started. And I feature a new nonprofit each month and an activist and a socially responsible business and musician.

I have no idea how many nonprofits are now using MySpace. There's absolutely no way to track this information. As I said, at the time when I got on about two years ago, it was anywhere from 10 to 50. Now it could be anywhere from 30 to 100, 000 worldwide. There's really no way of tracking, because MySpace grew organically. People -- they probably never guessed that people would convert an individual profile into a nonprofit organization profile so that organizational structure isn't there to see how many nonprofits are actually on MySpace.

MySpace is the third visited website in the United States. Yahoo is number one. Google is number two. MySpace, as I said, is number three. YouTube is four. Facebook is five. Then six, seven, eight, nine and ten are Windows Live, eBay, Wikipedia, the Microsoft Network and Craigslist.org.

MySpace is number six in the world. Yahoo, Google, YouTube, Windows Live and Microsoft Network are the first five. And then comes MySpace at number six, Facebook at number seven, Hi5 at number eight, Wikipedia is nine and number ten, the 10th most visited website in the world is Orkut.

If you go to the www.Fundraising123.org/change, each month I send out an e-newsletter that focuses on three MySpace best practices and three Change.org best practices. I really try to break them down into practical 'how' to best practices. If you wanted to subscribe to that e-newsletter, just go visit www.Fundraising123.org/change and then click on the number eight link.

But there are three that I really want to cover today - three MySpace best practices. The first one is embrace the chaos that is MySpace. I have to say, I absolutely love this site. And what I love about this site is that there are very few rules. It's mostly uncensored. You can pretty much do anything you want on MySpace as long as you don't cover the banner advertising at the top and put any X-rated photos on MySpace. It's pretty much free-rein. I like to call it the "Wild, Wild West" of the Internet. It is thriving on my metropolis.

In my humble opinion, I think the world has never seen anything quite like how people are organizing on MySpace worldwide. MySpace reflects the world upon which we live. So if it's happening in society, it's happening on MySpace.

So embracing the chaos, it's really hard, I know, for a lot of non-profit communicators and it

was, for me, at first. When we learned in Web 1.0 - you know, to keep everything very clean and neat and linear and balanced, MySpace is not that. A lot of people who don't use MySpace, they go to MySpace and like: "Oh my God. It's so ugly. How people can use that site?"

If you focus on that aspect of it - that it's ugly - you'll miss the bigger picture of what is actually occurring on that site. If you can just let it go a little bit and get on there and use MySpace and create a nice MySpace that's clean but try not to get too hung up on the fact that there is just crazy stuff floating everywhere because MySpace is not neat and linear and just embrace it because it's incredibly powerful.

The second MySpace best practice that I want to talk about is letting go of your fear of MySpace. This has subsided quite a bit over the last year, I've noticed. You know, MySpace does not get the best press coverage, and they really like to focus on the aspect of such sexual predators who are on MySpace. But I have to say that anything that I see on prime time television after being on MySpace for two years, you know, CSI - Crime Scene Investigation, anything I'd see on that in five minutes is worst than anything I've ever seen on MySpace.

The whole MySpace is a pioneer that gets top records for trying to, actually, find registered sexual offenders on MySpace, so try not to be fearful of it. Another thing is nonprofit communicators are still struggling a little bit with letting go of control of the message. So they'll try to not let people post comments on their MySpace.

Again, I just urge you to let that go because the worst thing that's going to happen is you're going to get a thousand comments on your MySpace profile - 999 of them are going to be positive, one of them is going to be bad and worst case scenario that one is going to sit on your MySpace profile for 24 hours.

So try to let go of controlling the message on MySpace. People are nice, the do-gooders on MySpace are very friendly and there's lot of them. There are so many - there are millions of people on MySpace that want to advocate for your nonprofit, that are using MySpace for social causes and to be a part of social change.

The third MySpace best practice that I wanted to touch on is if anyone who knows MySpace knows that it started as a social networking website for musicians. There is something that has not happened yet on MySpace, which is famous musicians which by far get the most traffic on MySpace - they have not yet started advocating for nonprofits in their top friends. The top friends' aspect of MySpace is what makes MySpace so powerful.

So right now, if you go to MySpace and you go to the music section and you go to Top Artists and I'm talking, you know, Fergie, Green Day, U2 - they don't have nonprofits on their top friends. U2/Bono doesn't even have the one campaign in his top friends, so there's just a huge disconnect between the nonprofit community and musicians on MySpace.

Over the last couple of months, I've noticed this has started to change. Wilco, for example, is promoting nonprofit - all these other bands, I have a list, but I can't remember right now - they are starting to promote nonprofits on MySpace. When this happens, we haven't even begun to

reach critical mass on MySpace. I just want to point out that it hasn't happened yet; it's not too late to get on MySpace. It's not too late to get on there and asked the musicians and the celebrities and all that to promote you. They will, if you ask. It might take a couple of times, but there's a lot of potential still out there.

