



## THE JOURNAL REPORT: TECHNOLOGY

### Recommended Reading

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Nonprofit, nongovernmental, grassroots or other mission-based organizations are increasingly turning to technology and new media to get out their message and spur social change.

The Nonprofit Technology Network, or NTEN, is a professional community that offers support for those who work in their information and communication technologies at such organizations.

### RECOMMENDED READING ARCHIVE

Get a regular take on what experts are reading to stay on top of their field, whether it be Small Business, Technology or Trends. Check back weekly at [The Journal Report](#) and see an [archive of previous columns](#).

Katrin Verclas, executive director, says NTEN advises these groups on using technology to meet their larger goals and also provides a forum for "accidental techies," or those who have with little or no formal information-technology training. Ms. Verclas refers to the people at NTEN as "techies for good."

Here is a selection of resources, Web sites, books and online tools for leveraging technology for social change, from Ms. Verclas and other NTEN members.

- **"Momentum: Igniting Social Change in the Connected Age,"** *By Allison Fine*

"This is a good resource for those who are working for social change and want to use social media to change the world. It aims to teach people how to use 21st century tools -- from the Internet to cellphones -- to organize and connect people for a common goal."

- **CitizenSpeak**, [www.citizenspeak.org](http://www.citizenspeak.org)

"CitizenSpeak is a free, open source email advocacy service for grassroots organizations. Inspired by MoveOn email campaigns, CitizenSpeak provides the same e-advocacy capability at the community level. CitizenSpeak has been used by civic activists across the country to educate representatives about local and national issues, promote causes, and build their lists. The code that runs

CitizenSpeak is available as a free module for Drupal, the open source content management platform."

- **An Introduction to Activism on the Internet**, [backspace.com/action](http://backspace.com/action)

"John Emerson's guide covers strategies and techniques of electronic advocacy using email, the Web and other new media to bring about social change. It provides a great overview and analysis of campaigning methods."

- **DotOrganize**, [www.dotorganize.net](http://www.dotorganize.net)

"DotOrganize recently published 'Online Technology for Social Change: From Struggle to Strategy' based on surveys and interviews of small nonprofits and social-change organizations. Dot Organize also features a virtual 'tool crib,' a directory of reviews and descriptions of online tools and resources."

- **ITrain Online**, [www.itrainonline.org](http://www.itrainonline.org)

"ITrainOnline provides technology how-to resources aimed at civil-society organizations in developing countries. The site includes materials and annotated links to excellent resources in English, Spanish and French, on topics ranging from computer and Internet basics to highly technical areas and the ways that civil-society and development organizations can increase their impact using these tools."

- **MobileActive**, [www.mobileactive.org](http://www.mobileactive.org)

"MobileActive is a global community of nonprofits, activists, and technologists using mobile phones in their work. The MobileActive series of [Strategy Guides](http://mobileactive.org/guides) (<http://mobileactive.org/guides>) examines the effectiveness of using mobile phones to build constituent lists, influence public policy and raise money. This series is designed to equip organizations around the world with the know-how to deploy effective mobile campaigns for a variety of types of activism and advocacy. The first guide in this series focuses on using mobile phones in electoral and voter registration campaigns. Other guides in the series to be released in the coming weeks will focus on issue advocacy, fundraising, and mobile organizing."

- **"The Accidental Techie: Supporting, Managing, and Maximizing Your Nonprofit's Technology,"** *By Sue Bennett and Tom Battin*

"This book is essential reading for anyone who has taken on technology responsibilities at an organization without any formal training -- the office or program manager turned 'accidental techie.' It includes step-by-step guides as well as templates and worksheets for various projects from assessing your systems to writing proposals for funding. Highly useful for nonprofit leaders, program staff, and board members seeking to gain understanding of their organization's technology needs."

- **"Emerson & Church's Real World Guides: Raising Thousands (If Not Tens of Thousands) of Dollars with Email,"** *By Madeline Stanionis*

"This book is a practical guide on how to start or improve an email-fundraising campaign. It covers basics like the best time of day to send emails and more complex issues like how to evaluate email marketing results, and everything in between -- in a short, to-the-point, step-by-step guide."

- **eNonprofit Benchmarks Study**, [www.e-benchmarksstudy.com](http://www.e-benchmarksstudy.com)

"The eNonprofit Benchmarks Study is the first of its kind to look at the effectiveness of using the Internet to raise money and influence public policy. It provides metrics nonprofits can use to measure and compare their online performance to other organizations."

- **Idealware**, [www.idealware.org](http://www.idealware.org)

"Idealware provides candid reviews and articles about software of interest to nonprofits. The organization offers news articles and reports monthly, including detailed looks at particular software areas, product comparisons, case studies and strategic overviews of key issues related to choosing software."

- **Choosing and Using Open Source Software: A Primer for Non Profits**, [www.nosi.net/projects/primer](http://www.nosi.net/projects/primer)

"This article from the Nonprofit Open Source Initiative (NOSI) gives an introduction to open source software and explains its potential for the nonprofit sector. Written in non-technical language, the Primer is targets nonprofit managers with little hands-on technical expertise. It includes: case-studies of nonprofits using open source software, a process for evaluating whether or not open source is right for an organization, and resources for nonprofits thinking of implementing open source solutions."

- **Idealist**, [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org) and **TechFinder**, [www.techfinder.org](http://www.techfinder.org)

"Idealist and Techfinder help nonprofit groups find technology consultants and organizations that can provide products and services. Idealist lists some 670 technology providers, while TechFinder lists more than 870 providers in the United States. Visitors can search providers in other countries as well. Idealist also offers job and volunteer opportunities, among many other things; TechFinder is a free service of NTEN and TechSoup."

- **"The Dynamics of Technology for Social Change"** *By Jonathan Peizer*

"Mr. Peizer articulates the impact of the cultural, political, and economic factors in the nonprofit sector on adoption and application of technology. It addresses systemic barriers and opportunities for tech adoption -- as one person said to me, 'The kind of stuff many of those trying to make technology work understand in their guts but can't articulate and therefore can't address.' It's a great resource for those helping nonprofits move beyond the more natural and easier focus on tools, software and hardware to begin to tackle the real barriers."

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