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Causes on Facebook: Partner Center, Application Redesign and America's Giving Challenge, Oh My!

with Matthew Mahan
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Rebecca Higman: Now I am happy to introduce our speaker. Matthew Mahan is the Director of Nonprofit Relations and Business Development at Causes. Matthew joined Causes after teaching middle school through Teach for America, building irrigation systems in Bolivia through a Rockefeller scholarship.

Mathew graduated from Harvard University where he also served as student body president. He is a native of Watsonville, which is a farming town on California's central coast.

So without further ado, I am really excited to turn the floor over to Matthew to get us started.

Matthew Mahan: Thanks for the kind introduction Rebecca. Hi everybody. Good afternoon or good morning if you are on the west coast. As Rebecca said, I manage both our nonprofit team and business development at Causes. That means that I work with a team of nonprofit coordinators who oversee outreach, education, and relationship building with our 12,000 nonprofit partners, as well as developing partnerships with companies and foundations and other organizations to deepen the impact we can have in the sector, as well as also, for Causes, figure out how to keep the lights on as we grow our team.

So I am really excited to be here today to tell you a little bit more about what Causes does, and specifically share some of the new resources and opportunities that are available to nonprofits and activists who use our platform.

So let me share just a little bit about Causes. You have probably heard a number of the high level stats. We have millions of users on Facebook. I think now we are at about 85 million users. Our users have created around 300,000 causes for issues and nonprofits that they care about. They have donated around 14 million dollars to those nonprofits. In fact, just last month we achieved a pretty exciting goal of ours, which was breaking one million dollars in individual donations in a 30 day period. So that is obviously very exciting for us, and we expect to see that number just continue to increase month by month moving forward.

But what you may not understand about Causes at this point, even if you are familiar with our application and some of those impressive statistics and all that, is really what our mission is.

In one sentence, our mission is to empower individuals working independently and working through nonprofit organizations to leverage the power of social media to build movements that have a positive impact on the world.

And that is really our overarching goal. So the things I am going to share with you today all relate to that. And ideally, I am assuming most of you are nonprofits and you have some familiarity with our application and with Facebook. Ideally, the things I am introducing today will significantly improve your ability to do the work that you are doing on the ground and to build the relationships with your supporters and donors that you need to have in order to carry out that work.

So the three main things I want to cover today are a redesign of the cause page itself, an upgrade that we recently made to our nonprofit partner center, and then some exciting news about America's giving challenge which launches tomorrow afternoon.

I think it is probably best, just so that we all start on equal footing, that I share a few crucial definitions with everybody. So I want to quickly start by explaining the distinction between Causes with a capital C and causes with a lowercase C, because this tends to lead to a lot of confusion.

Causes with a capital C refers to our company and our application on Facebook and Myspace. Causes with a lowercase C refer to the grassroots communities that users create and work through to have an impact. Whether that is to advocate for change, or to raise funds, or to educate people, causes are these grassroots communities, now of which over 300,000 exist on Facebook, that enable people to essentially take collective action, both to further a specified goal and also to simply support nonprofits causes.

A nonprofit is not a cause and a cause is not a nonprofit. Nonprofits can have many causes that support them, whether or not they started them themselves or activists around the world and the country have started them on their behalf. And the causes, if they want to raise money, have to identify a registered nonprofit in the US or Canada to ensure that the money is making it to an organization that is actually doing with it what it says it will do.

The other things that I just want to throw out there before we delve into the details are a number of URL's. I know we have promoted a number of different resources. And so just to make that absolutely clear to everyone, the first that you should note is Causes Exchange, which is our blog and a resource center that explains virtually all of our features. It is where we break news about the application, and is probably your best resource as an employee of a nonprofit who wants to figure out how to leverage Causes. And that URL is exchange.causes.com.

The next URL is for our nonprofit center, which is one of the main things I want to focus on today. You can access that partner center by going to nonprofits.causes.com. And again, that is not with www dot. That is just nonprofits.causes.com. From that URL you can both apply to be a partner and access all the tools on the partner center.

And then finally, staring tomorrow with the giving challenge, Causes.com will be both a landing page for the giving challenge, as well as the new home page for Causes, which will allow anyone, whether or not they are a member of Facebook, to access the Causes application.

So with all of that said, I want to move on to the three big items I wanted to share with you today. And the first I am going to quickly go through, which is the cause redesign. When Giving Challenge is launched tomorrow, you will notice that your causes look different. The primary goal of the changes we have made to the cause is to increase engagement.

We haven't changed the tools too much. Most of the tools will continue to be there and you will be able to find them quite easily. But we are moving a lot of the compelling content higher on the page, and we are adding the concept of tabs so that it is easier for users to navigate the cause and find the information they are looking for.

Essentially, we are making changes we believe will encourage people to return more often and to take more action, such as inviting more friends, viewing more media, participating in more conversations, and donating and fundraising more dollars for your organization.

So don't be scared by the change you will see tomorrow. I think you will agree that it looks quite beautiful. And we think it will also have a greater impact for your organization as well.

So the other two main things I want to focus on are the new nonprofit partner center and America's Giving Challenge. And I will take about 15 minutes or so on both of those, and then I am really excited to get your questions. I am sure there will be a number of good ones today.

