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# Understanding a Website's Role in Communicating the Mission of a Nonprofit Organization

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Understanding a Website's Role in  
Communicating the Mission of a Nonprofit Organization

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With Emphasis in Nonprofit Leadership

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## ABSTRACT

Through empirical research, this paper shows that by looking at the Alzheimer's Association as an example, one may hypothesize that a nonprofit organization can become an effective communicator by connecting its constituents with the prongs of its mission statement through technology, specifically its website. Drawing on multidisciplinary sources, including specific nonprofit organizations, managers, fundraising consultants, and scholars, the paper explains why a website can be an important tool to communicate a mission statement and affect the way that a nonprofit relates to its constituents. The paper then presents the results of a survey administered at the Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk, compares data from a case study of the Eastern Tennessee Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association's newly updated website and past communication efforts, and discusses implications of the data. It concludes that Eastern Tennessee Alzheimer's Association having a website is a key tool in addressing communication issues as the sector continues to grow and this nonprofit organization has made significant progress toward technological advances including their websites. However, it also identifies a need for further improvement, which can be accomplished through continued tracking of progress and implementation of Web 2.0 tools.

## INTRODUCTION

The nonprofit sector is an large field of “more than 1.1 million” nonprofit agencies in the United States that serve an assortment of areas like the arts, social welfare, and community development (Rubin, 2005). Nonprofit organizations exist to fulfill a social mission through the people, whom they affect and the supporters that they continuously gain. To be effective a nonprofit organization’s communications needed to recruit and mobilize its constituents to fulfill its mission. This research examines how constituents of the Eastern Tennessee Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association utilizes its current website, how effectively its mission was communicated to these constituents, and how a sampling of individuals interacted with the website for various purposes. As a tool to communicate a mission, a nonprofit organization’s website can facilitate the relationship between an organization and its constituents by providing information that links its mission to resources and allowing people to easily connect with the organization. When examining an Alzheimer’s Association’s website as a communication component in the nonprofit organization’s technology plan, the following questions were considered: Is it used by supporters? Who uses it? For what purposes is it used? How useful is it? What data is used to accrue such information? To accomplish this aim, pieces of evidence, such as a purposeful convenience sample taken at the 2009 Knoxville Regional Memory Walk and the data provided by the Alzheimer’s Association were used to assess the effectiveness of the website. Understanding people who use the Alzheimer's Association website as a tool to learn about Alzheimer's disease and programming helps draw inferences about the development of technology in grassroots nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations are not operating as effectively using staff

members' personal emails and Internet connections, but must use the assistance of websites as storefronts for the nonprofit organizations' missions. Websites require continual investment if nonprofit organizations seek to maintain relevancy and expand their influence in a crowded and competitive field, and therefore must expand to include Web 2.0 tools as they grow.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In article published by the University of San Francisco's Institute for Nonprofit Organization researchers concluded from a survey San Francisco area nonprofits that "technology is an integral part of work today; a nonprofit cannot hope to achieve its mission if it does not have access to and the ability to use technological tools" (Silverman, Rafter, & Martinez, 2007, p. 12). Also they went on to say that "the creative use of technology can lead to greater efficiencies in managing the organization, new ways of involving disparate communities, and great visibility and presence with funders, potential clients, and partners" (Silverman et al., 2007, p.12).

Furthermore, another lesson that emerges from the article is that some nonprofits searched for "interesting applications that could be adapted to the needs of the nonprofit. "The most creative nonprofits kept their eyes open, looking for inspiration in how to apply technology" (Silverman et al., 2007, p.14). In addition, "to be effective, technology must meet the needs of those who use it." For example, regarding blogging, if the constituents do not have an interest in reading someone else's blog, then even the best, "most sophisticated and well-designed website will not draw them in" (Silverman et al., 2007, p.13). The researchers found that the most successful nonprofits gave thought to what they wanted to accomplish and selected appropriate technologies to reach their

goals.

It is also imperative for a nonprofit to have its information technology (IT) match its mission statement, according to Steve Heyes. “Unlike for-profit entities, nonprofits are not accountable to a financial bottom line; rather, they are responsible for serving a social bottom line.” Also, “the goal of IT alignment is to use technology to support and enhance the work that you do to meet your mission” (Ross, Verclas, & Levine, 2009, pg. 4).

Emphatically, Heyes emphasizes that the mission statement “helps to verify if the organization is on the right track and making the right decisions” (Ross, et al, 2009, pg 5). As Heyes defines IT Alignment, he “refers to the coordination of an IT strategy with the goals, strategies, and processes used to meet an organization’s mission” (Ross, et al, 2009, pg 7).

As technology expands into mobile devices and user-driven content, nonprofits must consider adapting the technologies that will make their operations more streamlined in order to maintain a competitive environment and be accessible to current and potential constituents. Heyes admits, “Increasingly, nonprofits are using technology tools like handheld computers, smart phones, and websites not only to create efficiencies but also to become more effective” (Ross, et al, 2009, pg 7). He elaborates, “The organization could also create a website that allows clients to access their own data... So with IT alignment, technology is ... helping the organization serve more people and serve them better” (Ross, et al, 2009, pg 8).

Heyes goes on to present a detailed appraisal of how nonprofit organization may recognize technology use in their operations (See Appendix 3.). The “Five Stages of Managing Technology” offers a leader a chance to access their nonprofit organization’s

current stage of technology (Ross, et al, 2009, pgs 19-24). In the first stage of “Chaotic,” there is no plan for technological advances, the leadership is unaware of the technology that is needed to help the organization run more smoothly and training on the usually outdated equipment is simply done by observation of a staff member. The second stage of “Reactive” is an improvement over the chaos of the first, but still has only a limited technology plan that is not linked to a strategic plan, and is loosely tied to business practices and data collection. As stage three, called “Proactive,” appears, some technology is tied to the mission objectives of an organization but the daily work overshadows these goals, and the leadership and board make plans to use it to face current challenges and future improvement like financial accountability. Stage four or “Service” sees a mixed investment of technology with elements tied to mission objectives, leadership planning for future IT investments, at least one person designated to oversee technological issues and the existence of technology training and data collection is a high priority. Finally, the last stage, “Value,” sees technology as an investment tied to mission objectives; the leadership strives for full integration of IT team; technology is tied to the overall business strategy and the organization sees data collection and management as a support for all internal processes

After viewing this model of evolving technology, one can see that setting up a nonprofit's website is not a one-time process as the content, services and resources available are continually growing and changing. This is confirmed as Heyes writes, “As your mission, goals, strategies, and business processes evolve, so too will your technology needs. ... take stock of where you are and where you want to go on a regular basis to ensure that you're moving closer to IT alignment” (Ross, et al, 2009, pg 31). In



his conclusion, Heyes redirects his readers back to the mission of the nonprofit. "IT alignment is not about having all the newest gadgets; rather, it is the deliberate, measured process of implementing technology to meet your mission" (Ross, et al, 2009, pg 32).