OK. So I'm going to go through this very quickly. Why should nonprofit organizations have a MySpace? One of the first reasons and it depends upon your mission. If you're local -- first of all, let's say, if you're a local small organization, you can search by zip code, so you can find people in your area to become friends with. If you're global, MySpace is going global. There are over 20 MySpace sites and they're written in over 20 different languages and that is that first link at www.Fundraising123.org/change.

You can actually see the different MySpace sites that are popping up all over the world. We're all interconnected; you can be friends with someone in Russia where their MySpace is written in Russian. It's not broken down by different regional areas. I do want to point out that's one thing that I love about MySpace as I said, is that it is a reflection of our global community, every race, every income level, every educational level, every demographic you can possibly imagine, is on MySpace in large numbers.

Another reason why your organization should be on MySpace and what I think is, actually, the most important reason, is to drive traffic to your website. MySpace profiles are entirely customizable and you use HTML to design them. This is going to be your hardest part of getting set up on MySpace - is getting a design. As I said, if you go visit my Best Practices, there are a lot of tips there on designing. But people aren't on MySpace to read; you don't put a lot of text. People aren't going to go on there and read about your organization. You put in images and every image should be a link back to a page on your website.

Another reason to use MySpace is to build your e-newsletter list. You can insert HTML code where people enter their first, last name, email address and hit submit, and it goes straight into your database for people to subscribe to your monthly e-newsletter list. So MySpace is a way to market and communicate and find new donors. Find new supporters, drive them to your website, and subscribe them to your e-newsletter list.

Then, of course, there's fundraising. Actually, we're going to look at the site here in a minute and talk about that. Then to promote your e-advocacy campaigns and to actually use MySpace to drive people to other social networking websites like change.org or Facebook or YouTube. So if you can -- I don't know how many of you are in front of the computer, but if you could click the number four link and that's MySpace.com/gorillafund, it goes to the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund MySpace.

What I just want to indicate here and show through it and if you can even see it, you're probably be able to catch the gist of what I'm trying to say, which is, they've got their basic information there and it has got a couple of paragraphs about what they do - that's it; as I said, don't put a lot of text. Then they have the change.org fund raising widget on the left, which they raised $1216.

So when you click on that 'click to donate' button, that, actually, goes to change.org and Network

for Good processes the donation and each person that donates through that fundraising widget then becomes a supporter of your change.org profile, I want to clarify here that on Facebook and MySpace, supporters are called "friends". We, on change.org, we decided to call them "supporters". So I just want to clarify that right now that on MySpace, you have friends, on Facebook, you have friends, on YouTube you have friends, on change.org, you have supporters.

So then if you were to go down to Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund MySpace and again, that's MySpace.com/gorillafund, you'll see the widget and then you'll see images of gorillas on the left. Each image is a link to their website. So there's very little text here, and you're just using MySpace. It's basically a portal or a jump-off point to your Web 1.0 tools.

You see there's also "adopt now". You can adopt gorillas and all kinds of stuff, and then you can join the Change.org community. There's a YouTube video. And if you scroll down more, you'll see a form where people can enter their name, first and last name and email, and just directly subscribe to their email newsletters.

So the point with MySpace is that it's just incredibly powerful. And the volume--I've seen the stats. A small, nonprofit organization will get on MySpace. Maybe they'll get 100 unique visitors a week to their website--nothing. They're using MySpace, so they'll jump to 500, 750, 1,000.

So, as I said, on the Diane Fossey Gorilla Fund, you use it to fundraise, through fundraising widgets. There's something on the back end called bulletins, and it's by far the most powerful aspect of MySpace. It's entirely using HTML. So you can go to my Best Practices and learn the HTML tricks. You can send around bulletins. So let's say you've got 1,000 friends, and you send around a bulletin and you're asking people to adopt a gorilla or make a donation; 100 people can see that bulletin and likely click that bulletin.

There's another aspect of nonprofit organizations having a MySpace, which is to promote e-advocacy campaigns. So we've all received emails where it says, "Fill out your name and address, and send an email to President Bush to repeal the Global Gag Rule or to help decrease auto emissions from cars".

A lot of nonprofits use those in order to build their database. Let's just be a little bit honest about that. They want to impact change, and they want to impact President Bush and the administration and Capitol Hill, or they'll create email campaigns that go to CEOs or world leaders. So that aspect is actually important, but the back end of that is that any time someone fills out an e-advocacy email campaign, that nonprofit is getting the contact information of that person.

