

A.R.T.S.

ARTS RESOURCES TO SHARE • RESOURCES FOR THE ARTS ORGANIZATION FROM THE OKLAHOMA ARTS COUNCIL

SPECIAL TECHNOLOGY ISSUE

The inside pages of this issue are packed with information and resources about technology planning, writing technology proposals, finding funding, learning online, Web design, e-commerce, and more. There's something for everyone!

Should you have information you would like to share about this subject or any other, feel free to call 405.521.2931 or e-mail marla@arts.state.ok.us. We'd like to hear from you!

Important Workshop for Oklahoma Nonprofit Cultural Organizations

Mark your calendars for April 27! John McCann, co-director of the Institute for Cultural Policy and Practice at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia, will lead a workshop in Oklahoma City addressing the vitality of an organization through its mission and the relationship between mission and strategic planning. You won't want to miss it!

The Assembly of Community Arts Councils of Oklahoma is hosting this event, and according to Executive Director Ann Weisman, "John McCann has something to offer those new to our field as well as to our 'old timers.' His fresh perspective and novel approach give us new tools with which we can all build better programs and stronger organizations." Ann speaks from experience as she has been in two workshops facilitated by John McCann in the past six months.

The workshop will be held in the Carousel Room at the Metro Tech Conference Center of the Springlake Campus on NE Martin Luther King Boulevard in Oklahoma City. Cost of the workshop is \$35 for the first representative from an Assembly member with additional registrations costing \$30. Non-members of the Assembly are also welcome to attend. Their cost is \$45 for the first representative with additional registrations costing \$40. To register or for additional information, contact the Assembly at 405.236.1446 or acaco@telepath.com for e-mail.

"Arts Over Oklahoma" Online Arts Calendar

<http://ok.artscal.org>

Are your events on it?

It's free!

Wow! A searchable calendar.

Good publicity!

Technology Planning & Implementation

Gone are the days when arts organizations can ignore the presence of the online community. Although many groups believe they do not have the time or budget to be online, what they do not realize is that computers and the Web improve nonprofit effectiveness by reducing tasks performed by people, and making information available to everyone who needs it.

Nonprofits are in the relationship, information and communication business. The Web is based on getting information and getting it fast. So, it follows that a Web presence maximizes nonprofits' potential.

How, you ask? Technology makes it easier to prepare financial and fundraising reports that build the confidence of constituents, board members, funders, and the public. Computers and the Web make it easier to communicate with your board, staff, and the general public, and to publicize your organization's mission, services and activities. Information can be provided day or night, without regard to distance; donors can obtain information on urgent appeals as well as on the organization's work; press kits can always be accessible and up to date; and research results can be reviewed from anywhere.

Where do you start? Technology planning is an organization's written plan to integrate technology to support its mission, programs, and goals. It is an ongoing process, a path to goal attainment, but it needs to allow for change and growth. Because planning and implementation require a lot of work, management and board commitment are essential. Technology planning needs to be a part of long-term strategic planning for the future, resources need to be

dedicated, and a staff person needs to be in charge of the project. Generally, the plan should cover 3-5 years, with specifics for 18 months. It should cover hardware, software, staff training and other Information Technology (IT) equipment (e.g., phones, faxes, multimedia, and other specialized equipment) as well as funding.

Many experts advocate a technology team approach to planning as it allows more people from inside and outside the organization, users and experts, to buy into the new plan and to benefit from their experience. As a starting point, try brainstorming as a group about how technology could help achieve your organizational goals and increase efficiency. For each goal, list your technology ideas and then ask:

- 1) What will it empower or fix?
- 2) Who are the primary beneficiaries?
- 3) How ready are we for the idea? How ready is the field?
- 4) What knowledge (of environment, constituents, options) do we need to obtain?
- 5) What skills must we have?
- 6) What are the technical requirements?
- 7) What leadership or coalitions are needed?

Also consider any problems the organization is facing and what might be needed to solve those problems. Study how information flows through the organization and how any bottlenecks can be resolved. Survey each position in your organization concerning needs for doing that job in the most effective manner and consider how technology can or does affect it. It is important to know where your agency loses time and money. It is also necessary to assess the current system, determine how to integrate technology for the future or determine how much would be gained or lost by moving to another system.