However, according to Atkinson and McKay, nonprofits cannot economically afford to ignore technology advances. In fact, it is imperative that they embrace technological advances in the current economic times. "At a broader level, IT enables new disruptive business models that transform entire industries...These kinds of transformations, while they can be disruptive for the individuals in the incumbent industries, are a major driving force in economic advancement" (Atkinson, R. D., and McKay, A. S., 2007, pg 49). As direct mail fundraising campaigns bring in declining amounts of funds, online fundraising offers a promising alternative, especially since people who make their first gift to charity online give one and a half times as much as those whose first gift was made by mail. "Repeat gifts by online donors also tend to be larger" (Hall, 2008). From an economic standpoint, the cost of developing, printing, and mailing out solicitations often limits the universe of potential donors compared to the relative ease of developing and maintaining a donation page on a website where constituents can easily direct other potential donors thus widening the range of a fundraising solicitation.

Fundraising leaders have found that it is important to test fund-raising elements of Web sites. For example, Amnesty International (AI) sent online visitors to slightly different versions of a single Web page to determine which online elements do the most to persuade people to make a donation or visit other parts of the organization's site. "Amnesty raised \$128,000 more with the improved donation page; than it would have

otherwise" (Hall, 2008). Thus, they could justify installation of new software. Now AI is conducting additional tests to a part of its website "where visitors can sign petitions and engage in other forms of advocacy; that part of the site is the main way in which Amnesty collects e-mail addresses of potential donors" (Hall, 2008). Coupling advocacy projects with online fund raising was noted as a promising use of website. Hall (2008) told of a Planned Parenthood campaign where their website featured "videotaped statements from Planned Parenthood clinic workers who described the effects of the demonstration on both themselves and patients, some of whom were harassed by the protesters." The website raised "\$96,531, and more than half of those who gave were new donors, says Tom Subak, Planned Parenthood's vice president for online services. 'We got a phenomenal response'" (Hall, 2008).

Additionally, Hall suggested to build a dedicated website rather than expecting donors to navigate through a series of links. Her research found that these stand-alone Web sites for specific projects "can be promoted to potential donors with related interests." Donors traveled to the specific websites that they probably would not have found previously. (Hall, 2008).

Moreover, promoting online projects in social networks is a current technique to promote website traffic. Hall (2008) relates how Internet Sexuality Information Services sponsored, an online video contest soliciting teenagers' views on sex education. Few entries were received until two staff members began "combing through social-networking sites, commenting on blogs, searching online news outlets, writing to reporters, and sharing the group's own news." The charity ended the contest three months later with seventy entries and much higher visibility, attracting contributions from new donors. The

nonprofit is now positioned as an online thought leader.

In the fall of 2007, Sea Change, a fund-raising consulting company, in Takoma Park, MD conducted a survey (Convio, Sea Change Strategies & Edge Research, 2008) among those considered “wired wealthy” along with Convio, an Austin, Tex., company that provides Web-based software for nonprofit groups, and Edge Research in Arlington, VA., which does research and polling for nonprofit organizations. Those people who are technologically perceptive is commonly referred to as being "wired." The “wired wealthy” are by definition engaged online and are generous givers. The survey was based on data from 3,443 donors who had made gifts of at least \$1,000 to a single cause in the past eighteen months and donated an average of more than \$10,896 per year to charities. Interestingly, demographically, “wired wealthy” are predominantly baby boomers, with sixty-four percent of the donors age 45 to 64, and fifty-seven percent had incomes of at least \$100,000. They were extremely wired. They had been using the Internet for an average of twelve years. In addition, the report listed: 52% use YouTube, 16% use LinkedIn, 14% use MySpace (2% regularly), 12% use Flickr, 9% use Facebook (Convio, 2008). Twenty-three organizations that represent an array of causes, including advocacy groups, health organizations, international relief groups, public television stations, and Christian ministries provided their names. The survey was conducted online, and additional contact included follow-up phone calls.

The results (Convio, 2008) included five major points. Among the key findings, “wired wealthy” use multiple giving channels for donating. Four out of five donors said they had made a charitable gift online, and fifty-one percent said they prefer to use the Internet for their donations. Forty-six percent said that they expect to make a greater

percentage of their charitable gifts online within the next five years. Speed, efficiency, and instant gratification were cited as reasons they gave online. Sixty-eight percent agreed strongly or somewhat that “Online giving lets charities respond more quickly in the event of a crisis or emergency” (Convio, 2008, pg 15).

Interestingly, the respondents did not have security concerns about giving online, yet they were concerned about the risks and dangers of the email they might receive in the future. Most of the donors want more input on the quantity of e-mail they receive from charities. “Many say they get too much email from the groups they support. And the emails they do receive only get so-so marks” (Convio, 2008, pg. 24). Fifty-six percent said that charities send too many e-mail messages, and forty-seven percent said they do not read as many messages from charities as they did in the past. Eighty-one percent of donors dislike messages that take an urgent tone in seeking a repeat donation.