The partner center we have built, which again, you can access at nonprofits.causes.com, is a hub for all of our nonprofit partners. It is absolutely free to become a partner with us. And doing so gives you access to a number of tools that help you take advantage of your presence on Causes, because as many of you know, Causes is very bottom up grassroots.

You can't necessarily create a presence on Causes that you have total control over, and you can't necessarily easily reach out to everyone on Causes who is interested in your mission. It is a big space and it is a very diffuse space. And so we have tried to create tools in the nonprofit partner center that enable you to interact with administrators who are creating causes on your behalf and communicate directly with all of your supporters in a targeted way.

So I want to step back for just a moment before delving into the various tools in the partner center and talk a little bit about some pretty important trends that are going on in the philanthropic space, because I think it really sets the stage for what we are doing on Causes, and I think really helps explain why the partner center and why the Giving Challenge are as significant as we think they are.

And so the place that I want to start is by saying when we work with our nonprofit partners, we often advise them, well we always advise them, to build community. And by that we mean to build a robust relationship with their supporters and all of their other constituents, maybe the people they serve, obviously their board members and top donors, but really everybody who has an interest in their organization.

And we think that in building those communities, your organization should really tap into social media tools like Causes. And what we are talking about here with building community is essential social capital. It is about building the connections between your organization and the people who believe in what you are doing, as well as the connections between those people, basically mapping a social graph, a community of people who believe in your organization and can communicate with one another and encourage one another to continue to participate and continue to stand tall for your organization.

And so the reason that I am referencing this is that we have seen a number of major changes in the Internet in the last few years; really the last five years or so. And essentially what has happened is the Internet has become social in a way that it never was before.

We are seeing a real revolution in a number of sectors, because the Internet now, places like Facebook, are bringing together communities of people and authentic identities. Before Facebook and before other social networking sites, you had communities such as chat rooms with out real identity. And you had identity such as personal online banking without community.

And now that those two things are being connected, you have the ability to build robust relationships online. And all the things that people are doing online are becoming more social.

Why this matters for your organization is that community and social connection and social capital really tends to determine what people care about and the actions that they take.

And so what this means for you is that we are seeing a real revolution in philanthropy, in organizing, in advertising, in politics, and all these other sectors. It is a move from a top down centralized organization as this fixed institution that goes out and gets things done to bottom up grassroots organizing, which is a much more active, constantly evolving dynamic in which your constituents and what they have to offer become increasingly important and essential for you to be able to carry out your mission.

And so I know that is a lot of theory, but I think what we want to get to here is how do you take advantage of this trend? How do you stay at the front of these really important changes in the Internet to be able to carry out your mission in the most effective way and to expand your reach for the greatest impact that your organization can have?

And so this relates to the both the partner center and the Giving Challenge because the partner center has a set of tools that allow you to take advantage of these changes, and the Giving Challenge is an incredible opportunity for your organization to mobilize supporters using those new tools.

And so really try this emerging model of grassroots communities coming together to ask questions of nonprofits, to learn from nonprofits, and to see the impact they are having, and to essentially participate in a more meaningful way, which is ultimately what we are seeing supporters say they want to be able to do.

So to start with the partner center, if you aren't already a partner you can sign up to be one at nonprofits.causes.com. Doing so will give you access to a setup tool that, as I said before, will allow you to manage your presence on Causes. It will also give you access to a monthly newsletter where we share tips, we highlight success stories, and we let you know what is coming down the pipeline for the application.

Also, you don't have to be a partner, but we have an email address that is partner@causes.com where our nonprofit team is excited to take and answer questions and, again, share tips and best practices and help you strategize how to best use our tools for impact.

The other aspect of partnering with us is that it gives you an ability to manage your nonprofit's profile on Causes, which is a page within the application that is specifically for your nonprofit. It is the one place where you can control your official information and see how your organization is connected to a number of other causes.

And if you are following along on the slides that are sent out…I should have said this before…I am on slide seven now.

So as you sign into the partner center, if you have already been a partner you will notice a number of changes. If you have never done it before you will see an interface that has a number of different tabs. So I want to quickly run through what these different tabs do.

So the first tab, which is the default tab you will see when you log in, is the dashboard. And the dashboard gives you a centralized view into your presence on Causes and your activity. You can see which of your causes are growing quickly. You can see how many causes are affiliated to you, which is something I am going to get into in a moment. You can track what happens when you run campaigns and send out announcements and see whether or not that increases your number of supporters and your donations.

It essentially is giving you a broad overview of what is happening on Causes and who your supporters are. And in the coming months we will be adding more and more data such as demographic information for your supporters so you can get a really good sense of what it means to have causes and have supporters on Causes.

The next tab you see in the partner center is just called "causes." And we have added some really important functionality under this tab. The primary change now is that nonprofits have the ability to build a network of affiliate causes.

Essentially, an affiliate relationship between a cause and a nonprofit is a two way relationship, kind of like friending on Facebook, where the cause and the nonprofit say that they want to be connected with one another. And it allows them to pass information back and forth much more efficiently.