Once needs are addressed, shop around, talk with vendors, their clients or your peers to determine the best products for your needs.

The most important resource any organization has is its people, so make training a priority in your plan and include it as an ongoing line item in your budget. For new equipment or upgrades, hire someone from outside your organization to conduct training. All staff should receive at least basic training and one of every 10 staff members should receive advanced training. Phil Ferrante-Roseberry, Ex. Dir. of CompuMentor, notes the 70/30 rule used by many large companies: for every dollar budgeted for technology, 30 cents should be used for hardware and software purchases and the remaining 70 cents should be used for training and support.

Consultants, particularly those who understand nonprofits and their needs, can be very helpful in preparing a technology plan and recommending products or services. Remember that although they can bring expertise into an organization, only the nonprofit knows what goes on within—the mission, workflow, personalities, tasks, etc. So, it becomes obvious that technology planning and assessment are not functions that can just be turned over to someone else. Staff and management must maintain control and participate in the process for it to be successful.

Your next question is, “How do we pay for this?” If you’ve done your homework, you now have a technology assessment and technology plan in hand that reflect your organization’s mission. Be sure training, maintenance, technical support, time, staff knowledge, and contingency plans for downtime are addressed, as well as future needs. One of the most valuable parts of having a strong, well-thought-out technology plan is the ability to present it

to possible donors or funding sources. The organization looks efficient, forward thinking, serious, and knowledgeable. It also allows the organization to stay “on track.”

If you’re seeking grant money, remember that operational funding is often not as readily available as for specific projects, but don’t let that stop you! Nonprofit needs for operational technology funding are best couched in terms of the organization’s mission, or how it can serve its clients better. In other words, focus less on the technology and more on the outcomes or how they will improve people’s lives. By concentrating on the mission instead of a wish list, a nonprofit becomes a more attractive prospect for funding. After researching and deciding on a funding source, present a carefully thought out proposal with a compelling vision or innovative idea that will catch their attention.

Hard Copy

Wired for Good: A Technology Guide Book for Nonprofits, available from the Center for Excellence in Nonprofits, 408.294.2300 or www.wiredforgood.org/Guidebook.htm

Building Arts Audiences and Communities on the Web by Beth Kanter, available from the New York Foundation for the Arts, 212.366.6900. For the online version, see www.artswire.org/spiderschool/

The Nonprofit Guide to the Internet: How to Survive and Thrive by Michael Johnston, available from John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 800.225.5945 or www.wiley.com/products/subject/business/nonprofit/catalog/johnston2.html

Great overall links to resources for computer and technology information:

Nonprofit Resources for the Internet
www.helping.org/nonprofit/

Open Studio: The Arts Online
www.openstudio.org/info-url1595/info-url.htm

Benton Foundation's Best Practices Toolkit
www.benton.org/Practice/Toolkit/

Coyote Communications Technology Tip Sheets — www.coyotecom.com/tips.html

7 Characteristics of an Online Organization
www.onenw.org/onelist/onelist980810.html

Free Management Library
www.mapnp.org/library/informgmt/informgmt.htm

Technology Planning

NEA Lessons Learned: Technology Planning for Arts Organizations
www.arts.gov/pub/Lessons/Lessons/matuzak.html

National Strategy for Nonprofit Technology (NSNT) www.sustain.org/nsnt/

Tech Soup — Technology Planning
www.techsoup.org/articles.cfm?topicid=11&topic=Technology%20Planning

Getting Ready Questions
www.spiderschool.org/workshops/planning/readyq.html

Rubric for Technology Planning for Organizations, www.artswire.spiderschool.org/workshops/planning/rubric2.htm

Organizational Technology Assessment
www.spiderschool.org/workshops/planning/inventory.pdf

Elements of a Technology Plan
www.spiderschool.org/workshops/planning/elements/index.html

Open Studio — Technology Planning
www.openstudio.org/info-url1595/info-url_show.htm?topics_attrib=517

