How To Develop A Microvolunteering Action

A Guide for Charities & NonProfits

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Introduction

So what is microvolunteering and what's all the fuss about?

Introduction

There's a plethora of microvolunteer actions around at the moment – you only have to look at Help From Home's (http://www.helpfromhome.org/) database of over 800 repeatable actions or Skills For Change's (http://www.skillsforchange.com/) database of one-off actions.

But what if you're an NGO, a nonprofit or a grass root initiative wanting to tap into the huge potential that the microvolunteering market can offer? Would you know how to set up a microvolunteer action? The following, therefore, is a guide rather than a step-by-step list of actions, to discover whether your organisation needs to or is able to set foot into this arena.

What is a Microvolunteer Action?

Firstly, let's discover what a microvolunteer action looks like. There are several implementations and definitions of microvolunteering doing the rounds. They come from the following initiatives:

A) Help From Home, which is geared more towards home based volunteering actions, uses the following definition:

"Small, quick, low commitment, on-demand actions that benefit a worthy cause. The actions might be a task that could be accomplished as a whole unit from start to finish by one person or it might be an action that could be broken down into its component parts where an individual is just one of many people performing the same task to achieve an end result. 10 seconds to 30 minutes is all you need to help out a worthy cause!"
Source:
http://www.helpfromhome.org/faqs.htm

B) Skills For Change, which is geared more towards employees with professional skills to help non-profits, uses the following four criteria to define microvolunteering:

>> *"Convenient. It's volunteerism that fits into your schedule when you have time - typically (but not necessarily) via an internet connected device such as a mobile phone or personal computer. In practice, to achieve this level of convenience, there is often no training or vetting necessary.*

>> *"Bite-sized. Volunteer tasks are broken into small(-ish) pieces, so that you can complete a task in the time that you have available (whatever that time may be).*

>> *"The nonprofit that needs help asks a large(-ish) group for assistance. Microvolunteers who have the time, interest, and skills (ideally), and who may be previously unknown to the nonprofit, do the work.*

>> *"The time demands of the manager (e.g. a nonprofit staffer) are reduced by distributing as much of the project management and quality review as possible to the network of micro-volunteers."*

Source:
http://www.skillsforchange.com/

C) Institute of Volunteering Research in the UK, describes microvolunteering as:

"bite-size volunteering with no commitment to repeat and with minimum formality, involving short and specific actions that are quick to start and complete"

Source:
http://bit.ly/LU82ad

Microvolunteering embraces other forms of volunteering such as mobile volunteering (exclusively via smartphones), virtual or online volunteering (exclusively via the internet) and traditional volunteering (mostly associated with offline volunteering and in this context, tasks that can be completed in a small amount of time).

This guide will be concentrating on those microvolunteer action types that Help From Home promotes.

Microvolunteer Action Types

Microvolunteers have a huge range of tasks to tempt their participation in an action. The common element amongst all of them is unsurprisingly the length of time a task takes. If an organisation can break down their tasks into bite size chunks of time lasting perhaps no more than 30 minutes, then you're on the first steps of the ladder to creating a microvolunteer task.

So, what's out there? The following generalised list of action types from the Help From Home site should open your eyes and make you think about the tasks that microvolunteers could help you out with.

>> Transcribe documents online – http://www.oldweather.org/ Volunteers convert old ship's logs into text for future climate prediction research. Time = 10-20 minutes per page.

>> Tag photos – http://describeme.museumvictoria.com.au/ Volunteers add descriptions to photos to assist the visually impaired. Time = 5 minutes

>> Spread awareness of a cause via posters – http://www.anotherposterforpeace.org/ Pre-designed posters that can be freely downloaded and circulated on notice boards. Time = 5 minutes.

>> Scientific research via iPhone app – http://www.mappiness.org.uk/ Pings users daily, asking how they feel and locating them by GPS. Aids research into the impact of environmental factors on people's wellbeing. Time = a couple of minutes.

>> Recording audio books – http://librivox.org/ Volunteers record chapters of public domain books and release the audio files back on to the net. Time = upto 30 minutes.

>> Phrase detective work - http://bit.ly/bUxhXx Identify relationships between words and phrases in a short text, to help computers improve text summarisation. Time = 15 minutes.

>> Dynamic, updateable map of info populated by volunteers – http://wheelmap.org/en/ Volunteers add the location of wheelchair accessible places around the world, to help mobility-impaired people plan their day more efficiently. Time = 5 minutes.

>> Games that donate money for free – http://www.answer4earth.com Volunteers play a quiz game. For every correct answer you earn a leaf. Collect enough leaves and they will turn into branches, which eventually turn into a full tree. Time = up to 30 minutes.

SkillsForChange.com, on the other hand, offer a different style of microvolunteering based on open invitation challenges posed by non-profits. Here, volunteers are invited to answer microvolunteering challenges ranging from:

>> Brainstorming creative ways to use mobile phones to engage our supporter

>> Finding funding sources for our animal shelter's operation and growth

>> Designing an email template

>> Designing an existing background for our non-profit You Tube Channel' etc, etc

>> Providing feedback on our website

Although Help From Home and SkillsForChange focus on different implementations of the microvolunteering concept, it could be argued that in the context of this article, both organisations complement each other. Whereas SkillsForChange provide an extremely useful service for nonprofits to tackle the problems that will inevitably arise when setting up a microvolunteer action, Help From Home on the other hand will then become the end service to promote these actions to the public.

So Why Should You Set One Up?

Good question, because up to now most volunteering activities have been thought of in terms of traditional or online volunteering. So why introduce another method which allows a person to volunteer in short bursts? Surely, it's self defeating if a person volunteers in shorter bursts, because it would therefore seem that less volunteering actions are achieved. You would think that this was the case, but not all tradition / online volunteering actions appeal to everybody and especially in these perceived time starved days, any volunteering action that could be fitted into a smaller slot to fit within a person's busy schedule could be perceived as a good thing.

As Ali Husein, Director-Digital Media, Viacom18 Media Pvt. Ltd., states

> **66** *Microvolunteering is going to grow. It's a fantastic concept, because at the end of the day, people are lazy or just too busy. They want to be part of a good initiative but don't know how, so they'll be happy to take simple steps to create maximum impact with minimum action.* **99**

Source:
http://bit.ly/dzain8

Where's the Evidence that People Will Participate in Such Actions?

Listed below is a very small sample of the number of microvolunteer initiatives out there, where people can make meaningful contributions in bite sized bursts of time. They have been cherry picked to demonstrate the impact that some organisations are achieving. Obviously, there are many, many more that are not having the same impact, but nevertheless are still making a quantifiable difference.