Additionally, seventy-four percent said it is inappropriate for a charity to obtain their e-mail address from a commercial database, while eighty-two percent said they do not think it is right for charities to send them messages about another organization. Less than one-half, forty-six percent, of donors said the charity's messages do a proficient job of making them feel connected to the organization, and forty-three percent said the messages are well written and inspiring. Perhaps a problem in the survey was revealed in a follow-up call from researchers, when one donor told them he is disappointed that charities often give him just two choices for receiving e-mail messages: "always" or "never." Tactics most likely to please “wired wealthy” donors are action alerts, success stories, tax receipt at year-end, and reports back on how money was spent (Convio, 2008, p. 27). Ninety-two percent of donors like getting year-end tax receipts by e-mail, while

eight-three percent want to get electronic updates on a charity's finances and spending. Seventy-four percent said e-mail messages are appropriate when notifying donors that it is time to renew an annual gift or to explain how a donation has been spent. Therefore, because of the increase in online participation, applications and donations it is imperative to access the effectiveness of a nonprofit organization's website and associated resources. This research theorizes the role of the Alzheimer's Association's website as a critical tool in their operations based on the behavior and usage of walkers.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To be effective a nonprofit organization's communications needed to recruit and mobilize its constituents to fulfill its mission. The researcher considered the following questions to access the Alzheimer Association's website: Is it used by supporters? Who uses it? For what purposes is it used? How useful is it? What data is used to accrue such information? These questions were developed to examine the behavior of the Memory Walk participants when using the website and their uses, perception and consideration of the available, online resources on the Alzheimer's Association's website.

### METHODOLOGY

In this research, two pieces of original evidence were examined. A survey was conducted through personal interviews given at the Knoxville Regional Memory Walk on April 18, 2009 to measure the users of the Alzheimer's Association website. The survey was limited to ten questions, including follow up questions by the Alzheimer's Association so that Memory Walk participants would not feel tested at a joyous event (See Appendix 2.). This restricted the amount of detail that could be collected from the

participants. In an effort to increase the diversity of the sample, people were chosen at random but with the idea in mind to collect responses from several ages, genders and ethnicities.

The event was held outside in a carnival type atmosphere and the survey was conducted throughout the event between 9:30 a.m. and noon. The event had about 800 walkers of which 100 participated in the survey. The 100 participants of the survey all gave voluntary consent for their information to be used in this study and no names were written to provide anonymity to the participants and their families, who may or may not have been affected by Alzheimer's disease. The researcher observed a sample of individuals' interaction with its website's available, online resources. The Alzheimer's Memory Walk is an annual event held throughout the year in areas across the United States. The money that is raised from the event goes to support of the national organization, Alzheimer's disease research and local programming. Before the walk, participants are challenged to raise as much money as they are able and may form "teams" to encourage corporate and individual growth online. Donations can be made online as well as in person the day of the walk. The website allows participants to have a "team captain," who has the capability to send communication through the website.

Furthermore, the Alzheimer's Association provided statistical information about walkers and volunteers from the 2008 Knoxville Regional Memory Walk from the online donation software called Kintera. Both the purposeful, convenience sample and the available data from the Alzheimer's Association allowed this researcher to look at the communication of the Alzheimer's Association's goals from the website to its constituents. The purposeful, convenience sample measured the number of users of the

Alzheimer's Association website, who uses the website, what purposes does the website serve for its constituents that attend its largest fundraising event, the usefulness of the website, the ease of the website and if any additional information needed to be added to enhance their use of the website. Available data from Alzheimer's Association files measured walker registration, walker donations and levels of volunteerism.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This year, (2009) the top ten teams gave \$13,323.45 online towards the chapter's goal of \$80,000 (not including corporate sponsorships, See *Figure 9*). Overall, 637 participants registered online for the 2009 Knoxville Regional Memory Walk, which is 76.83 percent out of the 829 total participants (the largest number of total participants to date). Those 637 raised \$19,408.45, which was 38.39 percent of the total \$50,555 raised as of April 20, 2009. In comparison, 481 participants registered online in the 2008 Knoxville Regional Memory Walk, which was 58.28 percent of 719 total participants. Those 481 raised a total of \$12, 214.60, which was 13.58 percent of the total \$89,961.50 raised for the 2008 walk.

Along the same vein, people could register to volunteer online. Of the around 250 volunteers that offered to help on the day of the walk, 115 registered online and were able to indicate their preferences of volunteer stations, such as kid area, concessions, greeting, registration or money counting. Interestingly, of the 115 online registered volunteers, eighty-one percent of them were female. The female proportion of non-online registered volunteers was consistent with the female proportion of the over all sample. One more fact that was fascinating was the idea of preplanning. With the rise in the number of online registered participants by a certain date, the Alzheimer's Association was able to

plan more efficiently for food, prizes and turnout for the actual event.

Results of the survey can be found in *Figures 1-8*. Question one found the connections between the survey participant and the disease. Of the 100 surveyed, 57% of the had a connection to the disease, either by being a member of the board of directors, a caregiver, a family member, a health specialist, a volunteer, an advocate or a donor. Question two found if the respondents had ever used the Alzheimer's Association website because of this questions only 80 % of the survey participants went further and completed all ten questions. Question three found the following levels of website use among those surveyed: 6% visited daily, 15% visited several times a week, 10% visited several times a 5% visited once a month, 4% visited once a week, and 49% visited less than once a month. Question four assessed uses of the website. Participants could choose more than one use. Of the 80 respondents who had used the website, 57% of participants registered online for the Memory Walk and highlighted that as their primary use for the website, and 52% of people chose the website as a source of information about Alzheimer's disease. Question five measured the usefulness of the website on a five point scale. From this question, 51% gave the usefulness of the Alzheimer's Association website a perfect score of a five out of five, citing that they were very satisfied with the usefulness of the website. Question six measured the ease of website use on a five point scale. Of the 80 respondents who had used the website, 66% rated the ease of the Alzheimer's Association website as a perfect five out of five for satisfaction, and no responses lower than three. Question seven asked for additions to website. Most respondents asked for more of the resources that were already available on the website such as "Train Your Brain" activities, testimonials and pictures, but they also asked for some unique options



such as a link to Alzheimer's for Dummies and more software availability. Question eight measured sex of all 100 respondents and the following was found: 68% of respondents were female, 32% were male and none were transgender. Question nine measured age range and participants were largely centered between forty and fifty-nine at 40% of the participants. This was consistent with the Convio study on the "wired wealthy." Question 10 measured ethnicity of all 100 respondents from which the majority of the participants reported being white (seventy-nine percent), with only 10% black, seven percent Hispanic, four percent Asian and no American Indian / Alaskan Natives or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

