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ILS 252

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Socially Charitable

Basic concept: The premise of my website, **Socially Charitable**, is a way for people to donate time or money to any charity in their area. Fifty percent of the money donated will go directly to the charity of the donor's choosing, the other fifty percent will go towards funding local and sustainable projects throughout the state. The idea would be similar to Craigslist, in which cities have different regions. Local charities could then promote themselves with their own page (similar to Facebook). People could then view their profile and choose to donate either time or money. There is a similar website called JustGive.org, which is a nonprofit organization that specializes in donations of money. From their website, "JustGive's database contains nearly 1.8 million charities. How can you choose where to make your donation? The JustGive Guide includes 1,000 charities that have met stringent public requirements. The charities are grouped into 19 categories to make your search easier and faster (3)." Clearly they have the competitive advantage when it comes to donating money with their vast database, but it is unclear if they have as a robust of a time donation capacity. Companies like the Red Cross allow you to donate your time, "If you like to help people you have come to the right place. Your local Red Cross unit could have just the opportunity – from training to be and ready to respond to disasters to supporting a blood drive from delivering messages to our US service personnel to connecting

families displaced by disasters or conflict (4).” The Red Cross has obviously been around for a very long time and many people would want to donate their time and money to them. The nice thing about our site is we want to work in collaboration with everyone. I will have a unique opportunity to influence over 40,000 students and if we grow to other campuses we can reach hundreds of thousands of students. By directing people to other sites and helping people give their time and money, the site will definitely support the greater good!

How: As suggested by Philip Hooper and Simon Stobart in the article, *Using third-party services to reduce the development cost and improve the effectiveness of charity websites*, I will utilize third party technology including WordPress, PayPal, and other services to cut down on the production costs and avoid “reinventing the wheel.” In their article they state, “Although many charities now have a dedicated budget for developing their website the actual amount being spent varies widely, with the median figure being just under £4,000. (5).” My budget, shown below, will be roughly \$1,700 for startup costs, many of which I will donate myself to decrease costs. Because of the high cost of development I will do as much as I can of this website by myself, furthermore I will use the aforementioned tools to streamline everything from posting to credit card processing donations.

Budget:

Website Costs (Phase I)

Initial Graphic Design	\$1,000
Initial Website Coding	\$500
Domain Name (yearly)	10
Hosting (yearly)	150
Total:	\$1,660

Website Costs (Phase II)

Expanding the website regionally (Greater Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Chicago, Minneapolis)	\$2,500
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Webmaster (Part Time, Yearly)	\$11,000
Total:	\$13,500

Website Costs (Phase III)

iPhone Application	\$10,000
High End Back End Database Development	\$5,000
Webmaster (Full Time, yearly)	\$22,000
Total:	\$37,000

The rationale: This is not only putting your money to good use but putting your money where your mouth is in terms of your time. By allowing people to donate money to charities it will continue the process of charitable giving all over. By allowing people to donate their time, it will take things to the next level in terms of giving, and allow people who might not be able to give their money to give something.

Hard to relate: It is hard to relate to multi-national charities. UNICEF is great. It is a good charity for a good cause and for “\$15 a month (50¢ per day) can provide 12 packets of high energy biscuits specially developed for malnourished children (1).” This is good but it is hard to see your money in action. I view this as charity as being based on the confidence model, the confidence that people will use your money to do good things for people in other countries. However, it is still hard to see where your money actually goes. **Closing the gap:** David Thoreau believed that charity should be accomplished by helping your neighbors, because you can actually see what your neighbors needs and help them (2). By keeping things local you can a) see where your money goes or b) donate time yourself and make a difference. This is the concept of the site, local charities and sustainability.

Why Sustainability: There is a growing need for the world to become more sustainable. If we want to leave the planet in a better place than we left it, we need to make some fundamental

changes. Of the people I interviewed for this assignment, everyone agreed that there would need to be hefty changes in order to achieve sustainability in our society. By using half of the money that is donated to fund sustainable initiatives we can not only donate to worthy charities but also help sustainability initiatives locally and regionally.

The plan: This website will grow in a three stage plan that I have outlined below.

Phase I: The first stage is the soft launch that I will complete before the end of this semester. This site will be simple and allow for what needs to be done (donations and time scheduling).

Phase II: At this point we will be ready to expand. I anticipate the repackaging of the website to allow for different markets to cost roughly \$2,500 in time and materials. At this point, I will most likely either have to come on to the project part time, or hire someone to come on at part time. The cost of the part time webmaster yearly will be \$11,000.

Phase III: After roughly a year in success at phase II, there will be a big push to get to this step. Phase three will require an iPhone application, Android application, and any other mobile platform that might become prevalent over the next few years. I estimate the cost of developing the mobile platform for signing up to donate and/or signing up to give time to be \$10,000. It will require more changes to the website and backend capabilities to allow for national expansion. I anticipate the costs to get the site ready for national exposure to be \$5,000. It will definitely require a full time webmaster which I estimate will be paid \$22,000.

Presentation:

I presented my idea to another section other than my own due to illness. It was a very good experience and after the presentation I exchanged email addresses with two of the people in that section who were interested in helping me out. One of them said that his roommates were thinking of a way to make this idea happen for two years and he was eager to talk to me about actually getting the site going. The other person is a reporter for the Badger Herald and has a lot of connections to people locally, which could help the site build momentum with a press contact at the UW. I am genuinely excited moving forward to work with these individuals and I am glad that people thought I have a good idea. One unique idea that came out of the presentation was creating an iPhone app that would allow people who are looking to kill time the ability to do some short-term volunteering. I think that is a fantastic idea and is definitely something I had not thought about but which would be a great way to expand into new markets.

The site:

Below is a mock-up I did of the website. I am utilizing the “bootstrap” framework, which was created by the people who developed Twitter, to save development time. I am going to host the website on my company, www.highstakesbrands.com, servers. The only real sunk-costs for me will be my time (opportunity cost) and \$12.17 to register a domain name at GoDaddy.com. There will be greater costs, as I have outlined above, to make the site grow in the future. But there should not be that much of a startup cost to at least get the site launched.

Socially Charitable Home About Contact Username Password Sign in

Socially Charitable

Donate your time and money!

Who are we?



We are a charitable organization striving to match people looking to donate their time, energy, and money with charities in need. We also use a percentage of our total donations to improve sustainable initiatives across the country.

How do I donate?

Simply sign up and make an account. From there you can pick who you would like to donate to, whether it be your time or your money, and we will set you up with contact information or process your donation directly to the charity safely and securely.

What I learned:

I learned a lot by doing this project and I am glad that I picked this topic. I am certain that I will pursue this concept in the future. With the right guidance, and structure, I think Socially Charitable can become a success throughout the community. I think the sustainability initiatives can, at minimum, spread awareness about sustainability and hopefully also cause a direct impact in our world, by funding sustainability initiatives. I am very confident that in the future this project will help me in my professional career and will become a resume booster for me when I pursue this project further. . I will utilize the connections if have made in this class to make the website a success. I am excited at the prospect of launching Socially Charitable and will do everything in my power to make it a reality

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