

Nonprofit 911 – April 28, 2009
Twitter Fundraising: Holy Grail or Fail Whale?
with John Haydon
Sponsored by Network for Good

The MP3 audio transcript can be found at
www.fundraising123.org or www.Nonprofit911.org

Rebecca Higman: Now I would like to introduce our speaker, John Haydon. While he will strongly deny the claim, John Haydon is considered to be one of the leading experts on social media marketing for nonprofits. In his own words, he quotes, "Help nonprofits get results with social media by translating abstract marketing concepts and Web 2.0 technologies into plain English," which I am sure we all appreciate.

In September of 2008, John also published a free report for nonprofits called "Twitter Jump Start: The Twitter Guide for Small Nonprofits." So, without further ado, John, the floor is yours.

John Haydon: Perfect. Thank you so much. So, everybody I think has a copy of the PDF and basically going to follow along and I will indicate the page numbers at the bottom, so that we are all kind of on the same page.

So, the first page, page #2, was actually very easy for me to write. It has two words on it and it is "Thank You." So, thank you for attending the call, taking time, your time is valuable, but there is a bigger thank you here and that's that the work that you guys do, the nonprofits do, is so incredibly valuable and you don't hear enough how awesome it is. You are helping homeless people, people in poverty, children, so many different issues and you are sacrificing a lot essentially; income first of all, to income, time, you definitely work more than 40 hours a week I am sure and so I think that you all deserve a huge round of applause. So, that's the first thing we are going to do, we can't do that, so I am virtually clapping my hands in the air.

And, so if we go on to #3, we are going to talk about is to explain Twitter to your grandmother, I am just reading through that, mastering the four post types - we will get into that in a little bit - Twitter and email and Twitter and direct mail and the differences, advantages, and so forth. Twitter campaign management basics and finally the last thing that I am sure a lot of people want to hear about is what did Aston Kutcher do? We are definitely going to talk about that.

We will go on to the next page, page #4, again Q&A is going to be at the end.

Page #5, before we start, this is what I call the Twitter Disclaimer. First thing is that Twitter is definitely not a silver bullet. It is another tool among a million tools out there to do fundraising, for the awareness, develop a fan base and power advocacy and so forth.

So, before you consider any social media, you should really have the basics down, a website that people can actually go to, once you are connecting with them online, some type of donation processing online preferably and email marketing to kind of once you connect to people, you want to foster those relationships through email marketing.

So #2, Twitter may not be right for your audience, so the best way to do that - and we will cover this later on - is to search, you can search on Twitter using a number of different keywords and just determining is there a lot of activity in my space related to the issues that my nonprofit works for, is this important, are people talking about it. You definitely should get a general sense before you spend boatloads of time with a social media tool. Although I will say Twitter is very easy to use, there is a pretty much a low cost to get involved, like it doesn't cost you any money, but I mean cost in terms of effort and time and learning curve.

So, we are going to turn to the next page, page #6. Know how to explain Twitter to your grandmother. So, we will turn the page, we will go to page #7, which is a bigger title. Page #8, how to explain Twitter to your grandmother. Now why do you want to do this? Obviously, it may not matter if your grandmother is on Twitter or not. That's not the point here.

The point is really if you are going to delve into something like Twitter, it is really important to have the ability to basically give like an elevator pitch on Twitter. Twitter is this, this is what it does. That way if you have supporters that are interested and they are thinking about getting online, they are thinking about using social media, they may have a blog, they maybe on Facebook. But, they are hearing about Twitter, the value that your organization can add is that you can essentially offer like some insight into this is what Twitter does, this is how our supporters use it, you should definitely check it out and to explain it in simple terms.

So, it is just here, if the technology is clearly understood, execution of your social media strategy is more likely. So, if you give people something that's not really clear or is confusing, they are probably not going to act. They're just going to drop it and move on.

We'll turn to page #9. I have a formula here. This is one of the simplest ways that I've found to explain Twitter. I understand on this call that, generally, the majority are very, very small nonprofits who have very, very small budgets. There may or may not be people already using Twitter, or not. But, this is how you can explain Twitter to someone who is totally new. Jeez, what the heck is this Twitter thing? Which everybody is saying actually, everybody is asking me.

IM plus B equals T. Instant messaging plus blogging equals Twitter. OK? Again, grandma may not know what a blog is; she may not know IM. But, the point is that most of the general public, they are kind of familiar with these terms, and you can explain Twitter in those ways.

If we go to page #10, what is similar? Basically Twitter, for those of you on the phone who are scratching your heads already and saying, "What the heck is it?" Think of instant messaging. Instant messaging is like when you have AOL and you're typing a short text message to someone that's totally private. It's limited to 160 characters - kind of go back and forth, totally private, between two people.

