



# Telling Your Story: A Practical Guide for Nonprofits in the Digital Age

## A Practical Guide for Nonprofits in the Digital Age

### Why This Moment Matters

Over the last decade, the way people consume information has fundamentally changed. Audiences are no longer relying on traditional media alone; they are living, learning, and engaging on digital platforms.

For nonprofits, this shift presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Nearly 88% of nonprofits operate on budgets under \$500,000, meaning most organizations are deeply embedded in their communities, focused on delivering critical services—not documenting their impact for social media. Yet these same organizations are often the first to respond in times of need, filling gaps left by larger systems.

At the same time, public trust in institutions is shifting, and funding landscapes are evolving. This creates an urgent reality:

 **If nonprofits do not tell their own stories, others will define the narrative for them.**

The good news is that technology—when used intentionally—can level the playing field. A well-crafted social post, a short video, or a simple story shared online can reach and engage audiences in powerful, targeted ways.

 **The key is this: Technology alone is not the answer. Authentic storytelling is.**



### Why Storytelling Matters

Nonprofits are at the heart of our communities, yet many of their most powerful stories go untold. In today's digital world, storytelling is one of the most effective ways to build trust, engage supporters, demonstrate impact, and shape how people understand your work.

### The Reality for Nonprofits

Limited time and staff  
Focus on service delivery  
Storytelling often feels like a “nice to have”

 **Storytelling is not extra—it is essential.**



## What Has Changed

- Audiences now engage primarily through digital platforms
- Social media is where people learn, connect, and take action
- A single post or short video can reach highly targeted audiences
- Technology allows even small organizations to have a powerful voice

## A Simple Storytelling Framework

1. **THE NEED** – What challenge exists?
2. **THE ACTION** – What did your organization do?
3. **THE IMPACT** – What changed?

## How To Tell Your Story Effectively

1. Start with your audience
2. Focus on real stories
3. Keep it simple and avoid jargon
4. Be consistent
5. Focus on impact, not promotion
6. Be authentic and ethical
7. Use a human voice, not institutional

## Where Stories Can Come From

- Client interactions
- Volunteer experiences
- Program milestones
- Everyday moments of impact

## Example

Before: We provide food assistance in our community.

After: When a car repair wiped out her budget, Sarah had to choose between gas to get to work and groceries for her daughter. By visiting [NONPROFIT], she secured the fresh food her family needed to bridge the gap. Now, Sarah's focus has shifted from the stress of an empty cupboard back to her daughter's schoolwork.



**NONPROFITS  
GET IT DONE.\***

**You Don't Have To Do It Alone**

**Campaigns like Nonprofits Get It Done help amplify individual stories into a collective voice.**

**Final  
Thought**

**Your work is already powerful.  
Storytelling ensures the world understands it.**