On the SkillsForChange platform, among the many hundreds of successful examples include website search engine optimization help for Accountability Counsel, third-world water well drilling research for a Masaai village in Kenya, copywriting edits for the SETI Institute, focus group reactions to a new website design for Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence, catchy tag-line development for the United Way, media research for the Grameen Foundation, and many more.

>> http://www.freekibble.com/totals/ (online charity donating quiz), up to August, 2016: donated 3,037,056,180 pieces of kibble (cat and dog food to animal shelters).

>> http://www.everyclick.com/ (charity donating search engine), up to August, 2016: UK£7,440,420 raised for charity.

>> http://www.care2.com/click-to-donate/animal-rescue/ (click-to-donate), up to August, 2016: 1,127,031 people supported 1,363 months of animal rescue service

>> http://folding.stanford.edu/ (volunteer your spare pc power), up to August, 2016: 84,000 active citizen computers participating

>> http://www.projectlinus.org/ (creating handmade blankets and afghans), up to August, 2016: Over 6,063,751 handmade items delivered to good causes.

>> http://www.thepetitionsite.com/ (petition portal), up to mid August, 2016: 493,000,000 signatures added

>> http://www.pgdp.net/c/ (converting public domain books into e-books), up to August, 2016: 32,041 books converted.

>> http://www.seafloorexplorer.org/ (mapping the ocean floor to aid marine conservation), up to June, 2015 (but now defunct): 1,924,968 scallops identified, 166,613 fish marked, 2,401,825 images classified

>> http://freerice.com (word game quiz), up to August, 2016: 95,138,869,978 grains of rice donated

Why Should Volunteers Participate in Microvolunteering Actions?

People will microvolunteer for all sorts of reasons but there appears to be a recognition that it responds to a need for people to volunteer in this way, as the technology is available to support it eg. internet, social media and smartphone apps.

Here, therefore is a roundup of the pros of microvolunteering actions:

The Pros

>> Micro-actions can be conducted anywhere, at any time. You can do them while watching television, riding on the bus, or even reclined in bed! Volunteering can go wherever you go.

>> People can control the environment in which they volunteer their time, making it potentially safer than traditional volunteer opportunities.

>> Most micro-actions do not require commitment, which strips away one of the barriers that inhibits people from performing traditional volunteering. You can dip in and dip out whenever you want.

>> Practically all microvolunteering opportunities require the minimal of training: You just read the instructions and go. This really pushes microvolunteering into the 'easy' bracket and once again, removes a stumbling block that often prevents people from volunteering in the first place. These attributes might encourage people to explore similar, additional actions and so the overall time spent on philanthropic actions might increase.

>> You can now squeeze in more volunteering time, in-between your traditional philanthropic commitments.

>> The huge diversity of the type of micro-actions goes beyond traditional volunteering opportunities – so there is more scope to do more good in new ways.

>> The range of microvolunteering opportunities makes it all inclusive – no barriers to age, race, creed, culture, gender, etc.

>> As with all virtual volunteering, it enlarges the volunteer pool to include people who are house-bound, have disabilities, have free time only at irregular intervals, or are located anywhere in the world.

>> It has the potential to engage people in volunteering at a level they are comfortable with now, doing something they want. But at a later date, maybe when their lifestyle changes, they will be more likely to commit more time to that volunteering cause (which they might not have done if they weren't involved in it by microvolunteering earlier in their life)

As Jay V Sutaria, Founder of Bhookh.com, a Mumbai based click to donate initiative states

" **Micro volunteering won't replace actual social deeds, but just like email has become indispensable without making snail mail extinct, e-social work will become irreplaceable too.** **"**

Source:
http://bit.ly/dzain8
(now unavailable)

How To Develop A Microvolunteering Action

A little time spent planning, goes a long way!

How To Set Up A Microvolunteer Action

Having whetted your appetite (hopefully) to set up a microvolunteer action, what things do you need to consider to actually pull it off. As there is such a huge array of issues, causes and methods that a nonprofit adopts to achieve a means to an end, this guide can only ever be that – a guide.

There are more specific examples of organisations who have kindly contributed their experience in the way in which they set up their microvolunteer actions in Appendix A of this guide. They may not specifically relate to your particular nonprofit cause, but it will at least give you an insight into how they achieved their goal.

Setting up a microvolunteer action can be relatively easy, as in search-to-donate SearchKindly's (http://www.searchkindly.org/) experience where it took 15 hours to complete. Compare that to microloan platform Lend With Care's (http://www.lendwithcare.org/) experience where it took over 2 years to develop.

Even then, once you've built it, will they (the volunteers) come?

What Attracts People to a Microvolunteer Action?

To entice people to microvolunteer for you, you'll need to get in to their minds to see what motivates them to participate in this particular form of volunteering. You should be aiming to set up a microvolunteer action that has some and ideally all of the following attributes to lure your 'customers' into your net, so to speak! They are listed in no particular order and are based on those actions that SkillsForChange and Help From Home promote:

Bite sized. Can be completed in under 30 minutes, preferably quicker. There's a general perception out there that people just don't have the time to fit volunteering within their busy lifestyles. But if you create an action that can be accomplished in under 1 minute for example, then there's no real excuse not to volunteer. Click-to-donate sites like http://www.fandonation.com/ are good examples of a sub 1 minute spot of volunteering. They're also included in Appendix A as an organisation that contributed their experience in setting up their action.

Non location based. Participation can be accomplished from almost anywhere. Most microvolunteer actions are internet based, as that's the medium through which the action is conducted or it's the method needed to obtain the necessary instructions to complete an action offline. Laptops, smartphones and internet cafes are very commonplace so should not present a problem to participate in an action. Examples of 'go-anywhere' actions include the offline http://www.peaceday.org/ (origami peace campaign) and the smartphone Mappiness app http://www.mappiness.org.uk/

Visible feedback. Volunteers can be divorced from seeing the whole picture and the ultimate outcome, which may be frustrating for results-oriented volunteers. Companies and NGOs can benefit from giving microvolunteers more exposure to the end-result of their hard work. Here's a few sites that provide different examples of feedback for users:

>> https://www.zooniverse.org/ (collection of citizen science projects) Provides impact statistics for each and every citizen science project that is participated in, either individually or as a collective whole.