Then people are familiar with blogging. Some people write personal blogs, business blogs, nonprofit blogs. That's going to have a lot more room for a lot more words, a lot more characters. And also, there is a kind of history involved of activities.

With instant messaging - I'm just going down the left-hand side here - these are short, quick messages. They're generally private. Twitter is public, so Twitter can be searched on Google, actually. So, if you're posting information or tweeting - what they call tweeting - on Twitter and

you post something about a dog shelter. Anybody going to Google, they can Google that. Eventually they will find it. You may not be on page one, but it should appear in a Google search. They have a Twitter search engine as well.

So, instant messaging - very quick messages - instant messaging is very easy to use. That's the second point down here. It really doesn't take a lot of effort. You're writing a quick sentence. Boom, you hit "send," and you're done. The one thing that is different about instant messaging...

Actually, I'm sorry. Twitter does give you the ability to send private messages. OK? They call them direct messages. I call them the email posts, like emailing each other, almost. That's where really it's a conversation between two people. No one is seeing it. It doesn't show up in search engines; it's totally private.

So, where they kind of come together is that instant messaging is private and really nobody else is seeing the conversation. Blogging is totally public. So, anybody going to it can see what's been happening. This person posted information about the work that they're doing in St. Louis for homeless people. Wow, that's interesting. People can comment; they can add to it. So, it's available for the public.

Imagine instant messages available for everyone to see, OK? The other piece is that blogging is SEO-friendly. Now SEO, which means search engine optimization, is a totally different topic. We're not going to get into that. But, basically, it's the ability for your organization to appear in a search on a search engine. And the search engine is basically Google; we're talking about Google here.

With Twitter, as I mentioned before, anything you post on it is searchable for a search engine. This is one of the values of a blog, but definitely not the value of an instant messenger - again public posts.

So, that's how I explain it. It basically has some aspects of instant messaging, but it's also like a blog in that there's a history. You can actually look at someone on Twitter and look at like, Oh, there's this post that they did. There's this tweet, this tweet and this tweet, going back in history - going back in the last week, last weekend, this week and so forth. That's what blogging has. Twitter has also has the instant messaging; it has the ease of use and the short messages.

We'll go to page #11. Now here's the other interesting thing about Twitter. This is probably one of the most attended calls - 911 calls for Network for Good - probably because it's Twitter. It's all over the news: CNN, Acton Pitcher, the NFL is talking about it. Oprah is on Twitter. Everybody is on Twitter, literally. It seems like the past three months this has happened. It's newsworthy.

So, people at this point... This is some research that a gentleman named Michael Stelzner did recently, maybe a month ago. He surveyed, I believe, 200-plus organizations. What are they using for social media? These were businesses that were very active in social media, you know. Most of them are using Twitter, it says here. There is a lot of activity going on with Twitter, and that's another reason to take a look at it. In fact, I would be surprised if you went on Twitter and you actually didn't find anything at all related to your nonprofit. So, it's good to do that research in advance, though.

So, we'll go to page 12. Now, for folks who are still like, "What is Twitter? I'm curious; this is interesting. I want to get involved." Signing on is really easy. It's free. You go to Twitter.com - I put it right here - then there is a video that you watch. It's actually called Twitter in Plain English. It's kind of this cartoony type of video that's very, very accessible. It's really great.

Then you're going to sign up. You enter your name, a little bio that's about 120 characters, I think, and then your email. Then that's basically it. There is this forth step in the process where, just like with most social media sites, you will go through and, who else is using Twitter that I might know? And you would use your Yahoo! Account, your Gmail account.

Twitter kind of pulls that data in, and so Jane and Joe and Robert, all of these guys, all these people who are using Twitter right now, you can connect with them right away.

So, signing on is relatively easy. It's not like a Facebook; it's not like a Squidoo. Those sites tend to be a little bit more complicated, like LinkedIn. It's really easy. It literally takes five minutes.

So, on the next page, page #13, is the next topic that we're going to be talking about today. Again, I wish this was two-way. Because usually at this point on a conference call, normally I say OK, any questions on that first part? But, may just jot those down, and we can get those at the end.

So, the second point - mastering the four types, when and how to use them. This is for when you finally do sign on to Twitter, and you're ready to go. Or most of you might even be using Twitter as it is right now.

We're going to skip over to page #15. The four post types: I wrote an article on my blog about - I don't know - a few months ago. I had a lot of nonprofit clients asking me like, "What it this reply, re-tweet, direct? What does it all mean?" So, I wrote and defined each one of these. It's been really, really useful for a lot of people, so I thought I'd cover it today. We're going to cover these four: plain, or Web 1.0 post; re-tweet or good karma post, I call it the good karma; reply post or social post; direct message or email post, that I mentioned earlier.