Many of you who work for nonprofits and are experienced with causes have probably been a little frustrated over the past year or two with the fact that you may have many causes benefiting you, but you really can only directly communicate with them in either a one off manner, or you maybe only really have a relationship with the causes you have started yourself. And so it is really hard to actually communicate with your broad network of supporters. So we are trying to address that gap with the affiliate cause model.

So from this tab you will have the ability to see all of the causes that benefit your organization but are not yet affiliates, and those are called Independent Causes. You will have the option of inviting them to affiliate with you. When you invite a cause to affiliate with you, you are essentially extending them an invitation that they will get in their administrative center, which is the backend for each individual cause. And if they agree to affiliate, you will have a number of additional commissions, which I will get to in a moment.

Likewise, from the partner center you may find that causes have requested to affiliate with you. So it really is a two way relationship. Once the affiliate relationship is created, as a nonprofit you have the ability to push a lot more content out to that network of causes.

So a key example of this would be a fundraising campaign. In the past, when you started a fundraising campaign, you probably started it as a fundraising goal on an individual cause, and then you maybe went out to other cause and encouraged them to also participate. There is no good way to run this campaign in a coordinated manner across a number of causes.

Well now with your network of affiliates, you will be able to automatically create a fundraising goal and have it be seeded on multiple causes as one. So you can imagine the efficiency and the power to be able to automatically spread a campaign to a number of grassroots communities. And then in addition to that, something we are going to get into in a couple of slides, you will have the ability to message all of those members.

One of the key things I want to highlight now, for affiliate causes specifically, is that once a cause is affiliated with you, you have the option of acting as a co administrator on that cause. And so from this particular tab within the partner center, next to causes that are affiliated with you, you will see an action button that says, "Admin Center" that will take you to the cause and give you the administrative view of the cause where you can look at statistics for your cause, including who has recently donated, how many new members you have, why are people leaving your cause; all sorts of interesting statistics for that specific cause, as well as the ability to modify things like a welcome note, or to change the administrators, or make any of those changes that administrators currently make to their individual cause.

I have moved on to slide 10. We were talking about the dashboard, and now on slide 10 the affiliate causes.

So actually we just finished up slide 10. And I want to go to slide 11 now. We have discussed this as well, but one of the primary things you want to do as you familiarize yourself with the partner center is to begin to recruit a network of affiliate causes.

And I think quality over quantity is a good rule of thumb here. You certainly shouldn't focus just on building a network of thousands of affiliate causes that you really don't know or understand. You should instead focus on building a network of perhaps a few dozen causes. If you are a larger organization, maybe a few hundred that seem to be causes that were started by individuals who really believe in your organization's mission and want to be your field organizers, want to be out their on the ground organizing their personal network on behalf of your organization. And so what you are doing is actually distributing the work.

So in order to recruit affiliates when you are in this causes tab, if you click on the sub-tab that says "Independent Causes", so you are now looking at a whole list of causes that benefit your organization but are not actually affiliated with it, you will have the option on the right side bar of the module that shows all of these independent causes. You will have the option to send an affiliate request, which is the invitation I was referring to before. So you should certainly browse through your list of independent causes. And for any that you would be comfortable having an affiliate relationship with, send them an affiliate request and try to build a network of grassroots causes that support your organization.

I think we should move on from here in the interest of getting through all of this. So as we get to the next slide, which is organize affiliates, we are still within the causes tab. The last thing that really needs to be highlighted here is you can also categorize your affiliate causes, which can be particularly powerful if you have a large number of them and you want to divide them up according to programmatic area, or geography, or perhaps you have groups on college campuses, and so you want to divide them that way. You will have to figure out what makes sense with your own programmatic goals as an organization.

But by clicking on the “edit categories” link, which is just below all of the existing categories, which as you start will probably just stay up on “categorize” and not have any categories. By clicking on “edit categories,” you will be able to create categories and then assign your affiliate causes to them, which is really important when we get to messaging because it allows you to target sub-groups of causes and sub-groups of administrators to send very specific messages that are relevant to them.

So moving on to slide 13, “Co-administrating causes,” I think I got ahead of myself just a little bit here. But you, as I said before, have the ability to co-administer affiliates. Now if you have more than one person at your organization that is managing your partner account, which we really recommend.

I think it is a good idea to have more like two or three people on your partner account, or maybe more if you are a really large organization. You can actually add their Facebook account. You can add each person’s Facebook account to the partner center so that those people can all act as administrators of your affiliate causes. So you want to essentially give them all access to the partner center. You will share the same login and password, but once an employee of your organization is logged in, they will have the ability to, again, co-administer causes and take all of the other actions that are available within the partner center.

So to do that, you want to click on the accounts link in the upper right hand corner of the partner center and then follow the instructions for adding or removing other Facebook accounts to this profile.

So I want to keep moving. As we go to slide 14, the next tab of the partner center is called “Bulletins.” And many of you are probably familiar with the announcement feature, which is the tool on an individual cause that allows the administrator to send an email and a Facebook notification to every member of the cause.

We have expanded this notion to now span many causes, and we are calling these bulletins. And so just like with an announcement, but now across a complete network of affiliate causes, or perhaps a subset of causes that belong to a certain category you have created, you can send an email, a Facebook notification, and in most cases actually also post an announcement to the individual causes that your are messaging through bulletins.