>> http://phylo.cs.mcgill.ca/ (matching colours game for scientific research) Differently aligned coloured blocks produces different visible scores. Object of the game is to maximise score

>> http://www.headhuggers.org/ (knitting caps for people who have undergone hair loss due to chemotherapy, burn wounds etc) Shows photographs of recipients (http://bit.ly/h9KLBo) and creators (http://bit.ly/dMyUcV) of Head Huggers

>> http://www.postpals.co.uk/ (write cheery letters to very sick children) Provides a photo gallery (http://bit.ly/fsvOAf)of the work they do and stats (http://bit.ly/58VyiK) of people who have taken the time to contact the children on their database

Non discriminatory. Should be able to be completed by people with disabilities. For instance the website will need to be accessible by a screen reader for visually impaired people. One microvolunteering action that actually helps to facilitate this is http://www.fixtheweb.net/ This is another organisation that's included in Appendix A as an initiative that has contributed their experience to this guide in setting up their action.

No training required or at most, a minimal amount of training. This puts microvolunteering into the easy bracket as there is no lead-in to performing an action. A person doesn't need to have any special skills or expertise to participate. That said though, some of the actions / 'challenges' posed on SkillsForChange may need a bit of expertise to answer. SearchKindly, as mentioned previously, is an example of an action that requires no training, whilst RetroPsycoKinesis Experiments (http://www.fourmilab.ch/rpkp/experiments/) requires a modicum of training to complete an online experiment.

Simple instructions should be provided although in some cases they should not be too simple. Whilst people love the freedom to be able to 'get on with it', there still needs to be a set of engagement rules that is clear, empowering and directive in the end result. Just follow the instructions and go! An example of a set of simple instructions would be http://folding.stanford.edu/, a website that enables people to download a free piece of software to fight diseases. They describe their service in 3 simple words - 'Ready', 'Set', 'Fold'.

No vetting interviews. One of the beauties of microvolunteering is that if set up properly, there is no need to vet a potential volunteer. Normally a microvolunteer action would be devised as a self contained, do-it-by-the-book system, whereby if a volunteer steps outside their procedures, their actions would not be counted or be effective, as with the online petition portal http://www.petitiononline.com/, thereby negating any need for a vetting pocess.

No security checks. The UK Governments Green Paper, Giving (http://bit.ly/SaXert), states that *'CRB (Criminal Record Bureau) checks are frequently cited as an obstacle for people and organisations that want to give time in their communities.'* It goes on to state that *'49 per cent of non-volunteers who would like to give time are put off by bureaucracy'.* Although this probably goes against the grain of a volunteer coordinator, there really is no need to put in place a security check. You only have to refer to the above websites to realise that not a single one requires a security check, but yet contributes to a worthy cause via a volunteer's participation! Even Postpals, where people write cheery letters to sick children, does not require a security check. They have their own monitoring system which safeguards against 'undesirables' contacting the children.

No registration or signup required. Although this makes it more attractive for volunteers to participate it may actually be self defeating for the nonprofit, as a record of a person's email address could be added to a marketing list to raise funds in the future. Obviously an option to opt out of marketing emails needs to be provided. However, if it's participation levels that is required then a microvolunteering action without registration is the way to go. Definition-of (http://www.definition-of.com/) is a good example of this, where the organisation just requires you to fill out a simple form where no personal details are required in order to feed hungry children.

Free to participate. It can be participated in at very little or no cost to the user. You start using the word FREE and it's like bees to a honeypot. Well not quite, but FREE has a strong pulling power and provides one less hurdle to cross for those thinking of microvolunteering. SkillsForChange is free to use for the volunteer as are most of the actions featured on Help From Home. Of course, not all microvolunteering actions are free as some may involve material or postage costs to complete an action, especially those involving craftwork. Also, some microvolunteering actions involve microlending small amounts of money to needy people where it is virtually guaranteed to get your money back, eg. http://www.deki.org.uk/

What Attracts People to a Microvolunteer Action? (Cont....)

Communication. Provide a means to communicate with other participants or support team. Although not essential to a microvolunteer action, it could be quite a useful tool for a volunteer to give feedback or to resolve an issue. This is a particularly important part of the process at SkilsForChange, where communication between other participants drives the 'challenge' or question posed to a crowdsourced result.

No commitment. One of the drawbacks of traditional volunteering is that an action normally takes place at a certain time and at a certain place. That involves a level of commitment which puts many people off becoming involved. Microvolunteering, on the other hand, can be accomplished on a 'dip-in, dip-out' basis at a person's convenience. Just do it and go!

Incentives or prizes. Provide something for the 'what's in it for me' attitude. Whilst most volunteers are satisfied with a warm fuzzy feeling of having helped a worthy cause, some people will only volunteer if there's a chance of getting something more materialistic or gaining recognition amongst their peers.

Flexible participation. It should be very flexible, meaning to say it can be conducted whenever a person wants to become involved. A good attribute of a microvolunteer action is that it is globally accessible 24/7 and not just when the volunteer coordinators are working.

No age restriction. So long as a person is web savvy, then normally that is all that is required to participate.

Where Does A Nonprofit Start?

With a great idea for a microvolunteer action, of course!

But what if you don't have that world changing idea. Well, you could certainly scan through the microvolunteer actions on Help From Home and SkillsForChange for some inspiration.

Alternatively, Help From Home has collated hundreds of microvolunteering action suggestions from around the net, all of which can be used as inspiration to springboard a micro task. You can view these ideas via the following link: http://bit.ly/1fGIKLQ

For other more general ideas, there are various idea portal websites dotted around the internet where most commonly, Joe or Jane Public submits their idea either for peer review, to make money or just simply to make this world a better place.

Having now formulated your idea (hopefully), the next stage will be to win over your fellow colleagues, assuming you work for an organisation that has several employees.

> 66 **....you'll need to introduce your idea to other staff members to get them to buy-in to the concept....** 99

You'll need to introduce your idea of a microvolunteering action to other staff members on top of having to get them to buy-in to the microvolunteering concept. A tough nut to crack? Maybe or maybe not.

Start by talking with appropriate staff members and volunteers about the potential for microvolunteering at your organization, and why different staff members and volunteers want or don't want to do this. There are many people who would love to try microvolunteering at their own organizations, but who feel that the other staff or volunteers aren't ready, or are uneasy about the whole idea of microvolunteering.

Prepare a written plan that includes a mission statement, goals and objectives for your microvolunteering idea. Identify the potential costs and, following the discussions you've already had with other staff members, allay any fears that may have arisen. Establish a timeline but be flexible enough for unforeseen problems. Identify activities and assign responsible parties to complete them.

Where Does A Nonprofit Start? (Cont....)

Your plan should also include some or all of the following details:

>> What resources you'll need to set it up and keep it running?

>> How long it should run for?

>> If applicable, how is the flow of information to be monitored?