We'll go to page #16. So, plain, or what I call Web 1.0... I call it Web 1.0. Actually there is no such thing; I don't think anybody is using that term. But, we all say Web 2.0, Web 2.0, what is Web 2.0? It's basically a two-way path. It's where people are contributing content, giving each other feedback and having discussions online, back and forth, rather than just a big website and email that's pushing out one way.

So, a plain Web 1.0 post is where you just literally make a statement on Twitter. There's an example at the bottom. It just says, and this is from my Twitter stream - they call it a stream. A stream is a series of tweets. So, this is "A must-read for nonprofits, how to set up a blog for the long run."

And then that URL goes to - actually it's not my site, it's somebody else's where I found a really good article. So, that link goes to another article.

This is basically a one-way communication. People might give me feedback on it, they might reply, they might re-tweet it. And we're going to get to that in a second. But, essentially Web 1.0 clearly communicates that your post is intended, as it say here, for all followers.

It's very inviting, unless the content is the crap. Meaning that it's a good way for people to come in and connect with your nonprofit, your organization. But, ultimately the content that you're leading people to has to be valuable. And that's almost like a law on Twitter, a law like gravity. Value really drives success on Twitter.

I mentioned a term here "followers." Just as a side note, when you sign on for Twitter and you start posting your thoughts and ideas and so forth, people will be interested. "Wow, what's this person saying. I'm really interested."

Then they start following you. They want to follow your communication. They want to follow what you're putting out there. And then you'll also follow other people. You'll follow people and people will follow you.

The con - pros and cons. The con of this Web 1.0 is that if you do too much of this, it's literally just like, "Look at me. Look at me. Look at me." There's no real sense of discussion or community or you're connecting with others. OK?

And that leads to the second one here. Actually, it leads to the third, but we're going to go to the second one. The second one is called "re-tweet" or a "good karma post." That's on page #17 of the PDF that you have.

Re-tweeting is when you basically promote the content - you basically promote someone else's tweet. So, let's say that I'm following Rebecca. Rebecca says, "Hey, it's so hot right now, I'm sweating. I need some ice cream." And then she has a link to the best ice cream in the world.

What I do is I say, wow, I bet a lot of people following me would be interested in that because they may also be hot as well. [laughs] Or at least they like ice cream. So, what I do is I literally just put an RT at the beginning of her tweet. The example below is just put RT-Please, because I like to be polite.

But, it's RT-Please, and then literally Rebecca's information will follow that. So, basically, I'm just passing it down. Wow, that's really great content up ahead. The people that I'm following are putting out really great stuff. The people that are following me may not be aware of it; let me pass it one because it might have some value.

That's the re-tweet. I call it good karma because basically you're promoting someone else, you're supporting someone else. I really encourage that on Twitter, especially for nonprofits. There tends to be kind of like a "me, me, me" around nonprofits. They're under stress, which is completely understandable.

But, I often encourage to have a forward look and reach out to other nonprofits that may even be "competitors." And see if you can really promote them. They have an event coming up, and you promote that. That creates what I call good karma.

And what that means in reality is that the person will turn around and say, "Wow, that person is helping me out. They're pretty cool. I'm going to help them out." And then other people around, like thousands of people around, say, "That's pretty neat that they're promoting this other nonprofit. They must be a good person. I want to support them as well."

So, there is this huge culture on Twitter of supporting each other. Kind of like the mass is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

So, the con is that if you always send stuff out to your followers, like you're always basically asking people to re-Tweet the content, it's asking a lot. It could create what I call a "karmic drain." Meaning that you've taken out what you had in the bank and you're basically in the red. You can't really do it too much.

Because again, re-tweeting, you're taking - Rebecca say, "Hey, great ice cream." I'm like, "Hey, that's cool." I send it on to my followers and then I'm basically asking them, "Hey, send this on to your followers." So, it kind of cascades throughout Twitter that way.

And the good content gets re-tweeted the most. That's why really valuable content is important, super-important.

We're going to go to page #18. The reply post or what I call the "social post." What happens on Twitter is that somebody will say something. In this example here, there's this gentleman here Colobricks. That's his user name on Twitter. He mentioned something, or we were having a conversation.

He says, "Hey, John." Or @JohnHayden, something, something. I don't have it here. And then I replied back, "Certainly, a remote opportunity is better than none taken." So, the reply at the beginning, that little @ sign, indicates that there's a dialogue, that there's a conversation.