So this is the primary way to communicate with your cause administrators, who you can specifically target with this feature, and all of your supporters across any number of your affiliated causes.

Let’s move on to slide 15 where we get into a nice screenshot of what you will see when you click on the bulletins tab. So there are really three steps to sending bulletins. The first is selecting who you want to send it to. So currently, if you log in to the partner center, you will see the option to message all of the admins of your affiliated causes or to message all of the supporters of your affiliated causes. And then the third option there, which allows you to select a custom set of members, allows you to begin to target by cause category.

And for the Giving Challenge, which, again, launches tomorrow, and we will get to that in just a moment, you will have some additional targeting abilities such as specifically messaging your top donors, your top recruiters, and your top fundraisers from your hall of fame. But instead of just being for an individual cause, this will now allow you to message those folks across any number of causes that are affiliated with your organization.

A few other things that should be highlighted here. Once you have selected your recipients, you will then compose your message. And you will have the ability to include a call to action, which is an actual button that will show up in the email that prompts the reader of the email to invite friends, or donate, or go to the cause they belong to, or recruit from their friends. So you should definitely take advantage of those call to action buttons.

If you are looking at slide 15, there is a note here about the premium partner account, so I want to just say that I will absolutely get to that at the end of the presentation, but I don't want to distract from the core of this right now.

Going on to slide 16, you have the "Fundraising" tab, which is just to the right of the "Bulletins" tab within the partner center. And this tab is meant to give you an overview of your fundraising progress in any active fundraising campaigns you have launched across, again, one or more causes.

It also gives you the ability to build a relationship with individual donors and collect their contact information. And some of this is preexisting functionality that I know some of our nonprofit partners have been taking advantage of now for quite a while.

So when you are on the fundraising tab, if you click on donations in the left sidebar, you will see a list of all recent donations to your organization. Donors have the ability to share contact information on an opt-in basis. So on the donation form, if they check a box to share donor information with you, their basic contact information will appear here on this tab, and you will be able to download a donation report that will include all that information in a CSV file. So you can turn that into an Excel spreadsheet or put it into an existing database. For any users that choose not to opt-in, you will still see the amount they give, when they gave it, and you will have the ability to click through to their personal page within causes to thank them on what we call their "Care Wall." So you will always be able to thank your donors even if you don't get contact information from them.

Let's see. I want to quickly move through donor choices, which are perhaps a little less significant at the moment. The option below donations called "Donor Choices" allows you to create specific price points for impact equivalents; so the kind of impact you are having on the ground.

So you can say a $10 donation is equivalent to a bed net. A $25 donation is equivalent to five blankets. And a $50 donation is equivalent to a tent for a family of five or what have you.

So for organizations for which this makes sense, you can create these so called donor choices at different price points and give your donors a much better idea of what their donation actually means in terms of tangible impact.

We also give you ability to add a photo, customize the title of the donor choice, and write a brief description of what exactly that donor choice is. Doing this also modifies the donation form so that when the donor goes to your donation form, they see the price points that you have created along with the individual donor choice for each one that has the photo and description. So it is a nice way to customize your donation form and really make that yours.

Moving on to slide 18, the “Petitions” tab, we already have a lot of this functionality in the partner center. As our advocacy focus organizations know, petitions are a great way to spread awareness within causes and get a number of people to support advocacy campaigns that your organization is leading.

You can create a new petition from within this tab, you can close a petition, and you can track important statistics for any live petitions. So you can see the number of signatures, you can watch that grow, you can see how you are doing visa vie your goals, and then track how many days you have left.

Once you close the petition your campaign is over, but you still have the ability to email all of the signers on the petition. And that option is found right here on the tab. So as you look at any of your petitions, underneath the title you will have a number of options. You can edit the petition, you can promote it to individual causes or your network of affiliate causes, and you can email all signers. Other options there include downloading the signatures and closing the petition. So take some time to explore the petition tab.

Moving along to slide 19, “Edit Profile,” which is set apart as a separate tab all the way on the right hand side of the partner center interface, you have a lot of the tools you already had for editing your public profile, which is essentially the information that we present to users when they click on your nonprofit’s name anywhere in the application.

So if someone is on a cause that benefits you and clicks on your organizations name, they will end up at your nonprofit profile, which is a user facing page that gives important information about your organization. So this is a good space to keep that information updated and also to maintain your contact information, keep that up to date, so that we can reach out to you through our newsletter and other important communications.

We already talked about the account like, which is in the upper right hand corner of the cause. I am not on slide 20. This allows you to manage your partner center account. You can change your username and password, add additional Facebook accounts to your partner center account, sign up for email notifications, and generally mange this particular account.

And then finally on slide 21, I want to talk briefly about the premium account or the Giving Challenge, which, again, launches tomorrow. We will have all functionality be completely open and free to everyone.

There are certain tools and options that we are considering premium functionality that will be paid functionality when the challenge ends. And we are still working with our nonprofit partners to figure out exactly what those packages look like, but you can feel free to reach out us at partners@causes.com if you have questions about that or you want to make suggestions. That really goes for anything you see in the partner center and the application as well.