>> How is the voluntary work to be verified to a particular standard?

>> What will be its' code of conduct?

>> How do you protect identities?

>> How will volunteers be enticed to repeat volunteer or be retained?

>> Will it be a good ROI?

>> How will the rules of engagement be enforced and adapted if someone is breaking them?

>> How will a consistent standard of volunteer involvement be maintained?

>> How much supervision is required?

>> How will staff be educated to co-ordinate it?

>> What type of relationship do you want to build with your volunteers?

>> In what form will the results / feedback take?

Establish executive level support and commitment. Without support from your organization's leadership, a microvolunteering project could be doomed to failure. Executive level commitment and ongoing support can help break down managers' reluctance to microvolunteering and get such managers to participate long enough to see the positive results.

Do an in-house training on microvolunteering to demonstrate its viability, perhaps by inviting staff to participate in some of the microvolunteering actions featured on Help From Home or SkillsForChange. Amend your policies and procedures manual relating to microvolunteers.

This may not be that easy as microvolunteering challenges some of the most deeprooted aspects of coordinating volunteers with regards to say, security checks, insurance and health and safety issues. Also, what about your stance towards expenses, providing equipment or dismissal of a volunteer where someone is volunteering online?

Some of the information in this 'Where Does A Nonprofit Start' section was based on an article prepared by Service Leader http://www.serviceleader.org/virtual/establishing

So, What's Next?

Once you've got to this stage, you should be about ready to actually set up your microvolunteer action. As the range of actions promoted by nonprofits are so varied, this guide cannot possibly hope to cover the particular action you're intending to set up, so at this point it maybe advisable to turn to some of the initiatives featured on Help From Home and either base your action on theirs or contact them for advice.

However, you'll still need some pointers to guide you in the right direction. You might like to consider the following suggestions:

>> Arrange to allocate funds to consultants, advisers and firms you've employed to develop the action

>> Sort out the text and graphics for the website and instructions

>> Ensure safety measures are included where minors are involved

>> Arrange for legal status, if applicable and where relevant to the country it is going to operate in

>> Arrange for web host, domain name and statistics tracking

>> Choose the beneficiary, where applicable and the method of donation

>> Test drive the action with colleagues or interested supporters

>> Be prepared to change and evolve your idea in development and post development stage

>> Be mindful of stakeholder requirements

There's no substitute to the experience gained by other initiatives in their efforts to set up their own microvolunteer action. Appendix A features 12 organisations that have very kindly contributed the trials and tribulations they have gone through in setting up their own microvolunteer action.

Useful Websites

Unless you've got particular knowledge in web design, graphic design, smartphone apps, marketing etc, you'll probably need to spend some money on developing your microvolunteering action - or do you? Appendix B covers those initiatives that provide pro bono advice, support and expertise for nonprofits seeking help on particular issues. It's a comprehensive list but by no means complete and this guide welcomes any information on other initiatives similarly offering free help to nonprofits.

However, in spite of the pro bono initiatives out there, you'll still probably going to need to raise some money for certain aspects of the project within the development stage, so you might like to consider crowdfunding? According to wikipedia, it is described as:

> 66 *'the collective cooperation, attention and trust by people who network and pool their money and other resources together, usually via the Internet, to support efforts initiated by other people or organizations.'* 99

> **Source:**
> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowd_funding

Here's a few crowdfunding initiatives to help you become familiar with this concept.

https://prod.buzzbnk.org/
http://www.crowdrise.com/
http://www.kickstarter.com/

Wrapping It All Up

1   Write down the tasks to be accomplished

Task
1
2
3
4

2   From the tasks written down in Step 1, choose those that can be divided into micro-actions, ie those that can be completed in under 30 minutes. Describe them below, with as much detail as possible.

Task	Micro-action
1	A
	B
2	A
	B

3   Which of the tasks can you delegate to your co-workers, and which ones can be passed over to external volunteers

Task	Micro-action	Who can do it (Tick X)	
		Co-workers	Volunteers
1	A		
	B		
2	A		
	B		

Microvolunteering Smartphone Apps

Get smart about mobiles!

Microvolunteering Smartphone Apps

It goes without saying that smartphones are all pervasive these days and it's widely recognized that smartphone Apps are going to be the next big thing for a nonprofit to channel their efforts in either raising funds, promoting their cause or using people to microvolunteer for them.

To give you an idea of what's out there in the 'do good' mobile App arena, you could visit Help From Home's page devoted to the smartphone. It's a constantly updated list of Apps that benefit worthy causes and where the action can be completed in bite sized bursts of time. It can be found here http://bit.ly/HhbTa5

To Build An App Or Not?

As obvious as it sounds, an App will only work if it's a particular activity that makes sense for the user. If you're unsure whether your new App idea is a goer, then look at the list below to see if it ticks at least one of the following boxes:

>> It is an improvement on similar Apps already out there.

>> It is new to the world and solves a unique problem.

>> It serves a specific audience with particular needs.

>> It is fully interactive and engaging.

>> Which charities have already built Apps?

App Development Suggested Stages

The following is based on an Apple iPhone to give you an overall feel of what's involved. Obviously, it will be slightly different for other platforms.

1 Think of a great idea, then determine which audiences would use your App and work out their needs. You'll also need to look at:

- The top 10 Apps in a few categories to get an overall feel for how they make use of iPhone/iPad's unique navigation and how they present information to the user.
- A few Apps that are similar in purpose or function to the one you want to build, to see what approach they've taken and if there are any areas for improvement.

2 If you're planning on doing the work yourself, you'll need to:

- Get an iPhone or an iPad (depending on what you want to develop) – and preferably, access to a Mac computer with Mac OS X 10.5.5.
- Develop a non-disclosure agreement (to keep your great idea to yourself!)

- Download and install iPhone SDK, the Apple resources needed to develop and code your App. Register as an Apple developer.

You'll also need:

- An ability to assess what does and doesn't work in the App marketplace, and can transform your idea into a tech spec.
- Marketing skills (for research, promotion and marketing).
- Programming skills.
- Experience in designing for mobile devices, and sketching and producing user interface designs.

Phew! Can you do all of these things yourself? Probably not. The chances are that you'll need to find some resources to help you fill the gaps - which will probably range from agencies, to freelancers, to a friend-of-a-friend!

3 Next, put pen to paper and draw each screenshot of your App. This will help to establish things like:

- Size and shape of each element on the screen in relation to each other.
- How the user will interact with each screen and move from one element to the next.
- What info the user will see on each screen of the App and how this will be presented.
- Once you've finalised your sketches, you can create the design concepts.