That's very important on Twitter because people want to connect with human beings. If all they get are just literally one-way, like the plain post that I mentioned earlier. If that's all that they see, they're going to be like, ah, I don't know if there's any real human being behind this. It could just be this automated robot that's just sending off feeds off of Twitter.

I think I'm like a lot of people, they do want to have connections for business and otherwise. Twitter is a very powerful tool to do that. You want to have a healthy mix of all these posts, but the reply post is basically saying this person is pretty social. They've having conversations with many people on Twitter and they're going to be a lot more attractive. People are going to want to connect with them and get involved with them.

So, as an example, when you're on Twitter and you see someone who's talking about your cause, you can reply to it. It's kind of a reply button. You can reply to it and add your thought. And soon, there'll be a greater discussion back and forth. It's very dynamic, very organic, that happens.

So, we'll go to page 19. Direct message or email post, this one is very straightforward. It facilitates a more private, personal conversation between two users. In my case, it often leads to developing a new client. As a nonprofit, my nonprofit clients, they'll find someone on Twitter,

they just discover, "Wow, there's someone who's completely fanatic about our cause. I don't even know who this person is, but that's all they talk about."

So, you want to start following that person, find out do they have a blog, start reading it. And then sooner or later, if they want to really support your organization and it's mutual, then you can bring that conversation to more of a private thing. Like, "Hey, I really wanted to get you more directly involved in the next campaign. Would you be interesting in doing X, Y, or Z?"

It depends. You can bring whatever conversation you want private, but it really helps develop a more personal dialogue between two individual users.

And then the con on this, I really couldn't think of a con for this, because I'm a huge believer in one-on-one conversations. At some point, 70 percent of my stuff on Twitter is literally not seen by the public, because it's all behind direct messages, so I can email back and forth.

At some point, you want to kind of get away from direct message and then go to a phone call, email, those types of situations. So, you definitely don't want to maintain a 10-year relationship on Twitter. In fact, it's going to develop into something else.

An example here is Hildy Gottlieb, who's a really good friend of mine. We were scheduling an interview; I was interviewing her for my blog. We were trying to figure out, what are we doing? Are we doing Skype, landline? What's going on? You know, so that's like a little private communication that we had there.

We'll turn the page. I have about 10 or 15 more minutes; I think I'm doing fine. Twitter - I say "versus." We should cross out "versus," just slash it out, because we're not really competing with email or competing with direct mail. They should all be used together.

So, we'll turn the page, and turn to page #22. So, Twitter and email, this just goes to the characteristics of each and why you would prefer one and then the other for various aspects of a marketing campaign. They definitely should work together, though.

Twitter is basically free. It is free in terms of the actual cash that you would pay. It does... You have to pay staff; obviously they're going to get involved in Twitter.

Twitter is highly viral, and what I mean by that is that Twitter basically has an open network. It's an open network. A closed network would be like a LinkedIn or a Facebook, where you can only see conversations if you're actually that person's friend.

Twitter is an open network. Basically, you can see every single conversation if you want to. I think there are like five million people on Twitter. In one way or another, one approach or another, you can literally see anything. So, if there's someone who's not connected to you or following you - or you're following - if they're interested in something that you're talking about, you will come up in a search. Then, whoa, what's this? This is really interesting, this event that this nonprofit is doing. Then they'll pass it on.

Especially, if the viral part is really driven by something that Seth Godin talked about a few months ago on the Network for Good call. Basically, he really drove home the point that nonprofits have to be remarkable, meaning that people want to remark about you. That's

essentially what causes viral activity in any social media. It has to be really funny, really sincere; it has to be really remarkable. People want to talk about it and spread it. Twitter, you can organize your base around - and when I say base, I mean supporters - around an event. There are ways to that, which we'll get into in a second.

So now, email - the benefit of email that Twitter does not have is that email can be highly targeted. That means that if you have people who are joining, signing up, to your nonprofit newsletter, and then they read certain content, they can subscribe to something else. They may attend an event. You can measure folks, based on their activity on your website, and then target specific messages to these people, based on their behavior.

Someone shows up one time, blump. They are kind of passive; they have a passive interest. They get kind of a high-level, monthly newsletter or whatever. Somebody who's always donating, coming to events and really involved - that person's activity can be measured and then translated into highly-targeted messaging. The same thing with behavior; it can be measured and kind of analyzed. How are people responding to the email? Twitter, you can measure a little bit of that but not as much as with email.

Highly personalized - again, you can have a raving fan of your nonprofit versus a passive - like a friend of a friend. The messaging is totally different, and you have total control over that with email. With Twitter, it's very open; pretty much everybody gets the same message, receives the same message. So, you can't really personalize it as well, but these two should work together.