So I'm not seeing a lot of nonprofits doing this on MySpace, which really puzzles me that they haven't quite mastered this yet. But if you're doing e-advocacy, send these around in bulletins, put this all over your MySpace, because that is just another way to capture all those people on MySpace and drive them to your website and your email campaigns to get their contact information.

So, I'm going to stop there with MySpace. And, Jono, I'm going to ask: are there any questions there that I should be asking right now, or answering right now?

Jono: Not yet. We'll break, after you talk about Change, for questions. But that's a good opportunity to remind folks that, if you have any questions about what Heather just talked about MySpace, or if you have any questions about change.org, go ahead and email us right now at fundraising123@networkforgood.org. And Heather and Ben will be taking your questions towards the end of the call.

Heather: Great. Well, I just wanted to say this call is powerful, because I just checked my email, and about 30 people have subscribed to my e-newsletter in the last 20 minutes. So it's working. That's good.

Jono: Excellent.

Heather: So I'm going to shift a little bit to change.org. And I really do urge you to go back to www.Fundraising123.org/change, and under "MySpace", you'll see eight links there. The first six are six nonprofits that are using MySpace correctly. Browse through them. Have a look at them. See what they're doing. And if you ever want to reach me, have any questions about MySpace, you can email me at heather@change.org. OK?

Now, I'm going to switch over to Change. I've been working with Change since February of 2007. When I first found out about them, I actually approached them. I wanted to work for them. What I saw that they were doing, which is basically building the first ever social networking website just for nonprofits, donors, and activists; I was like, "Wow! That is the next step. That's beyond MySpace. That's beyond Facebook."

It's because Facebook and MySpace were not built to help nonprofits and donors and activists. They're catching up. They're trying to do all this kind of stuff. But change.org was actually the first website out there, and is still the best option out there, for social networking websites, that's specifically for nonprofits, donors, and activists.

So it was February and I sent Ben an email, then the founder, and I loved what he was doing and I really just wanted to get involved. And fortunately, he took a risk on me. By the way, I used to live in California. I'm doing all of this from the buckle of the Bible belt now; I live in Springfield, Missouri. And it's kind of funny, I mean, it's just a testament to MySpace's power that I just start this little MySpace and it propels me here. Two years later I'm speaking with possibly a thousand people on my cell phone.

It's just amazing. And so I basically landed my dream job with Change. And not because I needed a job, but because I believed in what they were doing and I wanted to be a part of it. So I'm going to tell you about Change, then I'll testify. I'm not a salesperson. I had other options that I could work with at that time. I chose Change because I believe in what they do. And where the site was at in February 2007 is nothing compared to where it's at today.

So basically there are four reasons, four strong reasons why I think you should be on Change.org. And let me clarify here that unlike MySpace and Facebook, it's $20 a month to sign up for Change, but I think after you hear everything that you can do with it, because that has been...we're a small staff, we don't have a lot of resources, so we can't put an ad in magazines

everywhere and do things to advocate for Change, but I think once you hear what you can actually do with this, $20 is going to be the best 20 bucks your organization can be spending right now. And I say that wholeheartedly with conviction.

So the obvious thing, the first thing, if you sign up for Change.org, and again, if you go to www.Fundraising123.org/change, under Change.org you'll see a signup link where you can go sign up. The first thing that you get is a branded network.

So we designed your social network on Change.org, which if you want to look at one real quickly, you can go to change.org/transfairusa. That link is also on that Fundraising123 page. Just have a look at it.

That's a nice, customized social network that we branded, that we designed using their logo to match their website, same colors. So instead of going out, Transfair USA, instead of going out and hiring a company that's going to charge anywhere from $2,000 to $20,000 to create their own social network, so they don't have to use MySpace or Facebook because they're still afraid of it, here you can get...there's no reason to do that, first of all, when you can get it on change.org for $20 a month.

So we have a great design team. It's branded to match the web communications that you're already using. There are all kinds of tools there, which I'm going to talk about here in a minute. We even have...it's really good for small organizations that don't have resources to hire a fancy web designer and spend a lot of money. We have a lot of nonprofits, small nonprofits that are signing up and aren't even getting websites anymore. They're just using Change.org as their primary website.

There's a point that I want to make about change.org and why you should have a social network in addition to MySpace and Facebook is that I want you to think about change.org not as a way necessarily to find a lot of new supporters, that's one part of it, but actually think about the donors that you already have. And you're providing a service to them. This is important because if you think about the experience of Web 1.0, which was quite revolutionary at the time, where you go to a website and make an online donation and you get an email back, and it says, "Thank you for your donation". And that's it.

That's great. It was revolutionary for its time, but it's not that exciting, and it definitely doesn't fit in with Web 2.0 where the Internet's going.

On change.org they can donate, they get their donation, "Thank you for your donation". By the way, they can also log in at the end of each year and print out a tax report for all the donations they've made on change.org. So it's very easy and you don't need to send them thank-you letters.