Furthermore, the surveys allowed for some simple cross-classification to determine web access and usage among internal subsets of age, gender and racial differences (See Regression Trees in Appendices 10-12.). For results that have a count less than ten people, the results are not particularly relevant because there are so few people considered and are, therefore, not included in this analysis. Also, from a statistical perspective, this analysis is only truly representative of the 100 people surveyed but may be used to draw inferences for web access and usage of the Eastern Tennessee Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association's web site. Moreover, 40 people out of 80 reported using the website to find information about Alzheimer's disease. Of those 40 people, 27 use the website once a month or more and 13 of the 40 used the website less than once a month.

Based upon the fact that this survey was taken at an event there is a high probability that there is a bias toward mentioning event registration as a major use of the website. However, of the eighty Alzheimer's Association website users over 56% said that they used the website for event registration. Of that 56%, 49% reported that they

were 20 years old or older and of that group, 55% (or 25 people) used the website at a minimum of once a week, or less than once a month. Twelve people out the 25 event registrants identify themselves as volunteers (those that devote their time and effort to support Alzheimer's disease but are not caregivers, support group members, staff or other health professionals) and 14 who identify themselves as non-volunteers (caregivers, support group members or staff or other health professionals).

Furthermore, 33 people of the 80 who reported using the Alzheimer's Association website said that they used it for Educational Resources (including "Train your Brain" activities, research etc.). Of those 33 people, who used the website, 8 were Black or Hispanic and 16 were White or Asian. These respondents view the website frequently, ranging from once a month to daily. The sample population was skewed towards Whites, creating a lack of statistical data for other ethnicities. It was also noted that out of those that reported using it for educational purposes less than once a month, none were males.

Finally, 48% out of the 80 website users reported using it for program information, including care giver training and virtual tours. Of that 48%, 53% were not support group members. Furthermore of this 53%, 9 people said that they used the website at a maximum of daily and a minimum of several times a month, while 27 people used the website at a maximum of several times a week and at a minimum of less than once a month. These statistics infer that the people that are using the website for its educational resources are both volunteers and caregivers, including health professionals.

From these results, one can make several comparisons. The Memory Walk registration results show that the online giving and registration was lower in 2008 before the revitalization of the Alzheimer's Association website in early 2009, creating an

eighteen percent increase in online registrants. The overall total is lower, which can be assumed may be due to the weakening economic climate and the length of the giving season for the Knoxville Regional Memory Walk (Participants have until May 15<sup>th</sup> to turn in their donations towards this walk). However, the number of registrations and percentages of total giving is higher, giving viability in part to ease and availability of the website that was promoted as a registration option, as well as other environmental factors such as increased public awareness from physical mail outs.

Also, as the data from the Memory Walk surveys was analyzed there were some potential gender and age biases found, despite efforts to diversify the sample. Sixty-eight percent of respondents were female, thirty-two percent were male and none were transgender. This composition could possibly be made from the overall majority of female registrants (1.5: 1, female to male ratio). The gender proportion in the survey correlates to the gender proportion of the Memory Walk participants. Furthermore, the ages of the participants were largely centered between forty and fifty-nine at forty percent of the participants. Most of these respondents were caretakers or health care providers for those with Alzheimer's disease. The age results are consistent with the Convio 2008 study that highlighted the "wired wealthy" that are major online donors of this age and sophistication. Moreover, an overwhelming majority of the participants reported being white (seventy-nine percent), with only ten percent black, seven percent Hispanic, four percent Asian and no American Indian / Alaskan Natives or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. This may be due to the population composition within the vicinity of Second Presbyterian Church in Knoxville and the Eastern Tennessee area.

From a more narrow perspective, one can see from the survey that those who

have sufficient dedication to the organization or the cause to spend time and money to walk, use the website as a tool for communicating and gathering information from the Eastern Tennessee Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. Over 32 of the 80 respondents reported using all four services (educational resources, information about programs, information about Alzheimer's disease, and event registration), which is a phenomenal count in a sample that would have been highly aware of the disease and its effects. It also showed that other than event registration, people mainly used the web site to learn about Alzheimer's disease, which reflects back to the chapter's overall goal to eliminate the disease through research, support and education. Furthermore, one could see that there was an even distribution of stakeholders among the four uses. Many demographics of respondents used the programs to support the cause to end Alzheimer's disease. Specifically, 39 people who were not support group members (volunteers, caregivers, donors etc.) used the web site to look at programs. The survey tells us that there is a tremendous need to keep the programs updated and current with dates on their web site and information and that event registration is well supported by their online software via their website. Both of these two major capacities help the chapter's staff work more efficiently towards their mission while communicating with their constituents through their website.

#### SPECULATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The measured impact of the website is based on constituents personal usage. People can associate and bond together to champion this cause and eradicate this progressive disease through promotion of mission, providing feedback back to the leadership and ability to link laterally. When asked in an April interview about the

possibilities that existed on the website, Kay Watson, the Director of Special Projects, organizer for the Knoxville Regional Memory Walk and developer of the new website, commented that she was thrilled at the response of people at the new website. She elaborated saying, "People are able to connect with each other and with our office to raise awareness and money for those that are diagnosed with this terrible disease. When they register for the Memory Walk they can volunteer and check a few boxes to get more information from our office about our programs." High usage indicates that the website is a fruitful avenue to communicate and tracking general societal usage, is therefore a way of getting out the message for greater benefit and promotes economical efficiency. The Alzheimer's Association's mission: "To eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health" is certainly not complete but with the help of effective technology, people are able to hear about ways to contribute to or learn about the cause. As seen in Appendix 1., the Eastern Tennessee chapter relates resources on their website for each phrase in their mission statement so that visitors can easily navigate to the specific information they are seeking: learning about medical research, symptoms of Alzheimer's, preventative treatment, contributions to the cause and benefits of using the association.