4 Develop and test the code for your new App (this is generally best done by an experienced developer).

5 Submit your App to the Apple store (don't be disheartened if they turn it down, make changes and resubmit!)

Promotion and Marketing

Reach out to your customers!

Promotion / Marketing

This topic really is outside of the scope of this guide, but as an indication of what needs to be thought about, here's a few pointers mentioned below. For more detailed guidance, it's probably best to search the net (using one of those search-to-donate search engines, hopefully) as there's a whole plethora of articles dealing with the subject.

- Before launch: Spread the word in target publications, inform subscribers by email, write a news release for your site and set up specific social media channels to build up the pre-launch excitement and buzz.

- After launch: Encourage your supporters to spread the word about your action using your social media tools. Try and get blogs who may be interested in your action to try it and write a review.

In the future: Monitor feedback from users and suggestions on improvements to help with this.

Of course, let's not forget Help From Home, who can place your microvolunteering action on it's database and promote it for you for free!

Reach out to your customers!

Image courtesy of FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Summary

Rounding it all up.
Go forth and microvolunteer!

Summary

So, there you have it. A simple step by step guide in how to set up a microvolunteer project! Daunted? You shouldn't be. Help From Home is regularly discovering new innovative ways in which initiatives are using the concept of microvolunteering to involve volunteers. It's also regularly discovering initiatives that are basing their microvolunteering actions on those that have been previously tried and tested.

It's a growth sector and there's such a huge market of untapped volunteers out there that who want to benefit worthy causes in bite sized bursts of meaningful micro actions. What are you waiting for?!

Go forth and microvolunteer!

Appendix A

How other initiatives developed their microvolunteering projects!

Appendix A

Quite a few organisations were contacted during December, 2010 in the hopes they would shed some light on how they developed their particular microvolunteer action. Each one was given a standard set of five questions to answer, although some have added in a few of their own! Here below, are the responses from those that replied:

FanDonation

Click Here to Donate By Listening
Click-to-donate action

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

I worked on FanDonation for about a month and a half before rolling out. Designing the website itself was easy, but all the administrative work that went with it took several weeks: signing up for a web host, purchasing the domain name, setting up statistic tracking and daily content rotation (both 3rd party services also), and choosing and engaging the beneficiary charity.

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

Money spent:a. web host plus annual cost of domain name: approximately $100b. other 3rd party tools purchased (content rotator, plus html encryption software): approximately $50c. Initial advertising spent: approximately $50Therefore, I would say a rough ballpark was one time cost of $100, plus ongoing cost of about $100 per year.
Time spent:Just a rough guess, but maybe 120 hours

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

No major problems in setting it up. I would say the only thing I had to watch out for was browser compatibility. Some browsers handle some of the techniques we use, such as framesets, differently, and I thus have to do extra testing for them.

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

We have been fortunate to have some other sites find out about fandonation, and add links to our site. The most popular of these, that I know of, is http://www.thenonprofits.com/. This is a collection of click-to-donate sites, and drives a lot of the regular traffic we get. However, promotion in a broader sense has been difficult. We have not had the budget to spend a lot on web advertising, and the little bit of advertising that we have done has not yielded a significant increase in regular traffic. Purchasing of banner ad space, google adwords, and free postings such as craigslist, have not seemed to help a whole lot.

5 **How successful has it been?**

Fandonation has been raising money for Yellow Ribbon for approximately 2 years now. The total money we have raised for them as of December, 2010 is $280. Note, before that we raised $325 for another charity called "The Alternative House" of Dunn Loring, VA (a shelter for homeless and abused children). So, our organization, since its inception in mid-2007, has raised over $600 total for charity. Of course, this falls way short of our organization goals. The problem is that we currently only have one artist

Search Kindly

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

The initial version was very simple. It was nothing more than a logo stuck on top of a Google Custom Search. Ramadev, who is the other founder, was instrumental in getting the second site up and running - he built a custom content management system. The current version is built on Drupal and it's a pretty standard Drupal-site. I believe this site took about 15-man hours to complete. I had the design done through a crowdsourcing website (http://99designs.com/) and then had a freelancer do most of the theming for the site. After that was done, it was just a matter of fine tuning the Drupal site.

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

The redesign and redevelopment cost, in total about $600. We could have done this for free, which is what we did on the first two sites. The design contest that was held cost $200. The freelance themer of the website (cutting up the design to work in Drupal) was $400. And then our server-slice costs $20/month. We could even cut this last part out by running this on top of Google's cloud, which is what Ramadev and I are discussing right now. Being that it took well over a year to get this version of SK out the door, I have no idea how long it will take to move to the next version.

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

Like so many websites and web apps, the problems aren't technical in nature - it's all about marketing and publicity. We kind of dropped the ball by not launching the redesign when we still had a pretty good sized audience. But mistakes are apparent in hindsight. And we spent a lot of time and effort (mostly me) fighting and losing the battle with the American Internal Revenue Service so that we could receive official charity status. We are registered as a non-profit at the state-level, but were not able to receive the federal designation. It was a two-year fight and I was pinning the future on it, but such is life. Ho hum. If nothing else, it's been an incredible learning experience.

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

No answer supplied

5 **How successful has it been?**

We didn't have huge traffic numbers, but there were times when we were bringing in over $1000 a month. Not bad for just having people visit and click around. With more focus on our end, we could have increased that value by tenfold. In total we've raised over $13,000.

6 **What special skills / knowledge did you need to set it up?**

It's a really basic site. Mature content management systems (like Drupal), are very easy to navigate. The site was designed through a contest, so that took no special skills. And the theming is something that could have been outsourced for far less than what we paid. Or we could have just done it ourselves. A dozen hours with some Drupal how-to videos could get a novice up to speed, possibly. If a non-technical person at a non-profit was interested in building something like Search Kindly, I would suggest that they do thing the easy way and just put aside $500 and get it done quickly. Of course, it could probably be done ever faster and cheaper, depending on the functionality that they are looking for. And depending on the size of their supporter base, it might make a lot of sense to pay for something to get out the door as quickly as possible.

Toilet Finder

ToiletFinder UK is an iPhone application using geolocation to find public toilets in the UK

1

How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?
The App itself was set up by a third party developer, actually based in France. I am not sure exactly how long it took them to build the App and launch it. They then worked with us to "re-brand" it as WaterAid Toilet Finder, and this probably took around a month.

2

Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?

I can't really answer this as they approached us with a ready-made App, rather than us commissioning it from scratch.

3

Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?

Not really, no. Once your app has been tested it goes to Apple Apps store for approval, which normally takes just a few days. It is then live in the Apps store straight away.