Hiring Outside Help

Hiring a Technical Support Provider
www.youthlearn.org/techno/hiring.html

How to Hire and Work with Consultants
www.ontap.org/advice.html

Finding and Choosing a Web Designer
www.coyotecom.com/webdevo/designer.html

ASPs (Application Service Providers) Offer High-tech Solutions for Nonprofits
<http://pnnonline.org/innovations/patterson1122.adp>

Writing a Technology Proposal

How to Write a Request for Proposal for a Web Project
<http://webdevelopersjournal.com/columns/writerfp.html>

Tech Funding: Proposal Dos and Don'ts
<http://pnnonline.org/technology/funding0202.cfm>

Crafting the Technology Proposal/Examples
www.npower.org/resourcesandlinks/TechFundraising/TechnologyFundraisingResources.htm

Finding Technology Funding

Technology Fundraising Resources
www.npower.org/resourcesandlinks/TechFundraising/TechnologyFundraisingResources.htm

Find Technology Funding
www.helping.org/nonprofit/grants.adp

Technology Funding
www.benton.org/Practice/Toolkit/techmoney.html

Computer Recycling Resource List
<http://pnnonline.org/technology/computerrecycle1.cfm>

Tech Soup — Funding and Grants
www.techsoup.org/resourcelist.cfm?resourcelistid=17

Learn Online

Beginners Central — for the Internet novice
<http://northernwebs.com/bc/>

Whatis?.com — Definitions of Internet terms
<http://whatis.techtarget.com/>

On-Line Learning Resources
www.npower.org/resourcesandlinks/TechTraining/TechnologyTrainingMain.htm

Online Classes
www.barnesandnobleuniversity.com/bnu?nhid=bn&userid=2IWKDN6VV3

Online Training
www.indiana.edu/~stcdev/public/training/index.html

Charlotte's Web/Open Studio Training Resources
www.charweb.org/arts/open/resource.htm#open

E-Mail

Making the Most of E-Mail
www.onenw.org/toolkit/navigation/toolkit_titles_email.html

Web Design

Ten Good Deeds in Web Design
www.useit.com/alertbox/991003.html

Top Ten Mistakes in Web Design
www.useit.com/alertbox/990502.html

Information Architecture
www.openstudio.org/info-url1595/info-url_show.htm?topics_attrib=518

Help with Web Sites

Web Building Overview
www.techsoup.org/articles.cfm?topicid=13&topic=Web%20Building

The Chronicle of Philanthropy's Building Nonprofit Web Sites
<http://philanthropy.com/free/resources/technology/websites.htm>

How to Build a Web Site with Free Stuff
<http://wdvl.internet.com/Authoring/Design/FreeStuff/toc.html>

Pick the Perfect Web Host
www.winmag.com/help/2000/webhosting/

CNET Reviews 5 Free Web Hosting Sites
www.cnet.com/internet/0-3799-7-1554905.html

E-Commerce

E-Commerce and Nonprofits
www.benton.org/Practice/Ecommerce/

Guide to E-Commerce
www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/reference/guides/ecommerce/

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Technology Opportunities Program (formerly TIIAP)

The U. S. Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration will award grants to state, local, and tribal governments, colleges, universities, and non-profit entities to extend the advanced telecommunications technology benefits to all Americans, especially those in inaccessible, rural and underserved urban communities.

Deadline: March 22, 2001
Information: 202.482.2048 or
www.ntia.doc.gov/otiahome/top/

NEA Grants

Creativity — Creation and presentation of artistic work, and development of professional artists.

Organizational Capacity (Services to the Field) — Developing strong and valued arts organizations.

Deadline: March 26, 2001
Information: 202.682.5400 or
www.arts.gov/guide/Orgs02/OrgIndex.html

Community Arts Development:
ArtsREACH — Supports partnerships between arts organizations and community groups that highlight the potential of the arts to address key community concerns.

Deadline: May 1, 2001
Information: 202.682.5700 or
www.arts.gov/guide/Challenge/ChallengeIndex.html

Arts Learning — Children and youth learning in and through the arts.

Deadline: May 14, 2001
Information: 202.682.5400 or
www.arts.gov/guide/Orgs02/OrgIndex.html