Your donors can go, they can make a donation, they can write a testimonial, they can create a fundraising page, they can invite their friends to join, and they can get involved with advocating for your organization on the Internet in ways that you've just never seen before. They can go to your website, they can read it. They can make a donation and that's it. They can read your e-newsletter.

Change.org and social networking in general empowers the masses, the constituency, to advocate for you. And again it's that part of letting control, allowing them to do it. So instead of having one communications director or a communications fundraising team sending out the e-newsletter and working on the website, imagine if you had 100 or 500 change makers, is what we like to call them, on the Internet advocating for your organization, fundraising for your organization. So Change is about allowing your donors and your supporters to do what they do best, which is to advocate for you.

Fundraising is a fascinating aspect of change.org because I've already mentioned that you can accept online donations so if you're nonprofit and you haven't figured this out yet and you're using PayPal, Change is a great source for that and of course they're processed by Network for Good, which is the leader in the field of processing online donations. As I mentioned, donors always get a receipt so you don't need to send them one. It's saving you time, resources and postage.

They can also make donations as gifts so that's what I did this past holiday season. I went on change.org and I donated $10 to 20 different non-profits. I entered my friends' email addresses and sent them a little happy holiday message, and at the end of the year I print out one tax receipt for all of the donations I made.

You can accept online donations, people can give donations as gifts, you don't have to do any of the administrative work, send thank you letters and then we have fundraising widgets, which, I don't know how many people on this call were able to see them but as I said if you visit any of those links all of those have change.org fundraising widgets on there.

The most powerful aspect and exciting aspect of fundraising on change.org is people can create fundraising pages and this is happening more and more. I'm chatting with a lot of people on MySpace when I tell them that they can go to change.org and create a fundraising page for their favorite nonprofit. They write me back and they're like, "Oh my gosh, this is the best thing ever". So what a lot of individuals are doing is they're going to change.org; they're creating fundraising pages where they can write a couple of paragraphs of why this nonprofit is important to them; they can upload a video that they found on YouTube or upload some pictures and then they can email all their friends and ask them to make a donation to their favorite nonprofit.

A lot of folks are doing this in lieu of birthday gifts, in lieu of holiday gifts, wedding gifts, and baby gifts. A lot of people are just fed up with consumerism so we're seeing the power of fundraising pages grow so on change.org; this is another thing that you can do which is a part of that $20 a month. Each fundraising page also comes with a fundraising widget that they can embed on MySpace or their blogs that are websites, pretty much anywhere on the Internet.

Another aspect of fundraising on change.org is that if you sign up as a nonprofit you can go in and you can post fundraising projects. Right now, the default setting for your nonprofit is a general fund of $10, 000 dollars but if you go in there and let's say you want to raise $5,000 for new video equipment or $5,000 to hire a social networking intern in 2008; then you can actually post and create individual fundraising projects which people actually often find more interesting to donate to specific fundraising projects rather than just a general fund.

There is a non-profit called The Advocacy Project and their URL is change.org/advocacy and that link is listed on that fundraising123 page where they have mastered the art of fundraising projects on change.org. They've raised, I can't remember, I think it's something close to $20, 000 dollars on Change just using fundraising projects.

So that's one aspect there and then a third reason is e-advocacy and this is something that I'm personally very excited about on change.org. In the late 90s I started a website called eActivist.org and essentially it was a portal to online actions, online petitions and online email campaigns. It was very new and fresh at the time. Environmental defense was the first nonprofit to do this, and I created a website that was a portal. The problem with eAdvocacy was that a lot of nonprofits, small nonprofits, are shut out of the process because it's very expensive.

There are some venders out there that charge $150 month. It's included in the $20 a month fee at change.org that your nonprofit can now create email campaigns. This is important for two reasons: one, I have found them powerful, an example, that I have created and this has never been offered either to individuals. People can actually go onto change.org and create email campaigns.

I saw something about bullfighting one day and I was so disgusted that I researched who was the mayor of Pamplona in Spain and found out his email address and as Heather Mansfield went onto change.org and created an email campaign and populated it around MySpace. And the mayor of Pamplona got like 500 emails. And they emailed everyone, and they're like, "Yes, we understand. We're so sorry". And it was written in Spanish; I couldn't really understand the whole thing.

But eAdvocacy is still powerful. Maybe not so much if you're sending it to President Bush, because I'm sure he's getting a lot of emails these days. But targeting corporations, world leaders, third parties: very powerful.

The second aspect of that is that, guess what: you get the email address of every person that takes action. And you can actually log in to your nonprofit account. I suggest you do it once a month. View your supporter data, and you can download the email addresses into an Excel spreadsheet to put into your master database to subscribe them to the e-newsletter. So it's a strategy: using eAdvocacy, one, to make change; two, to build your contact database.