The results reflect the current literature. In Appendix 3, Heyes shows the "Five Stages of Managing Technology" from *Managing Technology to Meet Your Mission: A Strategic Guide for Nonprofit Leaders*. By applying the data from population and sample studies of the Alzheimer's Association, the Eastern Tennessee chapter of the Alzheimer's Association is in the "Service" stage of nonprofit technology management. Although

currently the IT department is one person, as the need for more specialty information and sophisticated communication grows, the development of a position will follow suit. The Alzheimer's Association's website has shown the capacity to be used in the planning and management of a large scale event, the process of many communication tools like team-building, email, donations and pictures are integrated and automated, the service levels are defined for those that are trained to develop it and funding can be seen and planned based on replacement and future upgrades. In the case of websites as a tool for effective work within a nonprofit, this nonprofit organization can be seen as on the cutting edge of the technology trend because it is used as a funnel through which its mission is dispersed through the world. Also, as Heyes suggests, in the case of the Eastern Tennessee Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, the chapter strives to provide information to the social bottom line, mainly those affected by Alzheimer's disease, such as a caregiver, professional, researcher, patient, family member, donor. However, after talking with the Executive Director, Janice Wade-Whitehead, it was found that before the creation of their website, the Alzheimer's Association had fewer people on their direct mailing lists and that staff was spending more time, creating, printing and addressing these mail outs and answering questions on the phone. This promotion of online projects in social networks continues the online alignment of the chapter and reflects the findings of Heyes, Atkinson, McKay, and Hall as the Alzheimer's Association recognizes the economic benefits of testing website elements which promoting their mission to the community. Therefore, due to the development of the Alzheimer's Association's website the organization became a more effective communicator to its over 22,000 constituency by providing online fundraising tools through web based software, and financial reports that

provide current information and social accountability.

For further growth and website user satisfaction, the Alzheimer's Association website needs to branch into use of Web 2.0 tools as embedded Facebook, Twitter and Digg features and frequently access the technology used. This would create invite new people to local events and post pictures and movie slide shows using Picasa by Google to unveil team and event pictures from each Memory Walk, banquet, caregiver training and legislative day. By doing this, the Eastern Tennessee Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association can remain engaging, relevant, appealing and mission-minded to all ages. If further research was performed on the Alzheimer's website, one should ask what type of Internet connection that the respondents used and possibly where they used the website (work, school, home etc.). Also, it would be interesting to explore the subsections of ages more deeply in a succeeding study. Technology has a wide reach and further knowledge about the generations in use could help Internet developers to create better software for nonprofit organization's fundraising efforts through available social networks.

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Watson, K. personal communication, March 24, 2009.

TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1. Graph of the Number of People who accessed the Alzheimer's Website