For example, Twitter, if you're looking to boost subscribers of your nonprofit, you could use Twitter to start talking about a particular event, some new study that was done, some news about your nonprofit, or even an issue that's in the media, like the swine flu. Right? If your organization is related to something with health, you're on Twitter. You're talking about that and then driving people into your organization. Eventually, they sign up for your newsletter.

We'll turn the page #23; we're on 23 - Twitter and direct mail. The Twitter ID is basically like a little "at" sign and then your name, or your nonprofit or whatever. So, you can basically take that and stick that anywhere. Anybody who's using Twitter will know it; they'll know exactly what it is. You don't have to say http, colon, forward slash, blah, blah, blah, blah and then your user name. You can literally do like I did on the very first page - I think I did that - where there is just an "at" sign and then John Haydon.

So, you can slap that on a lot of direct mail pieces very easily. Again, Twitter is a lot cheaper than direct mail. Direct mail is again highly targeted, just like email. Twitter has this high viral potential. Direct mail really doesn't have a lot of viral potential. If somebody gets something in their mailbox, it's not like they're going to make copies of it and send it to all their neighbors. I mean, if they do, then you have a really good advocate on your hands, for sure.

Direct mail, the one thing about that is it's tried and true, meaning that nonprofits have been using direct mail for years. Direct mail vendors know exactly how to create success for nonprofits. It's a proven method, for sure. Twitter is in the very early stages of even proving anything. There have been tremendous success stories on Twitter, but I think a lot of people for the most part are really trying to get their head wrapped around what is the real business value.

Not that there isn't, but just how much. What is it? What can we do with it? People are still asking about that.

Direct mail is highly consumable; Twitter is not. Once you close your laptop, your iPhone or whatever, you don't see it; you're done. Direct mail, you can put it next to the bathroom, read it, have it on your couch, have it on your coffee table or have it at your bedside. You can read it; people kind of hang on to it a little bit more. So, that's the value of direct mail.

These are some differences and features of each: direct mail, Twitter and email that you should definitely consider or think about, some things to think about.

So, if you turn the page, we're going to page #24. And we are going to talk about Twitter campaign management basics. OK? This is huge; we could probably spend another two hours on this alone. I'm sure discussing this will bring up a lot more questions than not, but we'll proceed anyhow.

We go to page #26 - Twitter campaign management basics. This is a page on what works and what doesn't. In fact, you could take page 26, if you're getting on Twitter. You could take this and tack it to the wall in your nonprofit. Just stick it on the cube, and just look at these points. You can make notes on it, or maybe now.

Twitter, in terms of marketing, people are used to this term called "messaging," meaning we want to get our message straight and send it out to people. And then hopefully, they'll consume it. Twitter, as with most social media, it's more about the conversation, about being heard. Those are your advocates, your supporters and people who are interested in your nonprofit. They have a basic human need. They actually have at least one basic human need; that means they want to be heard.

What does that mean? That means that you want to have this back-and-forth discussion. That's the idea. You want to value what they have to say and you want to listen to them. They want to be heard and want to share.

So, Twitter is not a one-way for sure. Don't think of it as automated, quick, cheap thing just to send out blasts of messages, messaging. Messaging, I don't really like that world. It just assumes that everybody's vanilla, but nobody is vanilla.

So, giving versus taking. What does work on Twitter is if you have a philosophy or a mindset that you really want to give. You want to support other people, you want to educate people, you want to contribute.

If you're on Twitter and all you're doing is seeing what people can do for you and why they should, and having an entitlement attitude, that will get you nowhere for sure. And that's common in most social media.

Connector versus broadcaster. This kind of has to do with the messaging versus connection. What I call connector is someone who wants to connect. A broadcaster is someone who says, "Look at me, look at me, look at me. Read my latest news. I don't want to get to know you. But,

don't I have the greatest news in the world?" That's a broadcaster. You don't want to do that. There are uses for that occasionally, and we'll get into that in a second.

Your avatar, logo, or photo, that's a question that I get a lot. Should we use a logo or a photo? What I often recommend is that if you have a personal account on Twitter, you should definitely use your own photo. And I wrote an article on this on my blog, about using personal accounts and working them in with a corporate or a nonprofit master account on Twitter, and how those work together.

But, in general, what will work more often than not is a photo, a personal photo. Something that says, "I'm a person." And that's ultimately what people will connect with. They are not going to connect with a logo. People don't want to make friends with logos, people want to make friends with people.

The next point is finding your advocates. On Twitter, if you go to search.twitter - actually, why don't we do this.

Why don't we go page #27. And then #28, I'm sorry, I just blew through these slides; I didn't even call out the numbers. I'm just a little concerned about the time.