And to put this into a little bit of perspective, a lot of nonprofits are using online petition sites, just creating online petitions. And many of those charge anywhere from one to two dollars per email address. What you're paying on change.org, $20--OK, you get 20 email addresses.

If you use change.org correctly and you get all that stuff: you get the fundraising pages, the fundraising widgets, the branded social network, the eAdvocacy for $20. If you us change.org correctly and use the eAdvocacy software, you could get 200, 300, 400, 500 email addresses a month to add to your e-newsletter. I did the math. If you got 200 email addresses per month on change.org, that comes out to 10 cents per email--comparing that to what a lot of nonprofits are paying for online petitions, which is a dollar to two dollars.

So, honestly, I tell you, I've been in this field a long time. It's just amazing what you can do on Change if you know how to use it, which is why I published the Change.org Best Practices, change.org/bestpractices.

I've got two minutes left. Let me see if there's anything.

I also want to point out donors--you get their email addresses. If someone creates a fundraising page to benefit your nonprofit, and they send it out and, let's say, 20 people donate to that person's fundraising page in a year, you also get the email address of those 20 people.

You get their mailing address if they decide to give it to you. We had to find a happy medium, because we hear a lot of grumbling, more and more, from people that are getting annoyed with direct mail. One, we know nonprofits are spending a lot of money on direct mail. Two, it's cluttering up landfills.

So there's this kind of growing thing of getting annoyed with direct mail. So we didn't automatically make it where we provide you their mailing address, as a way to keep our change makers happy, because we didn't want them to come on change.org and make a $10 donation, and then, all of a sudden, they're bombarded with stuff in the mail. So, if they want to get stuff in the mail, they decide to give it to you. But you do get their email address.

And then, let's see. So, if you go to www.Fundraising123.org/change, there are three nonprofits that I wanted to feature. TransFair USA, which, if you click on that first link, you can see their change.org branded network. The second link is an example of a fundraising page of someone that's fundraising for them. The third link is, every nonprofit has their own unique URL on change.org that you can actually send around to people, for example, in your e-newsletter, saying, "Hey, how about a great New Year's resolution? In 2008, please fundraise for us. Here's the link where you can create a fundraising page".

The second one is the Advocacy Project: change.org/advocacy. And I just wanted to put them there to show an excellent example of how a nonprofit is using fundraising projects on change.org.

And then the third link is NARAL Pro-Choice America. They have just started using change.org, and they posted an email campaign, an eAdvocacy campaign. And that second link is there to just show you an example of how that looks.

And I really urge you, if you do sign up for change.org and you need help brainstorming an idea for eAdvocacy, email me. We'll talk about it. We'll figure it out. Because this is just a tool that has never before been offered this inexpensive, and if you use it correctly, it can really make a difference in your bottom line. Those last two links is where you can go to sign up, and then seeing the Best Practices.

Conclusion. I'm not going to talk about Facebook or YouTube. There are just a couple of things that I will say real quickly on Facebook. You can create a group. You can create a page. You can create a cause. I also want to point out that change.org actually has an application that is on

Facebook so you can view your nonprofit profile within Facebook.

YouTube - if you do sign up for YouTube, there's this one thing that I want to tell you. When you sign up and you create your user name, make sure that it is the same as your website because that will become your URL, like YouTube.com/gorillafund. The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund - their website is gorillafund.org.

If you can, try to set up your MySpace, YouTube and dhange.org profiles to match and be consistent with your website URL. If this is all new to you, write out a Web 2.0 marketing plan and try to allocate at least one to two hours a day to working these sites. If you can't do it, hire a social networking intern or volunteer. I do want to point out that I'm seeing 2009 budgets grow on nonprofits. This is actually becoming a new position in 2008 and 2009 where people are actually getting hired to just run these sites all day.

At a very minimum, I think you should be using MySpace, Facebook, YouTube and change.org. Those are the four most powerful. MySpace and Facebook couldn't be more different. The user groups are different. The demographics are different. If you use one and not the other, then you're missing a whole user group, so be sure to use both. Finally, I just want to remind you again that Web 2.0 is not meant to replace Web 1.0 but actually to work together. And that's the end.

Jono: Great. Thank you very much, Heather. That was really an outstanding overview of MySpace and change.org.

Heather: Thank you.

Jono: As Katya mentioned at the top of the call we are really, really excited to be partners here at Network for Good with change.org, and we are looking forward to helping thousands of nonprofits raise money online through change.org in 2008.

So, let's turn to our question and answer session. Just to remind folks, you can email us your questions and Heather and Ben will take them right now. The email address is fundraising123@networkforgood.org. I have already received some great questions, so I'm going to turn the phone over to my colleague, Katya, who's going to read the first question.