Source: Primary

**2. Have you used the Tennessee Alzheimer's Association Website (National Website information included)?**

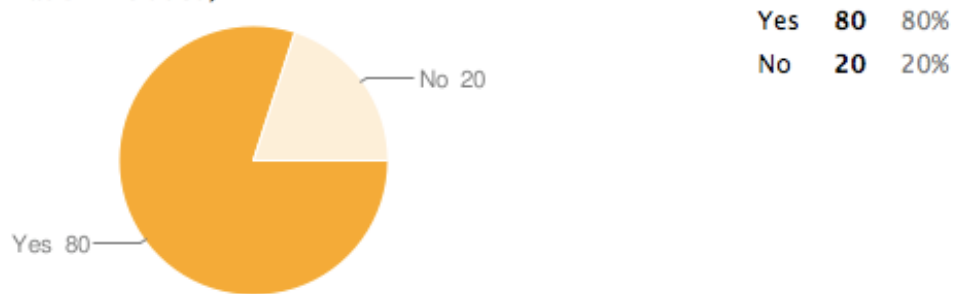


Figure 2. Graph of the Frequency of Website Access from those Surveyed

Source: Primary

**3. If Yes, how often do you visit our website?**

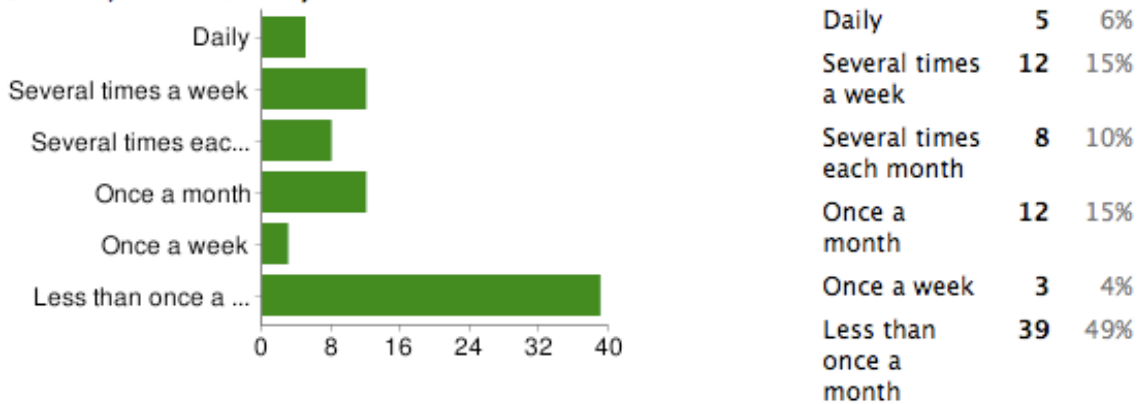


Figure 3. Uses of the Alzheimer's Association Website from those Surveyed

Source: Primary

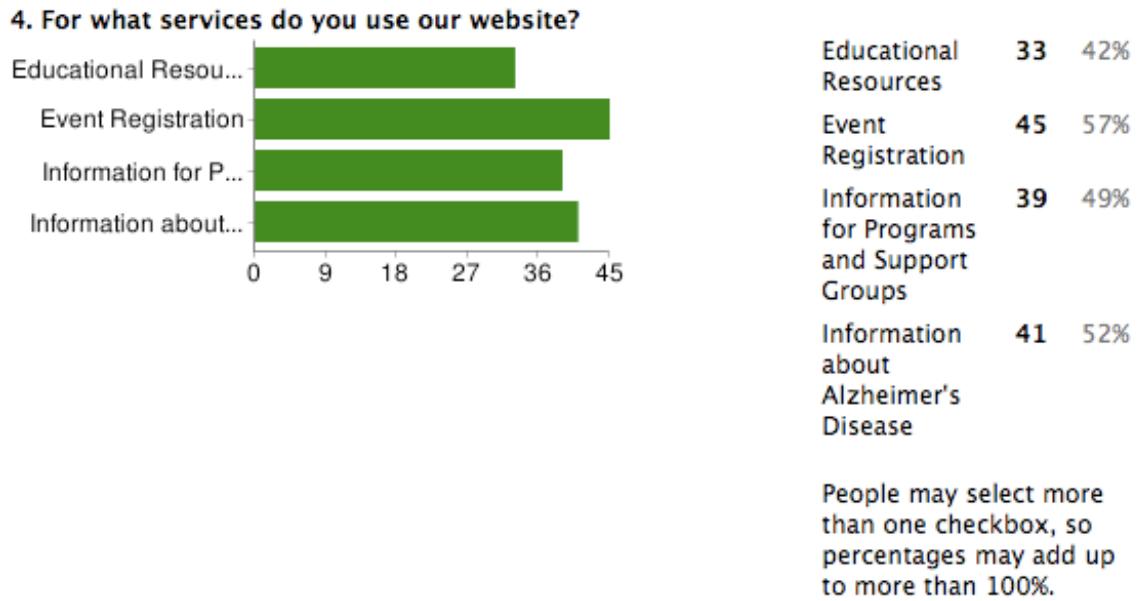


Figure 4. Rate of satisfaction according to five-point scale

Source: Primary

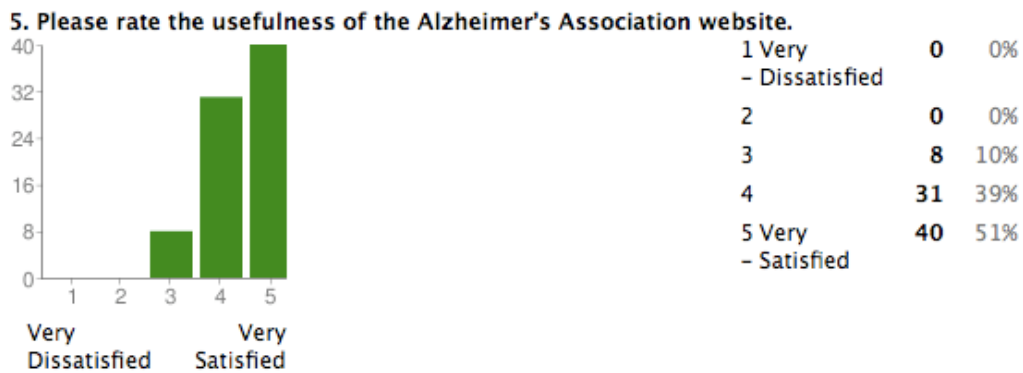


Figure 5. Rate of ease according to five-point scale

Source: Primary

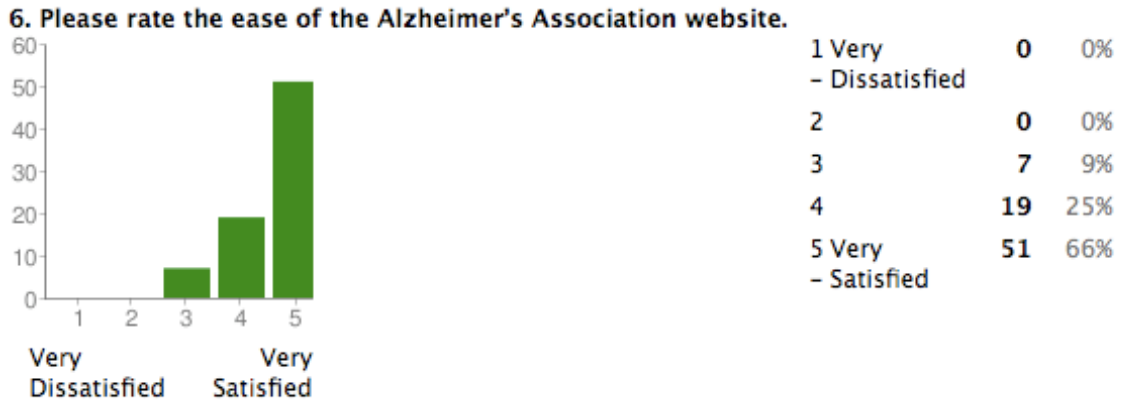
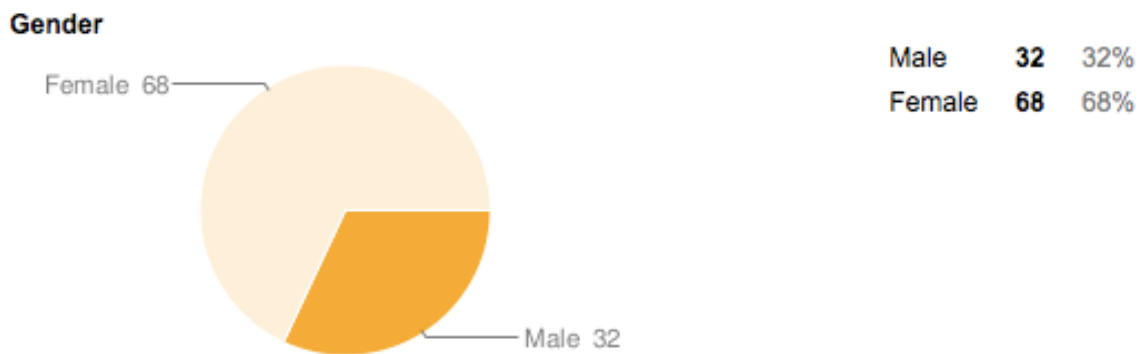


Figure 6. Distribution of those Surveyed according to Gender

Source: Primary



Note: No participants marked that they were transgender and therefore are not shown.