Currently where we are with the premium functionality is…functionality will be considered premium, and there will be some sort of monthly subscription to have full access to it. And those features are the ability to add an unlimited number of affiliate causes, the ability to post bulletins and send emails directly to the cause members of all affiliate causes. You will still be able to message all of the administrators, but not all of the members of all your affiliate causes. The ability to categorize and therefore highly target your causes, and the ability to feature media on your nonprofit profile, which is that public profile I referenced earlier within the application.

So with all of that said, to learn more about the partner center, you should definitely visit Causes Exchange. We have this information on the 22nd slide of the presentation. Causes Exchange has an entire page dedicated to the partner center. It includes a number of screenshots and tips. And it also has our insider's guide. And the direct link for that is also here on slide 22. But the insider's guide really gives you a step by step. I think it is about 10 pages long and it explains exactly how to use each of the tools, and shares a lot of strategy tips and best practices.

So as we are running down on time, I want to shift over to America's Giving Challenge. So the partner center is a good way for you to take advantage of these trends in philanthropy and organizing, and to really delve into social media and make it work for you, and build these large networks of grassroots supporters who believe in your organization and want to contribute on your behalf and participate in meaningful ways.

The Giving Challenge is really the perfect opportunity to put those tools to use. The Giving Challenge launches tomorrow at 3 PM Eastern. It is an opportunity for causes to compete with one another to gather donations from their existing members and new members they recruit in order to win cash awards for the nonprofits that they benefit.

If you are a nonprofit and you are trying to figure out how to participate in the challenge, you can enter any number of causes. And of course, using the partner center tools, you can message your members across any cause that is affiliated with you, so you definitely want to build that affiliate network now.

And once causes are entered in the challenge and we launch it tomorrow, the ultimate goal by which awards will be given out to nonprofits is to gather the most unique daily donations.

So there are two types of awards. There are overall awards and daily awards. And you will be trying to both, on any given day, raise as many unique donations as possible from your members and do the same on an overall basis.

The largest award that your nonprofit can win through your winning cause, if you will, is $60,000. I am trying to think of what else I can share with you about the Giving Challenge. Some of the key facts are under wraps until we launch tomorrow. We want everyone to start on a level playing field.

If you participated in the last Giving Challenge you know how exciting it is. I think the main takeaway should be that being successful in the Giving Challenge is really no different than being successful on causes. It is all about building communities, educating your supporters, getting them excited about your work, and using the excuse that the Giving Challenge is, to be perfectly blunt, to mobilize them; there is a sense of urgency there for those users to contribute while they still have an opportunity to multiply their impact by helping your organization win an award.

And it is really about effectively leveraging all of the tools on the application, from the messaging tools we talked about today to things we haven't talked about today such as Birthday Wish, which is a tool that allows any individual to donate their birthday to your organization. And instead of getting gifts from their friends, asking all of their friends on Facebook and beyond to make a contribution to your organization to fulfill their birthday wish.

So I unfortunately can't go through all of the various tools on the Causes application. I really wanted to focus on the new partner center. I am kind of assuming that most organizations on the phone have some familiarity with the application. But for those that don't, please go to Exhange.causes.com, click on the nonprofits link on the right hand side, and take a look at all of the different features that are available on Causes and will be essential to having a good showing in the Giving Challenge.

So I want to stop there and let Rebecca take over with questions.

Rebecca: Great. Thanks so much Matthew. Thank you to everybody who has sent in their questions so far. We have got a whole host of them, so I just want to dive right in and get us started.

The first question comes from Claire, and Claire is already planning on participating in America's Giving Challenge, so we are happy to hear that. Claire says, "We have created a causes page on Facebook. However, is there another formal registration process to ensure that we can fully participate?"

Matthew: Good question. There absolutely is. We will be giving you a couple of different ways to register. You do need to register in order to agree to the terms and conditions and officially enter your cause in the challenge. There will be a lot more information about that released tomorrow, but you can expect a Giving Challenge kickoff email from us which will have a link to the registration page.

The main landing page for the challenge will be www.causes.com; pretty easy to remember. And from that page you will have the ability to enter one or more of your causes in the giving challenge. And there will also be a link on your individual cause pages that should appear tomorrow afternoon and will also allow you to register.

Rebecca: Great. We have a couple of great questions here about strategy for causes. For instance, we have this one question from Jason, and thank you, Jason, for setting the stage for us.

He says, "We are a 40 million dollar international humanitarian organization that focuses on nutrition initiatives. A few years back, a number of the team created a cause without really going through our communications department."

That sounds familiar. A couple of us on the phone can relate.

"For a while we managed it, but then it went unused for a long time. So we are finally investing in social media and have had some success. We even launched a fan page and a Twitter account. Since July, our fan page has grown to about 5,600 and our cause to about 5,500, and has been that way for a long time. I am fairly new to causes and I am curious as to your thoughts on reengaging the cause base as well as growing it. We have a partner center and I am currently working through digging up the account information just to get logged in. It also took me a long time to remove the wrong admins on the cause and to get myself added. So what are your thoughts on that?"