Katya: Hi. There's a good question here. Heather, you spoke about how MySpace pages can be a great way to get traffic to your website. There's a question about...that sounds great, but then how do you get traffic to your MySpace page? In other words, if you create a MySpace page - you talked a little bit about a nonprofit portal. What are some good ways to quickly build up the number of friends you have?

Heather: Sure. There are so many ways. The question I get all the time is I'm anxious to get on MySpace. Then they email me and they are like, isn't there some kind of software that I can buy that will send out 10,000 random fund requests? And the answer is no, there is not. You have to put in the grunt work. If you're the communications director and you don't have the time to sit there and send fund requests and I actually don't suggest that you waste your time doing that, get

a young social networking intern that loves MySpace and loves what you do and have them send out fund requests.

Another way, for example, is the Humane Society of the United States. They are doing such a good job in this whole Web 2.0 sphere, and they actually put their MySpace link in their email signatures.

Transfair USA, we have Web 2.0 buttons. If you go to transfairusa.org, visit Transfair's website. You'll see at the very top on their home page they have four buttons: MySpace, Facebook, YouTube and change.org. Each button links directly to those different social networking websites.

You've got to get on there, and you've got to do the grunt work. You'll start to reach a critical mass. MySpace really starts to get powerful for you at the 5,000 friends mark. You have to spend twp, three months just getting to the friend request. What I suggest is rather than just do random searches and saying, OK, I'm going to send fund requests out to everyone in Virginia, visit other nonprofits. Similar nonprofits have a similar mission and send fund requests to their friends.

Does that make sense? You've got to send out the fund requests, promote it in your e-newsletters, promote it in your email signatures, and put the links on your website. More and more, we are seeing nonprofits doing this where they are actually linking to their MySpace profile or their Facebook group or their Change profile or their YouTube channel on their websites.

Katya: Great. Thank you. There is a question here from Michael. He wants to know what were the top four sites you cited as most important at the end of your presentation? Would you say it again? You got MySpace and Facebook and what were the other two?

And just before you go to those, a related question from another person is, should you be on all of them and how do you weigh where to be because like you said, there is quite a bit of grunt work involved? How do decide what's the best ROI of your time?

Heather: MySpace, Facebook, YouTube and change.org. YouTube, now realistically, you know, there's a learning curve here. If you've never used any of these sites, and if it's all new, don't spend 20, 40 hours yourself trying to figure it out. Maybe you've got a nephew or someone who is already using this site. Sit down, have them give you a training, two hours, so you can actually cut out all of that and get the gist of these sites in a couple of hours.

Of course, the time management problem is the biggest problem and as I said, virtual volunteering, meaning this volunteer doesn't even have to be someone that you've ever met. Someone in Virginia, if you are located in California and this is what the Dian Fossey Guerilla Fund has, is a virtual volunteer that just does this, logs in and spends 10 hours a week, working all four sites.

Change.org as I said, as far as fundraising has the most potential, and here's something that I'm just going to say: that I think there's a lot of hype and I think we're in the early stages of using MySpace and Facebook and YouTube for fundraising. If we remember in the late '90s, we got

the "donate now" button and there was so much buzz about that. And we put the "donate now" button on our website and we thought, all right, yeah, the donations are going to start rolling in. And nothing happened.

So we had to go through a learning curve. One, people had to feel comfortable and understand how the process worked of making the donation. It was the late '90s and people were so afraid of, well, what if I give my credit card information, am I losing my privacy. And then we had to learn that just putting a "donate now" button on your website or on your MySpace, doesn't work. You have to use an e-newsletter, you have to do the "ask" to drive them to the "donate now" button.

The same thing is true for MySpace and Facebook and YouTube. You have to do the "ask" and change.org. If you send out an e-newsletter and say, please join our new community on change.org, make a donation, and create a fundraising page. I think we are still in the early stages of fundraising. Two years from now is when people are going to be comfortable and understand that, oh, I'm donating through a fund raising widget on MySpace. MySpace isn't processing the donation. Ah, change.org and Networks for Good is.

I can't remember what the question was but I wanted to just give them that side note there that don't get on these sites and think that all of a sudden the donations are going to start rolling in. The power in these sites right now is community and empowering your supporters. By far, change.org has the most potential of empowering your supporters to advocate for you.

MySpace is very powerful for driving traffic to your website and getting e-newsletter subscribers, not necessarily new donors at this point. But Beth Chancellor who writes a great blog, she just works on the thing about return on investment. The fact is you cannot track your return on investment here. This is a whole new world.

For someone who visits your MySpace profile and visits your website and they might visit your MySpace profile again three months later and subscribe to your e-newsletter and then three months later actually make a donation. So it's not instantaneous like that. And I want to also point out that this is a long-term investment.

