

Nonprofit Website Project Checklist

A practical checklist for planning, developing, launching, and maintaining your nonprofit website

I. Before Development

Project Planning

- ☐ Define the website's goals
- ☐ Identify priority audiences
- ☐ Define key user tasks and desired actions
- ☐ Document technical requirements
- ☐ Identify required integrations
- ☐ Determine required website functionality
- ☐ Choose the website platform
- ☐ Establish the project budget
- ☐ Establish the project timeline

Project Management

- ☐ Assign a project manager
- ☐ Identify key stakeholders
- ☐ Establish decision-making authority
- ☐ Define who will provide feedback
- ☐ Define who has final approval
- ☐ Establish deadlines for content and approvals

Website Structure

- ☐ Create the sitemap
- ☐ Define the main navigation
- ☐ Identify required page types and templates
- ☐ Map important user journeys
- ☐ Identify primary calls to action

I. Before Development

Content

- ☐ Audit existing content, if applicable
- ☐ Identify content that needs to be created
- ☐ Identify content that needs to be updated
- ☐ Create a content plan
- ☐ Assign content owners
- ☐ Establish content deadlines
- ☐ Plan content migration, if applicable

Technical Planning

- ☐ Confirm domain ownership and access
- ☐ Choose hosting
- ☐ Identify required third-party services
- ☐ Document existing systems and integrations
- ☐ Determine analytics and tracking requirements
- ☐ Define accessibility requirements
- ☐ Define security and backup requirements

II. During Development

Technical Setup

- ☐ Set up hosting
- ☐ Set up the development or staging environment
- ☐ Configure the CMS
- ☐ Configure the database, if applicable
- ☐ Set up SSL
- ☐ Configure security and backups

Website Development

- ☐ Build page templates
- ☐ Build reusable components
- ☐ Develop navigation
- ☐ Develop forms
- ☐ Develop custom functionality
- ☐ Configure search
- ☐ Configure user accounts or member functionality, if applicable
- ☐ Configure donation functionality
- ☐ Configure event or registration functionality, if applicable

II. During Development

Content & SEO

- ☐ Add new content
- ☐ Migrate existing content, if applicable
- ☐ Optimize images
- ☐ Configure page titles and meta descriptions
- ☐ Configure URLs
- ☐ Configure internal links
- ☐ Generate XML sitemap
- ☐ Configure robots directives

Accessibility

- ☐ Use appropriate heading structure
- ☐ Add alternative text to meaningful images
- ☐ Check keyboard navigation
- ☐ Check color contrast
- ☐ Label forms correctly
- ☐ Provide captions or transcripts where needed
- ☐ Check accessibility of interactive elements

Integrations

- ☐ Connect donation systems
- ☐ Connect CRM or database systems
- ☐ Connect email marketing platforms
- ☐ Connect event or membership systems
- ☐ Configure other required third-party integrations

III. Before Launch

Functionality Testing

- ☐ Test all forms
- ☐ Test donation functionality
- ☐ Test payment processing
- ☐ Test newsletter signups
- ☐ Test event registration
- ☐ Test membership functionality, if applicable
- ☐ Test all integrations
- ☐ Test search
- ☐ Test navigation
- ☐ Test all calls to action
- ☐ Test downloads

Cross-Device & Browser Testing

- ☐ Test desktop
- ☐ Test laptop
- ☐ Test tablet
- ☐ Test smartphone
- ☐ Test major browsers
- ☐ Check responsive layouts

Content & SEO Checks

- ☐ Proofread all content
- ☐ Check headings
- ☐ Check images and captions

III. Before Launch

Content & SEO Checks

- ☐ Check internal and external links
- ☐ Check page titles and meta descriptions
- ☐ Check URLs and configure redirects
- ☐ Check 404 page
- ☐ Verify XML sitemap
- ☐ Verify search engine indexing settings

Performance, Security & Accessibility

- ☐ Check page speed
- ☐ Optimize images and media
- ☐ Verify SSL
- ☐ Check security configuration
- ☐ Confirm backups are working
- ☐ Perform accessibility checks
- ☐ Check keyboard navigation
- ☐ Check forms for accessibility

Final Approval

- ☐ Complete internal review
- ☐ Complete stakeholder review
- ☐ Resolve final revisions
- ☐ Get final approval
- ☐ Confirm launch date and responsibilities

IV. Launch

- ☐ Take a final backup of the existing website, if applicable
- ☐ Confirm production hosting is ready
- ☐ Deploy the website
- ☐ Update DNS, if required
- ☐ Verify SSL
- ☐ Test the live website
- ☐ Test forms on the live website
- ☐ Test donations on the live website
- ☐ Test integrations on the live website
- ☐ Verify analytics and tracking
- ☐ Verify redirects
- ☐ Check for broken links
- ☐ Confirm search engine accessibility
- ☐ Monitor the website for immediate issues

V. After Launch

First Days & Weeks

- ☐ Monitor the website for errors
- ☐ Monitor forms and submissions
- ☐ Monitor donations
- ☐ Check analytics
- ☐ Check search engine indexing
- ☐ Check for broken links
- ☐ Review user feedback
- ☐ Resolve post-launch issues

Ongoing Website Management

- ☐ Update CMS software
- ☐ Update plugins and extensions
- ☐ Maintain security and backups
- ☐ Renew domain and SSL certificates
- ☐ Update staff information
- ☐ Update program and service information
- ☐ Remove outdated content
- ☐ Publish new content
- ☐ Review forms regularly
- ☐ Review integrations
- ☐ Monitor website performance
- ☐ Review analytics
- ☐ Review SEO performance
- ☐ Conduct periodic accessibility checks
- ☐ Plan ongoing improvements

From Checklist to Successful Launch

A successful nonprofit website isn't just about getting every box checked. The goal is to build a website that is useful to your audience, manageable for your team, secure, accessible, and able to support your organization's goals over time.

Use this checklist as a starting point, then adapt it to the size and complexity of your organization and website.

Need help managing the technical side?

Nonprofit WebOps provides full-stack website solutions for nonprofits - from domains, DNS, SSL, hosting, development, integrations, security, and maintenance to ongoing website support.

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