Matthew: Great. There is a lot that could be said there. I definitely think you should take some time to go to Causes Exchange where we have a number of best practices and tips listed, and you can really take time to get to know all the features and read about success stories and our recommended best practices.

But I think at a high level, what is valuable about Causes is it gives you an opportunity to build deep relationships with a large number of supporters. I think that the way paradigm shift is occurring…We are moving from a model in which nonprofits would take a lot of time to invest in relationships with large dollar donors. And now you have the ability to truly invest in relationships with thousands and thousands, maybe even millions, of small dollar donors.

And so I think what you want to do is use the tools on Causes, and your Facebook page, and your Twitter account. I think you want to use them all in concert and make sure they are integrated with your communication strategy. And figure out how to empower your supporters to participate in supporting your mission.

Some things that come to mind are put yourself in the position of a supporter or donor who cares about an organization that he or she doesn't work for. You want to be asked what you think. You want to learn about the organization. You want to be able to ask questions. You want to be able to see the impact you are having. You want to be able to join together with other like minded people and take action together.

And so these tools we are describing, whether it is Causes, or Twitter, or a Facebook page, they all are an opportunity to do that. So I think you want to be regularly communicating with your members and sharing relevant and compelling information with them. Tell them what your organization is doing. Tell them what you need. Ask them questions. Encourage them to get involved. Give them opportunities.

I think a lot of people don't get involved because they are simply not asked or they are asked in a way that they don't find compelling. Maybe they get a piece of mail at home in isolation; they can't ask any questions with a piece of mail and it is hard to talk to their neighbor about it.

So having this conversation within social media is really an effective way to get your supporters involved. And I think Causes offers a number of tools for doing that. There are announcements. You can set fundraising campaigns. You can put media on your media board. We have seen a huge spike in views on media, so put up compelling videos, and photos, and articles about your organization and the issues you work on.

And just be sure to continue to reach out to your supporters both individually and through these mass communication tools to give them a way to participate.

Rebecca: Great. Now actually, there are a few folks who would like us to kind of take a step back for a second. You mentioned having a Facebook page versus a cause. So a couple folks wrote in, Anna, Sharon, and Penny with just a couple of questions.

Can you explain a little bit…? You touched on this at the beginning in terms of what a cause is. Can you shed some light on the differences and benefits that nonprofits can enjoy with the various types of tools that Facebook offers? So you know, a cause page versus fan pages versus groups. Can you clue in our audience a little bit who doesn't have quite as much experience?

Matthew: Yeah, absolutely. It is a good question and one that we get a lot. Let me start with the opportunities on Facebook, specifically groups, Facebook pages, and causes.

Groups tend to be for a fixed internally focused group of people. So a movie club or book club, the graduating class of a university, the employees of a nonprofit; they tend to be for internal communication and are not particularly good for recruiting, mass communication…

In fact, once you hit a limit of, I believe, 5,000 members, you can no longer email all of the members of the group. So they play a role, but probably just for internal organization.

Facebook pages are a great way to directly broadcast information to your fans or your supporters on Facebook. Probably the most valuable tool on a Facebook page is the ability to post to stream. And what that means is, for everyone who has fanned your page, who has come along and said, "I am a fan of your page," they have given you the ability to put stream stories, to post information to their homepage on Facebook.

Their homepage has what is called a stream, which is just a running list of news stories, if you will, from all of their friends and the Facebook pages they have fanned and other entities on Facebook that they have a connection to.

So if you have a Facebook page and you accumulate fans, you can then tell them about local events. You can give them updates on your organization. It is a very lightweight, top down way to directly push content out to your Facebook users while they are in Facebook. So that certainly has an important role to play.

And then the causes, which I have probably talked about the most, are really geared toward taking advantage of what is unique about social media, which is the peer to peer nature of it, which is the fact that instead of more traditional top-down models, imagine a website where you control all of the content. People have to come and find you. You decide what they see. You decide what options they have.

Facebook, Causes, and social media in general is more horizontally organized. It is about people connecting with one another, having conversations, making joint decisions, taking collective action, asking questions together, and it is really a bottom-up model.

So that is what Causes is meant to take advantage of, these innovations in the Internet, the online space, that hopefully connect concerned communities with relevant organizations and allow you to build deep communities with a lot of social capital.

I don't know that I was real clear when I was talking about this before, but I think in two points why building these kinds of communities around your organization matters is that communities tend to determine what people care about, what they are talking about, and ultimately the actions they take. And so that is, I think, the rationale for focusing on building your presence on Causes, in addition to the more top-down traditional communication tools like a Facebook page or a Twitter account where you are really just able to push news out to people who care about your organization, which is also valuable, but it is fundamentally different than Causes.

Rebecca, does that sufficiently answer the question?

Rebecca: I think so. That gives a good introduction to the various parts, what they are used for, and what the strategy is. So I definitely think that is a good intro.

But then I love how Wally put this question he sent in. He says, “As an organization that is on Facebook but not yet a part of Causes, can you give the first four or five steps we should take?”

And then I am actually going to add on another part to that. Understanding if folks already are on, can you explain a little bit more about what the next steps are? Do they have to register again? Can you go over again about signing up as a partner versus an affiliate? Just help us define some of those terms, too.