MySpace and Facebook are not going anywhere. A new generation of 18 to 24 year olds, I think the Pew Research Center for People in the Press or something like that. They sort of said the emails are for old people. Their Facebook profiles, their change.org profiles, their MySpace profiles they are keeping these. These are the way they communicate now. So I wouldn't get on there and expect miracles. You are going to have to wait it out, but you want to start doing the grunt work now, getting it designed, getting the friends, getting things going.

I think change.org has the most potential for fundraising. There it's not about quantity, 10,000 friends. It's about having 200 strong friends, supporters actually; 200 supporters that advocate for you.

Katya: I want to ask a follow-up question to what you are saying: Karen wants to know in terms of setting expectations, you are talking about you can't expect the world and you do need to put

in effort and they will build a community. I was wondering how many email addresses a month does the average nonprofit collecting right now on change.org?

Heather: Here's what I have heard and there's no place to track it. It's, as I said, very difficult to get stats and ROI on this. The Humane Society mentioned at one point that they got, for every 100 unique visitors they got to their website, three subscribed to their e-newsletter. For every 100 unique visitors that they got to MySpace, or every 100 friends, nine of them subscribed to their e-newsletter.

So it's actually three times as high. The way you track this is you have to watch your website traffic, you watch your e-newsletter traffic grow, if you create email advocacy campaigns, and I can't stress that enough: please sign up with change.org and use the email advocacy software. Track and see how many people take part in your eAdvocacy campaigns and then log in the change once a month and download all those email addresses.

So that's what you watch. I wouldn't watch donations right now, at least from MySpace and Facebook. And yeah, that's how you track it and the question was it seems to be about 9% from MySpace of getting new e-newsletter subscribers.

Katya: OK. And that question was actually about change.org.

Heather: Oh. For how many email addresses? Sure.

Ben: Sorry Katya, this is Ben. I think right now for organizations that are using the eAdvocacy tool, we just launched this for organizations over the past two months. I think the average is probably somewhere just above 100. And again, it's entirely contingent upon how many eAdvocacy campaigns are run and how they're promoted.

I think the important thing is it's a tool that needs to be effectively used. It's very similar, if you take a step back, this is what Heather's been saying, it's similar to Web 1.0; putting a "donate now" button on your website is not sufficient.

In the same way, just joining MySpace or joining change.org isn't going to result in a flood of additional new supporters; however, they're extremely powerful tools that you can use to leverage your existing supporters to gain new activists.

So right now, it's above 100, but we really think that for each eAdvocacy campaign that's run, hundreds really can be culled on a monthly basis if used effectively.

Heather: And that's the key: use them. It's an action verb. Learning how these things work. For example, the MySpace that I run for nonprofit organizations, I think it hit 26,000 friends yesterday. I sent around a bulletin to a change.org e-action this morning, and one bulletin generated 60 emails in less than an hour.

So it gets more...these tools get more powerful as you actively use them, learn how to use them. And a bulletin takes ten seconds to post. It got 60 emails. And that's just amazing.

Katya: OK. I have a related question from Catherine and Brian.

Heather: Sure.

Katya: Catherine wants to know, can a random person who's interested in what you're raising money for find you if they'd never heard of you on these sites?

And then in a related question, Brian was asking, he says, "I've tried to participate in change.org as an individual. I've noticed that unlike other social sites, I don't get any notification regarding things that I'm involved with on the site. While I get a generic update regularly, that doesn't keep me coming back to visit my profile, so I'm not as active as I'd like to do. Is this a design choice or is there any chance of this changing in the future, or am I missing something?"

So again, both Brian and Catherine are wondering about how people, individuals get linked to a cause.

Heather: Well, the answer to the second part of that question is: all you need to do is log in to change.org and go to your account settings and there's a box that you can pick to say get email notifications of when you have a new friend request or a new discussion update or a new nonprofit update. So it sounds like that has been turned off.

So the person that signed up for the individual change.org account isn't getting notifications because it's turned off in the back end. You can also do that on MySpace and Facebook and all that kind of stuff.

And then, I'm sorry, what was the first question?

Katya: The other question was: Can people who have never heard of your organization...

Heather: Oh, yes.

Katya: ...hear about your issue? For example, Catherine's with the Cure Alzheimer's Fund, so I assume she's asking you if someone cares about Alzheimer's, they happen to be on a social network, but how do they find you're raising money for what they care about?

Heather: They can find you easily on change.org. If you just go to change.org and go to nonprofits and search and enter in the name of your organization, your organization's profile will pop up right away.

Katya: No, she's asking actually a more general question. For people who might care about Alzheimer's who are coming to MySpace or change.org...

Katya: ...but they don't know the name of your organization, they're not familiar with...

Heather: Oh.

Katya: ...might be very inclined to give to you. How do those connections get made?