I have the giving versus taking page, which is page #28. I have a link there that talks a little bit more about that. Connector versus broadcaster, that's on page #29. And then we are on connector versus broadcaster accounts.

So, there's a woman, Wendy Harmon. Many of you may not know here. She actually runs social media for the Red Cross. The Red Cross as both what I would call a broadcaster account, which is more like a new feed, a one-way kind of like, "Here's what's up with the Red Cross. Here's what's new." That's that Red Cross logo right there. And then Wendy's on Twitter as herself, having more like a connection, connecting with people.

I don't think we have time for this. There's a link at the bottom here. This is kind of like advanced Twitter here, what I'm talking about here, which is about how do you use Twitter when you have a major event? Say for example in Boston, they have the AIDS Walk.

When do you suddenly start sending out news items about that event because there's so much activity about it? You don't want to offend people that you've developed a personal relationship with, but you also need to get the news out. So, that is definitely the case where you have two accounts. You have one which is your personal, and then one that's more kind of like a one-way broadcasting type of situation.

So, I have a few articles on my blog about that. And then there's also a guest article I wrote at this other blog, and the link is down there.

So, we're going to go to page #31; we talked about this. And I just here, who do you party with? Logos or people? That's the way to think about it there. And Guy Kawasaki, who many people might know. He kind of helped out Apple a while ago; he's a very smart guy. He says, "When people view a stream of Tweets, your avatar should stand out." Because that's really the thing

that most people will see about you. So, you don't want to have too flashy, but you do want to have it very you, very much who you are.

Finding your advocates. These are different search sites that you should definitely use. One that I like a lot is Tweet Beat. I put it here as the second one down. And this is where you can enter a search term, you can even search a URL. You can take your nonprofit's URL, plug it into Tweet Beat and be notified by email if someone's talking about your nonprofit.

Now, you want to be creative with keywords and try them out. Keywords are basically search terms. If you are an organization - I did some work with an organization that dealt with breast cancer. So, you want to say "breast cancer," those terms related to that may be "feminists," something like that.

You obviously know your nonprofit more than I do, so just think about the specific terms, try them out, see what works, see what gets you the response. "Whoa, I put in breast cancer and all of the sudden I'm getting back these results, and I'm reading these posts from these people and these are exactly the kind of people we want to connect with. They're all talking about breast cancer."

So, we'll turn to the page #33. One thing I want to do is, when I say "follow the followers." If you get onto Twitter and you find a few people who are really, really hard-core about the issue that you're supporting, that are really kind of the big spokespeople, you want to find out who they're following.

And you also want to follow them and follow their followers. The reason why you want to follow their followers, is because those people are interested in that spokesperson. You want to follow them because you'll have similar interests and connect with them. That's a very quick way, following a huge spokesperson's followers, that's a quick way to find a base of folks and friends on Twitter. That's page #33.

Just the quick thing on the Ashton thing, because a lot of people have been asking about it. Page #39. First of all, unless you know somebody really famous and you're really good friends with them, I wouldn't worry about the Ashton thing so much. But, what they did do that was really smart was this person, Ashton, challenged other people.

"Hey, Oprah, what can you do?" "Hey, CNN, what can you do." He really created a lot of activity around this. And then people just sort of glommed onto it. There's more on that. It's pretty much spelled out.

Rebecca: Yes. We've been getting a couple of questions about hash tags, so if you could inform our audience about that those are, I'll just hop in and make a quick note about them too.

John: OK. A hash tag is the simplest technology in the world. Basically what it is, it's a way for you to create a link on Twitter - not really a link, but it's a way to collect information on Twitter, so you can follow a conversation. The way that you create a hash tag is you put a # sign and then you make up a little term. There's an organization that I work with, Volunteers of America, and they have an event coming up. I'm not going to tell you what the hash tag is, I'll make one up. Like #VOA-something.

That's all you have to do. And what that does is, if you go into any Twitter application and you click on that link, it'll say #nonprofit or #whateveryourcauseis. The one that is very popular is #swine, because everybody is talking about the swine flu. What it does is you create that, which is literally just typing #swine, and you can literally follow anybody on Twitter who is talking about that discussion.

Yesterday, I found out about a person who is writing a book, and they're literally putting the whole thing on Twitter using hash tags. So, that you click on the hash tag and you can literally read the whole book by using that.

So, it's a tag; that's all it is. They call it "hash tag," but it's a kind of a tag. If you go to any blog and there are tags on the right-hand side of a word. They have them on del.icio.us. del.icio.us is a website. StumbleUpon. You see areas where you click on and it basically draws you to all that content related around that term.