Matthew: Sure. Absolutely. Yeah, I know that there is a lot of different terminology and a lot of different types of people who are using Causes. So let me try to break this down a little bit more clearly.

You, as a nonprofit employee or a totally independent individual on Facebook, can access the Causes application and download it or install it to your Facebook profile. So when you are within Facebook, you can search for Causes. We should be the first search result. We are an application with about 30 million monthly active users which will show up in the search results. You will see our logo.

And if you click on that, you will be taken to our application page. And if you haven’t installed the application, there will be a blue button just underneath, or actually right on the Causes logo that is on the Facebook page there that encourages you to install the application.

So you go through the installation process and then you have the application attached to your particular Facebook account, your Facebook profile. From there, you can go into the Causes application. You will automatically be in the Causes application and you can start creating causes and joining causes, and donating, and all of that good stuff.

You can get back to the application from your Facebook profile once you have installed it. If you go to your personal profile page, you should find the application near the top of your profile page to the right of your photo. You may also find it in the lower left hand corner of Facebook by clicking on “applications.” It should be listed there.

And if you are ever unable to find the application again, you can always just search “Causes” within Facebook and the top search result should give you our application. And you can get into the application from there.

In terms of partnering, that is specifically for nonprofits. It is a separate site that is off of Facebook and is a backend dashboard that allows you to interact with what is happening on the application.

To get there, you need to type nonprofits.causes.com into your navigation bar at the top of your browser. And from there, you can either sign in…If you are already partnered with us you will have a login and password. If you have not, you will see a link to become a partner which takes you to a short application that asks you to verify that you are an employee of the organization. You need to share your EIN number and organizational email address so that we know you are with the organization, and some other basic information about your nonprofit.

That sends us an application that usually takes anywhere from 24-48 hours to process. We verify the information. If it all checks out, we create your partner account which automatically sends you an email. If you are ever rejected for any reason, it is usually jus a temporary thing. There is usually some problem with the application. And we will also send you an email explaining why your application has been put on hold. And you can resolve that by actually resubmitting your application to partner with us.

Once your partner account has been created, you again will go back to nonprofits.causes.com and log in which gives you access to this partner center. You will be logging into the partner center and you will see all of the functionality that we went through in the slide show.

Rebecca, was there anything else you wanted me to explain?

Rebecca: I think that is good for now. I am sure we will hop back. We have some great questions about affiliates and things that we will try to get back to.

In the meantime, Liz has a question that I wonder if other folks on the call are experiencing too. Liz says, "Is there a way to optimize searching for your organization in Facebook or Causes? Many friends of the organization tell us they try searching and have trouble finding us. There are many pages with similar organization names."

So it is kind of search engine optimization within Facebook and Causes. Do you have any tips for her?

Matthew: It is a very good question, and I am not entirely sure within Facebook what the answer to that is. I can tell you within Causes that our search results are weighted by the number of cause members and number of donations to the cause. So the only really easy way…I don't know if it is easy, but the only direct way to "optimize" your organization showing up in search results is to build your cause and gather more donations, and then you will appear higher in the search results when someone types in the name of your organization or a keyword that is related to your work.

I think other ways to help your supporters find your cause or multiple causes include putting links to them onto your Facebook page, which may be used as sort of a clearinghouse of information within Facebook.

Your website, absolutely. Presumably, if you have supporters on Facebook, they are using Google to find your website as well. So it is really valuable to link directly to your affiliate causes from your website. You should stay in regular communication with them by sending out emails that include links to your causes.

Otherwise, I think that search is the kind of thing that we are continually trying to improve, and it is a little bit tricky because, as you know, causes are not nonprofits, so causes will not necessarily have the name of your nonprofit. And in fact, many of our most successful causes have action oriented titles like, "Help save the rainforest" instead of "The Nature Conservancy." So someone looking for the Nature Conservancy may not be able to find them that way.

So I think you should least in your cause title try to include keywords that are really relevant to your organization's mission. And then again, as you build your presence on Causes, your causes will rise in the search results.

Rebecca: We have gotten a couple people write in and are just curious about donations that are tied to causes on Facebook, and just wanted to know, "If somebody sets up a birthday cause, how does our organization get those donations and things like that?" Matt, can you just talk a little bit about how the donation processing works?

Matthew: I would be happy to. Network for Good is our wonderful donation processing partner and we work with them to ensure that all donations that are made to a cause. Again, I want to just step back for a second and remind everybody that for a cause to raise money, it has to identify a registered nonprofit in the US or Canada in order to gather donations.

And when someone donates through a cause that is benefiting the nonprofit organization, that money is collected and processed by Network for Good, which then sends it on to the nonprofit around the middle, around the 15th, of each month. It is aggregated.

So if you have 100 causes with thousands of members who are creating hundreds of birthday wishes, and there is this really decentralized network of support for you on Causes and you have got all these different donations coming in from all these different places, they are always attached to your 501C3, and therefore Network for Good is able to pull those all together, aggregate them, and then send you a check. Or, I think what we would all prefer because it is a lot easier and better for the environment, they can send it to you via electronic funds transfer.