Heather: OK. It would be very hard to find you on MySpace. MySpace doesn't have very good search functionality. On change.org you'd have to go on there and then your nonprofit organization, you can do something called 'create tags'. So you can go in and put in 'Alzheimer's' or 'Alzheimer's support' or different key words so that when someone goes to change.org and searches Alzheimer's, your nonprofit will pop up.

There's one thing that I want to point out. All I talked about today is the nonprofit side of change.org. I haven't talked about how individuals are using the site. There's a whole another aspect there. We've got changes. We've got nonprofit communities, politicians, all kinds of stuff. I hope I answered that question.

Ben, did you want to add anything to that question?

Ben: I think the key point here is twofold, right - whether you're driving people to the site yourself as an organization or whether there are random people who care about your issue that find you. As far as the latter, it doesn't happen as much as a lot of organizations expect. It certainly does happen that somebody interested in Alzheimer's might find you. What's more common is that somebody who cares about your organization who isn't necessarily directly connected or not necessarily even on your email newsletter might start raising money for your organization without you even knowing it.

This happens quite often. In fact, most organizations that are signing up at the site will have somebody start donating to them or creating a fundraising page for them without them even doing anything or knowing about the site.

That's the case definitely on change.org. It also happens on Face book as well where anybody can start a cause supporting your organization. You may not even be in contact with them, but again the really most effective way is, let's say, you've already got a core base of supporters, people who care about your organization. Giving them encouragement to start causes on Facebook or a fundraising page on change.org is the most effective way rather than waiting for people to come to you.

Heather: I just want to point out the same thing with websites. Just because you have a website doesn't mean anybody is going to find you. You have to enter in meta tags. You have to do search engine optimization, so it's the same thing. It's that old adage of the late '90s: it's the information super highway and you have to create exit signs. Back then, it was to your website. You've got search engine optimization; you put meta tags in.

Here, it's the same thing. If they want to find your MySpace or they want to find your profile at change.org you've got to find the different ways to drive them there - same thing with websites.

Katya: Thank you. That's a great point. Gabrielle has a question, Ben. I think it might be a good one for you to answer. She's with an art organization focused on creating and producing public art projects that empower participants and raise awareness of the silent epidemic of physical,

sexual and social abuse. Her organization was founded as a community initiative fund under a foundation that is a 501(c)(3).

She's wondering since Donate Now portals are available to 501(c)(3)s only, how does this work on change.org given she has a fiscal sponsor? How can she apply for the service as a funded nonprofit, and when asked for the organizer's information should she put in hers or the umbrella organization? Where are some good resources for help on the issue?

Ben: For fiscally sponsored organizations, organizations that are under a broader 501(c)(3) they can certainly sign up for change.org. They can do so by simply filling out the same form that a normal organization would fill out and selecting that they are a sub-organization of the umbrella organization. The EIN, employer identification number, will be used from the major fiscal sponsored organization. Otherwise, all of the other information of the organization should be their own, their own physical address, their own name and contact information.

What we'll do is we will actually directly contact you as an organization, have you do so and facilitate the process. They can definitely do so, and we can really handle it. If there are any questions specifically at any time you can email us either at helpchange.org or email Heather directly at heather@change.org.

Katya: Great. Thanks for covering that. We have about less than a minute left. I have a comment from Michelle from Pike Place Market Foundation. She says, related to Heather's comment regarding how individuals are using change.org. That'll be a great follow-up call to this one. It'll give us ideas on how to empower and educate our supporters to use the site. But thank you, Michelle.

We will wait on the call on how individuals are using these special networks because you make a good point. Our last two calls are from the perspective of nonprofits, and it might be fun to find out more about the behavior of people using these social networks to do good.

We will be happy to invite Heather and Ben back. We can also point you to our wire fundraiser white paper. It gives you a lot of information on how folks are using these social networks which is available on www.Fundraising123.org, and we can email it to you too as an attachment, Michelle.

I'm going to let Jono say a couple of wrap-up words. Thank you, Heather and Ben for all that great information.

Heather: Thank you.

Jono: Thanks everyone for attending today's Nonprofit 911. We will be back in February with our next call on using e-newsletters as an outreach fundraising tool. Stay tuned to www.Fundraising123.org and your email inbox for details and the date and time of our next call. Once again, if you missed anything, you will be able to download the audio recording of this call tomorrow morning at www.Fundraising123.org/change. In about five days time we'll also have the text transcript. If you want to dive in for further details you can do that.

We also have about 10 hours of recorded Nonprofit 911 calls from the past six months, also available to you at www.Fundraising123.org/training. So, we'd like to invite you to take advantage of those calls and transcripts. All of our resources are available to you from Network for Good at no charge.

Thanks again for joining us today, and we look forward to speaking with you on Nonprofit 911.