Rebecca: That was a perfect overview. We had a couple of questions come in for the folks on the phone who are already using Twitter, and they were curious if there were hash tags for this particular call. So, if anyone is curious, absolutely. It's just #nonprofit911. For the folks who are already Tweeting, that's what our hash tag is. #nonprofit911.

John: So, do we have questions?

Rebecca: Absolutely, yes. We had a whole host of questions. Thank you for all of your great information. We'll skip ahead and dive right in. We have some questions actually before the call started, so I want to make sure we get to those. Both Aliyah and Charla wrote in with questions, so I'll read both of theirs so we can kind of tie them together. The one from Aliyah says, "If we use these mediums, including Twitter, and publicize them to our audience, for instance teenage girls, how do we control, manage, and monitor how our supporters use or abuse it? For example, if I have an event and I'm using Twitter to connect people, what legal implications are there if someone misuses or abuses the medium to communicate if we encourage it?"

"For example, girls using crude, profane, or vulgar messages to each other, or worse, someone with ill intent, such as a child molester, trying to contact or communicate with them? We'd like to use Twitter and Facebook to encourage people to connect, we're just a little nervous about it getting out of control or something bad happening to our audience."

John: Yeah, that's a really good question. It's very common. First of all, I'm not a lawyer. I don't think I'd be able to pass the bar. I don't think I'd ever be able to do that. Legally, I don't think - there's literally no control. If someone is expressing their opinion about something, they have every right to do that. It's a free speech country that we live in. And unfortunately on Twitter, you really can't control the messaging. Control - you just can't. If people are going to have ill intent and are going to say something about your nonprofit, the best thing to do is to really try to get to know that person and find out what the issues are. Do the relationship one-on-one thing. Try to turn an enemy into a friend.

I've had the experience where that has been somebody has been a harsh critic of a nonprofit and they were always blasting really negative stuff. And this nonprofit really kind of was patient and

took their time, and now this person is a supporter. Because there was like a misunderstanding and they won his support.

And I don't really think you can do a lot of control. Maybe the police can get involved in term of an illegal activity. I'm sure that can be easily tracked. Unless you're a nonprofit police organization, I don't think there's much you can do.

Social media by nature is very uncontrollable. On Facebook, for example, anybody can create a Facebook group. And they can just literally do whatever they want. Some stuff may be illegal or legal, but the technology is there that people can literally just create a Facebook group around something that they feel really passionate about.

On Twitter, they can do exactly the same thing. They can find a hash tag and they can jump in and start causing trouble. The only solution is really to kind of find out who are these people, what's their issue, do they have a link on their Twitter page? What's their website? Try and learn about these folks. You could create a different hash tag, but then you'd need to communicate that out.

There are other ways to communicate events. Twitter is very, very open. It's hard to control the content if someone would want to just cause trouble, unfortunately.

You can control blogs. You can control what's on a blog, because you own the blog and you can control over the comments and who's involved and who's not and all that. Twitter is totally open. You just can't control it.

Rebecca: Let's move onto a happier Twitter comment. This is a great question that came in from Bianca, kind of tying it into the idea of fundraising using this medium. Bianca says, "I see the Twitter responses being like pledges. What's the follow-through rate, or is that even measurable? Tweeters are a different breed of donor, but what about recognition? Do you think in the long term we'll be able to keep our Tweeters engaged to become repeat donors?"

John: Wow. That's a really great question. I love it. Because I read a study, I think it was in the "New York Times" or somewhere, where someone did some research on - I forget who it was. I wish I knew, because this call is recorded forever. [laughs] But basically, they did some research and they found that a lot of social media fundraising things were basically around one-time donor situations. People come, "Oh, yeah, I can give \$5." Boom, they're done and they never come back. That's definitely a challenge.

I think that phenomenon has more to do with the event type situation. If there's a massive tsunami, and this whole half of a town or city is totally wiped out and they need help right away, Twitter is going to be excellent for that.

But unfortunately, you'll get people who are just interested in that event, boom, and they're going to move on to something else. They're not really going to - just because they did that doesn't mean they're totally qualified to support an organization who happens to ship packages and meals and stuff over to areas of need. They may not be interested in that, but they're interested in helping out the situation that needs addressing now.

So, the key with turning Twitter folks into permanent advocates is to find them, not to have a mindset that I need to convert people to something. Put out really, really good content that's really interesting and the right people will get interested. The people will get interested if it matters to them, and your job is basically to identify those people and connect with them.

How do you connect with them? They may have a Facebook page. Become their friend on Facebook. If they're a fan, if they're hard-core about your nonprofit and you say, "Hey, join our Facebook page," they're going to love it. They're not going to be offended. It's not going to feel like marketing to them.