4

How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?

Because the App is both functional/useful and also something of a novelty that also benefits a good cause, it's been pretty easy to promote it, with lots of interest from the media and online tech/charityblogs etc. We've also promoted it to our supporters through our normal channels, eg: website, email, facebook, twitter, etc.

5

How successful has it been?

Pretty successful - we made the top 40 App chart when it launched, and feedback has generally been positive. As an awareness-raiser and brand-builder for WaterAid it's been good. As a fundraising mechanism, not so good, but that side of things was never really the intention.

Super Badger

Please note this action is no longer operational
Facebook application that provides the opportunity to send prewritten emails straight from your Facebook profile

1

How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?

It was about 3 months from concept through to release, however it requires constant development to keep it relevant.

2

Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?

The initial set up was around £5k with a monthly retainer of around £400.

3

Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?

There were no problems with Facebook, however, the delivery onto iPhone was harder and required a redevelopment of the app itself.

4

How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?

It was fairly easy to start with although Facebook has limited the number of people which can be invited on a daily basis so larger promotion is through advertising and word of mouth.

5

How successful has it been?

Very successful although we are aware that part of that will have been because it was the first app of its kind. As of December, 2010 75,000 actions have been completed.

Progressive Secretary

Please note that this action is no longer operational
Allows people to send out progressive email letters to Congress, the President, and other officials on peace, ecology, civil rights and other issues.

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

No answer supplied

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

Our normal budget comes from the donation we receive, which is a few thousand dollars a month. No one, including me draws a salary. Sometimes I hire a programmer. We have probably thirty people who volunteer to write letters, proofread, correspond with members, test software etc etc etc.

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

No answer supplied

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

No answer supplied

5 **How successful has it been?**

Progressive Secretary has 3883 members. Each member receives a well written letter a few times a week (depending on their preferences). If they click or reply send then we do. In that case, our members reply maybe 18,000 times a month. 3 time 4 (letters per month) times 3000 (members who want to see that letter) times 50% who reply is 18000 replies a month I GUESS!!!! (shout)

NeoAid

Please note that this action is no longer operational
Search-to-donate search engine and watch-videos-to-donate for free software

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

8 months

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

We spent $60,000

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

Like any IT project, we have faced many issues we not expecting to face. Marketing Neoaid has been the most challenging.

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

We struggled getting traction from media

5 **How successful has it been?**

Version one is what you can see at neoaid.com. We have totally changed our business model and now operate as it is explained here http://www.neoaid.com/about/ Actually, it's not that informative!

Write To Prisoners

Facility to write letters to prisoners held in connection with terrorism.

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

From a decision to set up a 'Write to a Prisoner' initiative to a more-or-less stable and functioning initiative took a few weeks in late 2004.

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

- The 'Write to a Prisoner' initiative uses a single page on our existing website. Hosting costs for our website are low; the incremental hosting cost for the page is zero.

- The 'Write to a Prisoner' page depends on the web design and maintenance work involved in running the SACC website as a whole. All this work was done on a voluntary basis by people operating from home and it isn't really possible to make a ball-park estimate of a monetary equivalent. But I'd note that it includes time and effort by the individuals concerned, access to computers, internet connection, software tools.

- Maintenance of up-to-date content on the website, whether or not it relates directly to the ' Write to a Prisoner' initiative, helps bring traffic to the 'Write to a Prisoner' page. This requires a continuing commitment from those involved in the work. As with the website design, I have no easy way of either estimating the monetary value of this voluntary effort or deciding what proportion of it should be assigned to the 'Write to a Prisoner' initiative.

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

- When the initiative was set up in late 2004, the main focus was on prisoners held in Britain whose identities were protected by court order. We thought it necessary to publish a certain amount of information about these prisoners in order to generate interest in writing to them. This had to be done without publishing information that would significantly assist their identification. To develop a solution to this problem we had to respond to issues raised by the prisoners' legal representatives and liaise with two other groups who were embarking on a similar initiative at around the same time.

- The secrecy surrounding the identities of these prisoners, coupled with the publicity that had accompanied their initial detention under the (now-defunct) Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001, had produced an aura of mystery and sense of something sinister surrounding the prisoners. We expected this to be an obstacle in the way of encouraging people to write. We dealt with this by talking about the prisoners at public meetings (taking care not to provide information that could identify them) and by sending a greetings card to a group of prisoners, signed by a number of public figures, MSPs etc

- For all these activities we needed the trust of the prisoners themselves and of the people from whom we elicited support. For this we drew on relationships built up through other campaigning work. We have also benefited greatly from the work of an individual who had already begun writing to these prisoners independently of our campaign as a result of personal contact with another prisoner unconnected with our campaign.

- As well as prisoners held in Britain, our initiative includes prisoners held in Guantanamo Bay. As far as I am aware, no one has ever received a reply from a Guantanamo prisoner. In many cases letters were returned by the US authorities. In other cases there was no response at all. Information from released prisoners suggests that letters from people other than family members rarely, if ever, reached the prisoners (letters from family members, when they reached the prisoners at all, were subject to heavy censorship and extreme delays). In these circumstances, the main purpose of the letters was to cause the US authorities to realise that there was support for the prisoners, and to allow lawyers with access to the prisoners to tell the prisoners that people were trying to write to them. To maintain people's interest in writing under these circumstances we had to discuss the problems at public meetings.

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

- We use our email list to encourage people to write to prisoners, referring them to the website for contact details and background.

- We regularly include an item about writing to prisoners in leaflets that we produce for a variety of other purposes. We distribute these leaflets at our own public meetings, at public meetings organised by other groups with whom we have a relationship, at demonstrations and on various other occasions.

- At public meetings on related issues, we suggest writing to prisoners as an action people might take.All this is fairly easy to do, given the existence of our ongoing campaigning activity on a range of related issues.

5 **How successful has it been?**

- Since we encourage people to write to prisoners on a personal basis, we don't necessarily get feedback from them and we can't measure success reliably.

- My impression is that there are people in fairly regular contact with most or all of the prisoners on our list. When we launched our initiative, many of the prisoners held in Britain had received no letters in the previous 2 years. Some of them were remote from their families, so this meant they had had little or no contact of any kind with anyone apart from their lawyers. The efforts that broke through this isolation were shared between us and a couple of other groups. I think the breakthrough is irreversible and no longer depends on our efforts, or on the efforts of any other group. Given the way that we work, I don't think it would be possible to estimate an ROI. But in relation to this particular initiative, the return should be measured not in terms of the number of letters, but as the difference between isolation and communication. So I think the only meaningful answer is "priceless."