Figure 7. Distribution of those Surveyed according to age range

Source: Primary

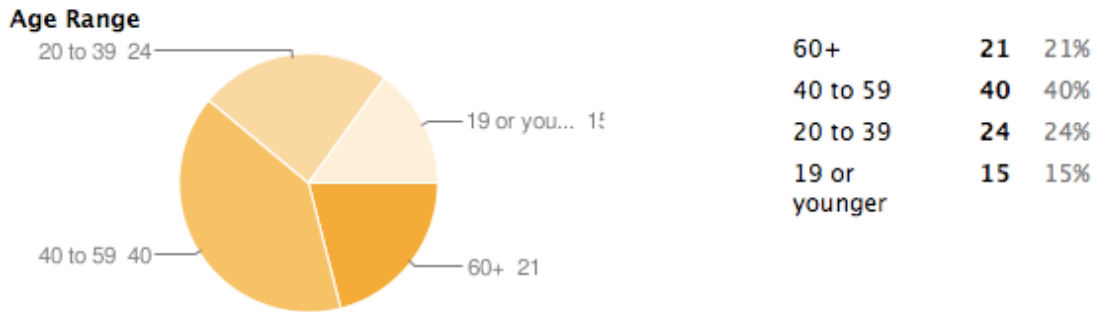
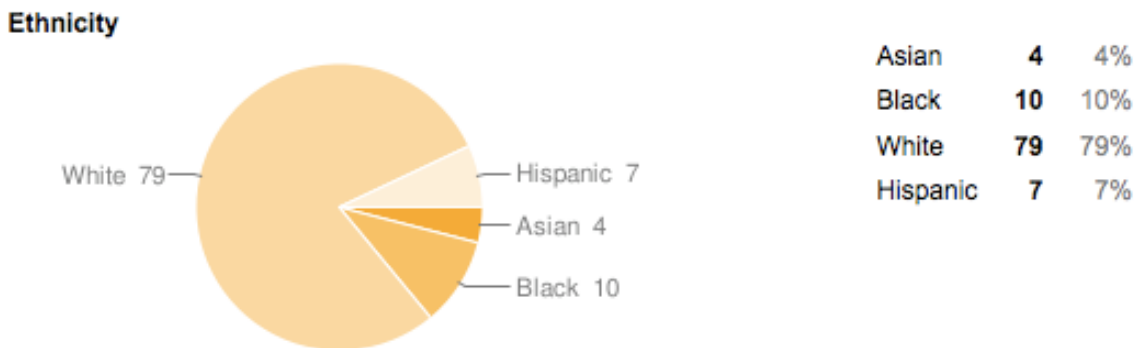


Figure 8. Distribution of those Surveyed according to ethnicity

Source: Primary



Note: No participants marked that they were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and therefore are not shown.