So, that's what you want to do, you want to focus more of your efforts on finding the people who are hard-core and that want to be continuous. And then, the next step is to turn them into fundraisers. I have an interview with the Red Cross coming up tomorrow on my blog, and that's Wendy's thing. Basically finding the hard-core people and giving them the tools to spread the word and do fundraising.

And that's what you can do with Network for Good, by the way. My understanding is Network for Good has tools for that.

Rebecca: Absolutely. We'll make sure to mention them again at the end as well. We had a couple of questions come in from both Shane and Kimberly. They were looking for any input that you have in terms of success stories that you've seen nonprofit organizations experience. What kind of successes have you seen in terms of fundraising, and what are some of the tactics and strategies that they employed to actually use Twitter as a fundraising tool?

John: That's a great question. Just some tips and tools and stuff like that to check out. There's a company called TipJoy.com, which is a more about that pledging utility that someone mentioned, so check that out. That's a way you can use that with Twitter. Twitpay is another one, where people can actually pay money through a Twitter account. Success stories. There's an organization that I work with called 12for12K up in Canada, and I'm pretty consistent with those guys. I basically lead their whole blogging team. And they get Twitter going, they do a lot of Twitter campaigns.

The way to think about it in terms of success stories - specific stories. There's an organization called Strong, and we did a campaign in March around raising food for the hungry. And you can find out more about this at 12for12K.org. There was a campaign in March.

And what we did was we essentially had an online auction, saying, "Hey, all these people are willing to give up really cool free stuff. If you donate \$10, your name will be put in a hat to get this stuff." That went really well. We actually raised about \$12,000 in six hours, basically with Twitter.

There was a lot of work behind the scenes that led up to it but within a six-hour period, \$12,000 was raised, which is huge.

So there's that. There's another organization called Mom It Forward. They had a pajama party, a virtual pajama party about two weeks ago. They had a video thing going and they interviewed people, and they had Guy Kawasaki talk. At the same time, the Twitter community was kind of

rounding people up, like shepherders, to bring them into this event. They raised a pretty good amount of money as well, in a short amount of time. I don't have the dollar amount.

So, the success stories really revolve around, if you know someone on Twitter and they have like a million followers, like Ashton, that's great. Because he sends it out, boom, everybody sees it. Like, "Ashton, damn, I've got to get involved. Let me get a net for \$10." If you have something like that, that's ideal.

Chances are you don't, but that's the great thing about Twitter is that someone or someone that you know may have a massive amount of followers, like 10,000 or 20,000 people, and based on that you can involve them in your campaign and have them "spread the word." Literally spread that out to their followers.

Rebecca: That makes a lot of sense. And kind of piggybacking on what you just mentioned, we have a great question from Amanda. She says, "Can you touch on the campaign slide," which was number 35. "I was listening to the call in order to find out the contributed income potential in using Twitter. Is this more of a connection tool or is there a potential for raising funds on this. What do you see as Twitter's potential in that regard?"

John: All the success that I've seen happens to revolve around events, so if you're going to use it as a fundraising tool, it's good to have it around an event. And that means like a snapshot in time, kind of a big event. The other thing that has worked a lot for fundraising, is to have something that is very remarkable, like a really cool video that has a ton of impact, that makes people stand up. "I've got to do something." It's not about getting people's attention, but it's about really having super-good content that gets people talking about.

Twitter is the platform for people to talk about it. And then that coupled with an event or a target: "Our goal is \$12,000 by the end of the month. Let's go."

And the other piece that I'll say about the fundraising is that don't make it complicated. Develop campaigns that have very specific action. And the cool thing about Twitter is the action is easy to take. You literally just post something, or you go to PayPal and here's \$10, boom, that's it.

I guess the key is to keep things as simple as possible. If you're going to use Twitter, "We're getting everybody involved, here's what you do. Click on this link, donate \$10. Third step: pass it on." The simpler the better, that way it's going to be more actionable. People will actually take action on it.

If it's very complex and they have to fill out a registration form and all that, forget it. It's totally not going to work. You'll lose a lot of people. So, that's events.

Community, that's more like a long-term thing. Just developing relationships. You don't want to maintain these relationships on Twitter once they develop, you want to pick up the phone, send an email, have an interest in what they're doing. You want to bring it beyond Twitter. That's where you can develop these relationships, I think.

Rebecca: I just want to thank you again for being on the phone today, John, we really appreciated the information you were able to provide for audience. And thank you to everyone who has called in.

So thank you again, John. We can put up a link so you can answer some questions, and we'll go from there. Wonderful.

John: Excellent. Thank you so much, everybody. And again, hat's off to you, a big thank you. Have a great day, and stay cool.

Rebecca: Excellent. Have a great day everybody.

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