- Of course we had a wider aim of not only breaking the isolation of the prisoners but of forcing just treatment of them. This has been largely unsuccessful in relation to prisoners held in Britain. Some of the prisoners we originally supported have been deported to their home countries, where they have suffered further ill-treatment. Some remain in this country, deprived of their freedom by an ever-changing merry-go-round of legal manoeuvres.

- Most of the Guantanamo prisoners that we have supported have been released (three have not). Letter writing, while almost certainly futile in the direct sense of establishing contact with the prisoners, was an important part of raising public awareness and so creating the public pressure that led to their release. Our efforts were just one small part of a mosaic of efforts by a number of campaigning groups. The success of these efforts - though still incomplete - is in my view best valued at "priceless."

6 **Some general thoughts**

I have made a number of points that are very specific to our "write to a prisoner" initiative, and that in some instances have a weight attached to them that might seem rather heavier than the idea of a microvolunteer action might imply. I have done this with the thought that it may turn out that success for other microvolunteer actions also hinges on the leverage of issues and networks specific to those actions.

In particular, I think that it would hardly have been possible for this initiative to function as a microvolunteer action without the link to SACC's wider campaigning activities. This gave us:
- contacts through which we could mobilise political support;
- opportunities to publicise our initiative with minimal incremental effort;
- forum within which to discuss problems as they arose;
- goodwill and trust on which we could build.

Jack The Donkey

JackTheDonkey.com ™

A community where your time online supports the charity of your choice for free

1

How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?

Short answer: 5 months from the first moment of inspiration to having an initial site up for people and charities to start interacting with and providing feedback.

Long answer: 13 months from first inspiration to having what I considered a solid platform for development around the idea of giving a poop for the charity of your choice freely, regularly and socially.

With widespread bailouts being granted to the financial and automotive sectors, JackTheDonkey was conceived as a place where people could help bail out the nonprofit sector freely. As such, (and probably too soon) we rushed out an initial site that was more sparse, and limited to simply sharing and commenting on pictures (in exchange for JackTheDonkey donating 1.1 cents every impression to the charity of your choice).

There were lots of growing pains in the first year as we continued to evolve and refine Jack and added additional charities who were interested in participating (now more than 20 from Canada, The US and UK). We also added additional means for people to be "social for a cause" and added additional ways for people to connect with the charities and causes, including volunteer and community boards, and incorporating the charities' Twitter feeds into their supporters' profiles. Without having paying advertisers onboard during that time, we also added Google adwords to try and cover some of the donations I have been paying out per click.

2

Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?

Ballpark (excluding having not taken a salary since this began) $25,000 - $35,000 for programming, hosting/maintenance, legal fees, communications (dud), etc.

3

Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?

There have been the expected technical growing pains and bugs (eg. fixing the toilet and the lights start flickering...can't explain it...it just happens!)...but the biggest challenge has been getting corporate partners onboard. I naively thought that corporations would see the value of sponsoring JackTheDonkey as a means of extending their cause marketing initiatives to the web 2.0 generation. But alas, without "critical mass", it was impossible to convince them of the value (which was why we added Google adwords).

That being said, with the evolution of the site and growth in our membership we've had greater success of late in that regards.

4

How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?

Much more difficult than I expected. Again, this has been a huge learning experience. I thought that everyone (and I mean EVERYONE) would be as excited as me to know that they could support charities and causes by being social!

I've realized that PR is incredibly difficult to create as such, our focus is on social media and in the coming months, promotions (virtual and real world) to help grow our community further (I also periodically dress up like a donkey in public to get the word out about Jack).

5

How successful has it been?

This has been self-funded, and I most definitely have not broken even and JackTheDonkey definitely has not had the impact on the world I know we can, but all signs are pointing in the right direction!

I should clarify that JackTheDonkey isn't a non-profit. We're a social-enterprise working on behalf of nonprofits.

Lend With Care

lendwithcare.org
Microloans from CARE International UK

http://www.lendwithcare.org/
Micro-loans facilitator

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

It took us nearly two years from the initial idea to launch. The actual website design took about 8 months from start to launch, including testing. Much of the work was in the initial research to select the countries and MFIs with whom we would work.

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

We would like to keep this confidential

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

Problems were, finding a way to avoid any exchange rate risk, developing an administrative system that would incorporate the needs of CARE Country Offices, MFIs and CARE UK head office finance systems, the length of time it takes to communicate with lots of different stakeholders in different countries, getting buy-in from more than one part of CARE International.

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

As all the money loaned goes to the entrepreneur without CARE taking any admin fee we have very little marketing funds to promote it. It has been more difficult than we anticipated to promote it through word of mouth, online advertising etc. We are currently waiting to take a celebrity on a field trip with some media. It has taken much longer than anticipated to sign up a celebrity and agree a date for an overseas trip.

5 **How successful has it been?**

It is too early for us to give performance figures and ROI is hard to measure. We don't anticipate breaking even for at least 5 years but this was always expected.

Fix The Web

Fix the Web
Love it, Join it, Fix it!

http://www.fixtheweb.net/
Web accessibility reporting site

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

1 year

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

Equivalent of one full time person and £60k

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

Shaping the idea with stakeholders took time and dealing with usability and accessibility issues on the site

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

Twitter very useful and a clear and well delivered PR plan - proper resource on and partnering around PR – so promotion has gone well. Also worth noting its an innovative idea in a field that had little grass roots focus.

Click For A Change

1

How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?

It took a weekend to come up with the idea and the specifics and about a couple of weeks of evening and weekend work to set up the first version of the website. We've been trying to keep it updated and evolving ever since.

2

Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?

There are three elements: hosting, programming/maintenance and promotion. We set up the first version on a free hosting server, but had a few problems of stability, so decided to go for a paid option. This costs about $90/year, but there are several options, some cheaper some more expensive. We bear this cost ourselves.

In terms of programming and maintenance, everything was done "in-house", by 'donating' personal time over evenings and weekends, so it's difficult really to put a price on it. Anyone with a bit of technical experience could work on something similar.

Finally in terms of promoting the site, we've used Google Adwords and a few other sites, paying the odd few dollars here and there for promotion (in total probably about $100 over a couple of years). Even though this is not an essential part of setting up the website, it does help!

3

Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?

I'd say the server bandwidth and technical knowledge were the most challenging aspects. Free servers cannot usually support large traffic and tend to be unreliable. We decided to bear the hosting costs and that has made our life easier in terms of setting the site up.

Once the site was up and running, the most difficult bit was to promote it, get people using the site and well-known charities to support it.

4

How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?