We should also probably note that on the check or the statement of funds being transferred in the middle of each month, Network for Good will break down for you the source of those donations by cause name. So you will be able to understand which of your causes are fundraising the money that is coming to you.

Rebecca: Great. We did have one nice Facebook shout out, so I just wanted to thank Amy for writing in and for participating. Amy is from National Autism. She says, "Our

Facebook cause “Think Autism” is almost at 1.2 million. Thank you Causes.” So I just wanted to share that. She is really excited to be involved in it, so thank you Amy.

Matthew: Yes. Thank you, Amy. That is really exciting. We have enjoyed watching your cause grow and are excited to continue working with you.

Rebecca: Excellent. We have a lot of questions coming in about relationships between nonprofits and supporters. Whether it be an affiliate, a partner, or other fan pages, can you talk a little bit again about the relationships about who can set up what? So for instance, we had a question from Susan that says, “Can you affiliate with a cause who is not a partner?” There was another question, “What do we do when a fan has registered our charity? We understand they can do it, but is this allowed?” So if you just want to talk a little bit more about who can do what and how best to communicate with the folks that are registering for you with or without your knowledge.

Matthew: Sure. OK. I am not sure if registration of causes is referring to the Giving Challenge specifically, but otherwise, outside of the Giving Challenge, causes don’t really register for anything.

Anyone can create a cause. Maybe that is a good place to start. Anyone who has installed the Causes application is able to create a cause for anything that they care about. It can just focus on raising awareness or it can raise money for a nonprofit.

This is the very decentralized model we are talking about that is extremely peer to peer and often very local. And so for example, under this model the Human Society of the United States, one of our nonprofit partners, has around 1,500 causes around the country, and I believe even outside of the country, that have been set up by Facebook users on behalf of the nonprofit organization.

Imagine doing a political campaign when supporters have house parties to raise money and awareness for the campaign. So you have thousands of house parties across the country on behalf of a presidential candidate.

It is kind of the same idea. Or another way to think about it is local chapters. Because they are not a one time event like a house party, they are an ongoing local organization that has been set up on behalf of your nonprofit.

With the new partner center tools, you have the ability to reach out to and coordinate and manage all those different causes that have been set up by your supporters on Facebook.

Now in terms of what nonprofits can do, it is a little more complicated because you can get involved on either side. Like any Facebook user, you can create causes. So you can install the application through your Facebook profile and you can create causes.

A number of our nonprofit partners actively manage one or more causes themselves. But you can also partner with us, and this is the actual registration that is happening with

Causes, which is actual nonprofits, their employees going to nonprofits.causes.com and applying or registering to be a partner of Causes, which, again, is free and gives you access to nonprofit specific tools in the partner center that allow you to reach out to and manage all of those causes in the application.

Rebecca: As you mentioned, there are so many terms and so many great options and opportunities for nonprofits to get involved in Facebook and Causes that sometimes all the different terms can get a little jumbled.

Is there any particular resource, perhaps a glossary of terms or another resource or help center, than can help folks sort this out when they go back to kind of process all this information after today's call?

Matthew: Yeah. That is a great question. There is, though I want to admit that it could be better. And I think the idea of a glossary is a great one, and it is definitely appropriate at this point.

The primary place to get an overview of the Causes application and what nonprofits can do, what individual activists can do, and essentially the relationship between all these different constituents who are active on the Causes application is what we call Causes Exchange, which is a blog that we post to on a regular basis, but it is also a resource center.

We have broken resources down by constituents, essentially. So we have a section for activists, we have a page for nonprofits, another sub page for foundations, and companies. And so presuming that most of your on the call are working for a nonprofit organization, you will want to go to exchange.causes.com. And that is no www dot. Just type in exchange.causes.com. And then click on the link for nonprofits on the right hand sidebar where you will be taken through the terminology, all of the different tools, what it means to partner. There are a ton of resources there that I think will really explain how to use our application from the perspective of a 501C3 organization.

With that said, I love the idea of a glossary that is just a list of terms that we use that can be confusing. And that is something we will get on and do in the next week or so. And when we do put it together, it will be posted on Causes Exchange, so you should definitely familiarize yourself with exchange.causes.com.

I should also mention our help center within Causes. If you are within the Causes application, click on "Help". It is a small link in the upper right hand side of the application. The help center has a number of frequently asked questions broken down into different categories. There is a whole category just for nonprofits. There are questions about donations and the donation process. There are questions about how to start a cause, how to grow a cause, how to effectively mobilize supporters.

Sometimes it is easier for people, instead of having a ton of resources, to just go straight to a list of questions that they have themselves. So to access that, you need to go to the

Causes application within Facebook and click on “Help” and then go through the frequently asked questions there.

Rebecca: So with that I just would like to turn it back over to Matthew if you have any final closing remarks. From here at Network for Good, thank you so much for joining us today.

Matthew: Thanks, Rebecca. I want to thank Network for Good for giving us the opportunity to share this information with so many of you. And I want to thank everyone who joined the call today for taking some time out of your busy schedule to learn more about these new and, I think, really exciting tools.

Rebecca: Excellent. Thank you so much. And again, thank you everyone for joining us today. We will be in touch with more information. So have a great rest of your day! Bye everybody!