It's not been easy, but it's not been extremely difficult either. The most important thing is to have free time to talk to other people. Promotion so far has been mostly through Twitter and Google ads. The most difficult bit is to get well-known charities to support the initiative and understand that adopting and promoting such initiatives can be to their advantage.

5

How successful has it been?

At times when we've really pushed promotion, visitor numbers have been really encouraging! But as we've recently been through a long period of updates and relative silence on our part due to lack of free time, it has been generally been a bit more quiet. In terms of ROI, excluding hosting costs, I'd say it's about 10-15% - i.e. we make about $110-$115 for every $100 invested in promotion. If we include the hosting costs ($90/year which we currently bear ourselves) we probably break even. But in any case, these are very rough estimates.

Grid Republic

http://www.gridrepublic.org/
Distributed computing portal that allows people to use the spare power of their pc to work on public interest research projects

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

Several years. There was a fair amount of software development involved, and then a long growth curve.

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

No answer supplied

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

Primarily technical - software development and design and, of course, economic (since the technical stuff is expensive).

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

Promotion is easy. Effective promotion, it turns out, is very hard. We've made some good progress lately - a grant from Google gives us a nice ad budget, and Intel has sponsored a Facebook application, called "progress thru processors" (http://www.facebook.com/progressthruprocessors).

5 **How successful has it been?**

I think we really are starting to make a difference and i think prospects for the next year or two have been exciting. There is no ROI to speak of, since we give everything away and are a nonprofit organization.

mappiness

http://www.mappiness.org.uk/
Smartphone app that maps happiness across the UK for research purposes

1 **How long did it take you to set up your microvolunteer action?**

We were working on it from February - August 2010.

2 **Please provide a ballpark figure of how much it cost you in money and time?**

I did all the development myself, probably spending about half my time on it. So that's no money, except a small monthly amount (< $100) to run the data server and website, and 3 or 4 person-months of time. Of course, we had the advantage that I have a fair amount of software development experience. I think getting it developed by an agency would probably have cost us $50 - $80K.

3 **Did you experience any problems in setting it up and what were they?**

Not really. A few early bugs needed squishing, but nothing serious.

4 **How easy / difficult has it been to promote it?**

Remarkably easy: some weeks I've done nothing but field calls from journalists! I think we did well to launch during the August 'silly season', and we're working with some very topical ideas. And we were very lucky to be featured in the App Store early on.

5 **How successful has it been?**

More successful than I ever dared hope. I thought 3,000 users was a mainly aspirational target, and we're now at over 30,000!

www.helpfromhome.org

Appendix B

Pro bono support websites!

Appendix B

Resources for Creating a Microvolunteer Task

The following initiatives will help you in the process of creating a task. They will either be free or extremely inexpensive compared to the going market rate.

Skills For Change

http://www.skillsforchange.com/

Get free help with creative design, marketing, strategy, media, tech and more from skilled microvolunteers from around the world.

Charity Choice

http://www.charitychoice.co.uk/volunteering

Provides a service for UK charities and non-profit organisations to contact professionals or experts who are volunteering their services for free.

Reach

http://www.reachskills.org.uk/

Reach help skilled people take on new challenges, broaden their experience and make a difference to their community through supporting voluntary organisations. UK based.

The Community Corps

https://thecommunitycorps.secure.force.com/

Connects skilled IT volunteer professionals to nonprofits in need of IT support. Volunteer assignments last between 2 – 25 hours. Has a US focus.

Project Help Wanted

http://forums.devshed.com/project-help-wanted-40/

Provides a meeting place for people interested in working on a project or projects "off-site." Find your next programming partners here. Volunteers wanted and help offered are available within this forum.

iT4Communities

http://www.it4communities.org.uk

iT4Communities can help UK charities, community groups and social enterprises access free IT support from IT professional volunteers.

Apps4Good

http://www.apps4good.ca/

Canadian based alliance of talented software developers who are passionate about improving their community by building smartphone apps for charity.

Resources to Recruit Microvolunteers for your Task

Once you've created the task, you'll want people to participate in them. The following initiatives will enable you to advertise and recruit people specifically interested in either very short term or microvolunteering actions.

Help From Home

http://helpfromhome.org/

Microvolunteer portal for microvolunteering actions.

vInspired

https://vinspired.com/search?category_id=17

Has a dedicated category devoted to promoting microvolunteering actions.

Create The Good

http://createthegood.org/volunteer-search?promo=front#five-minute

Suitable for actions that last 5 minutes or less.

Jewish Volunteer Network

http://www.jvn.org.uk/

Accepts microvolunteering opportunities.

LinkedIn for Nonprofits

https://nonprofit.linkedin.com/

Post a microvolunteering opportunity and access free professional help from around the world

Idealist

http://www.idealist.org/search/v2/?search_type=volop&search_browser_options_initial_sort=published_date

Choose their 'Less than one hour' category for actions that can be completed in under 60 minutes.

Skills For Change

http://www.skillsforchange.com/

Get free help with creative design, marketing, strategy, media, tech and more from skilled microvolunteers from around the world.

Do-it

https://do-it.org/

Do-it is the main volunteering portal in England, which provides a (well hidden) category for classifying your volunteer role as 'micro'

Media Resources

Need a promotional boost for the microvolunteer action you've created. The resources below provide free help when it comes to creating videos or media stories to spread awareness about your task.

Media Trust

http://www.mediatrust.org/give-support/volunteer-with-us/media-matching-2/

Brings together UK media and communications professionals who volunteer their time for free with charities and voluntary organisations with limited resources to raise their profile and awareness of their cause.

Scribd

http://www.scribd.com/

Scribd is a social publishing site, where tens of millions of people upload, share, read and print original writings and documents.

Issuu

http://issuu.com/

Issuu is an online service for uploading and viewing print material, such as portfolios, books, magazine issues, or newspapers.

Voice Thread

https://voicethread.com/

A VoiceThread is a collaborative, multimedia slide show that holds images, documents, and videos and allows people to navigate slides and leave comments in 5 ways - using voice (with a mic or telephone), text, audio file, or video (via a webcam).

Slideshare

http://www.slideshare.net/

SlideShare is the world's largest community for sharing PWP presentations or PDFs.

Asana

http://asana.com/

A shared task list for your team members. Helps you organize your work, your staff and establish priorities.

Gickr

http://gickr.com/

This website helps you create online for free animated GIF

Capzles

http://www.capzles.com/#

This website is for people who want to learn how to tell multimedia stories : it helps you combine videos, photos, music and text.

Thanks for reading this Guide!

We really do hope it was useful for you!

http://www.helpfromhome.org/

Twitter: @helpfromhome