Figure 9. Amount of Online Giving by the Top Ten Memory Walk Teams

Source: Primary

Total=\$13,323.45

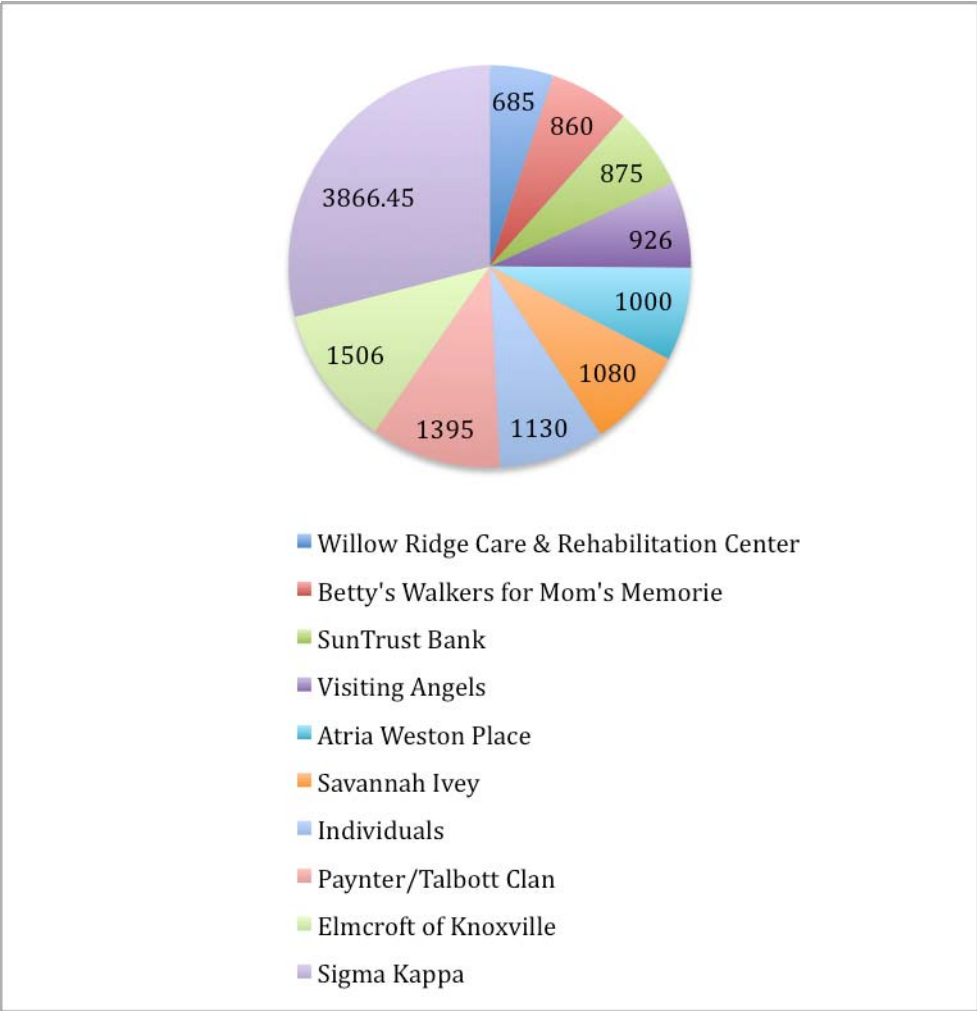


Figure 10. Regression Tree according to use of Educational Resources

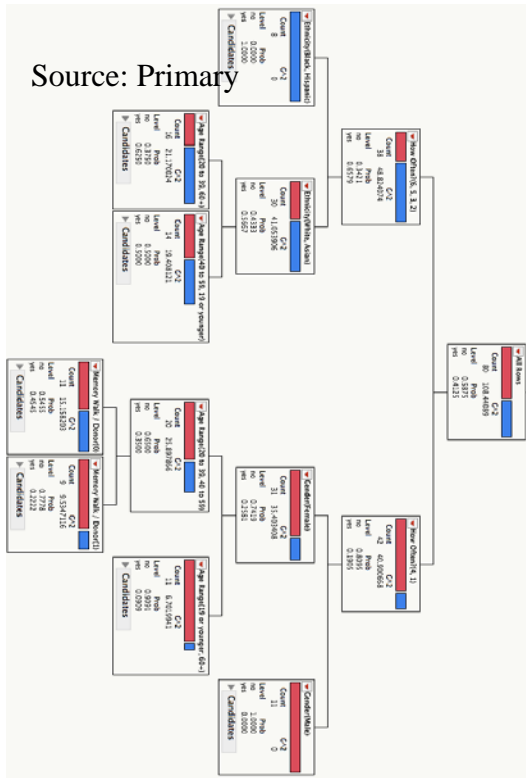


Figure 11. Regression Tree according to use of Event Registration

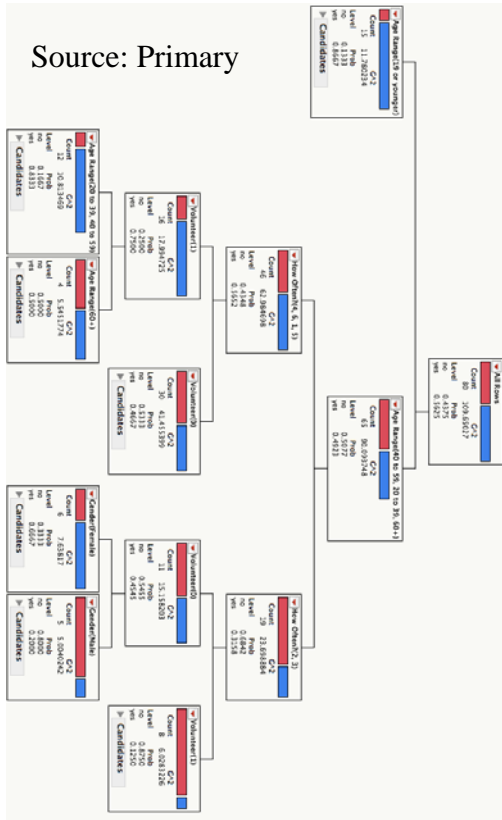




Figure 12. Regression Tree according to use of Alzheimer's Disease Information

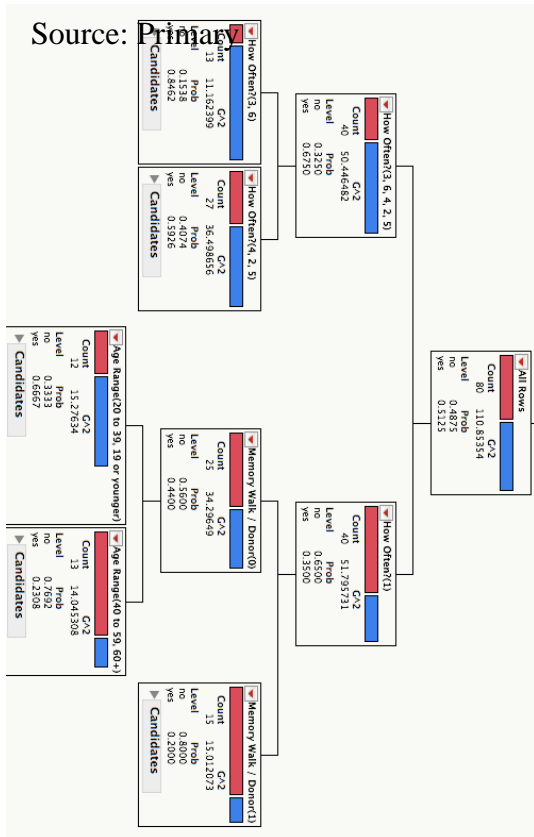
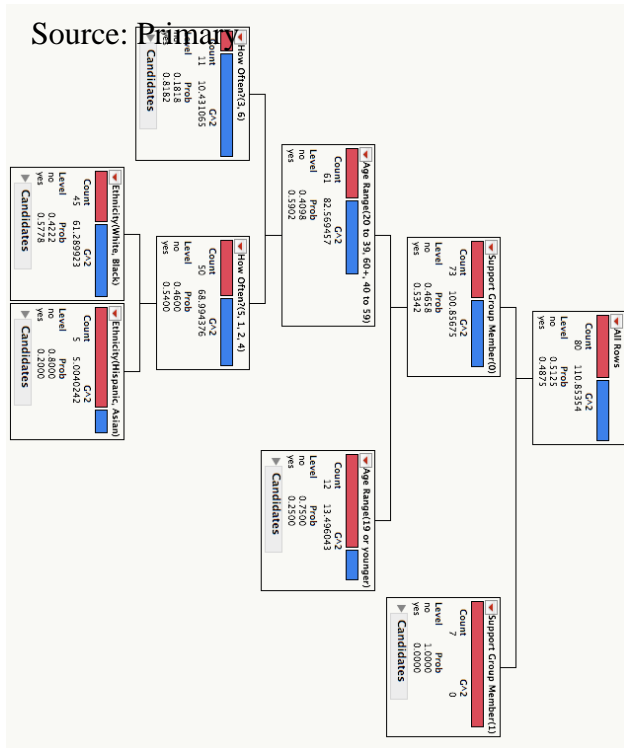
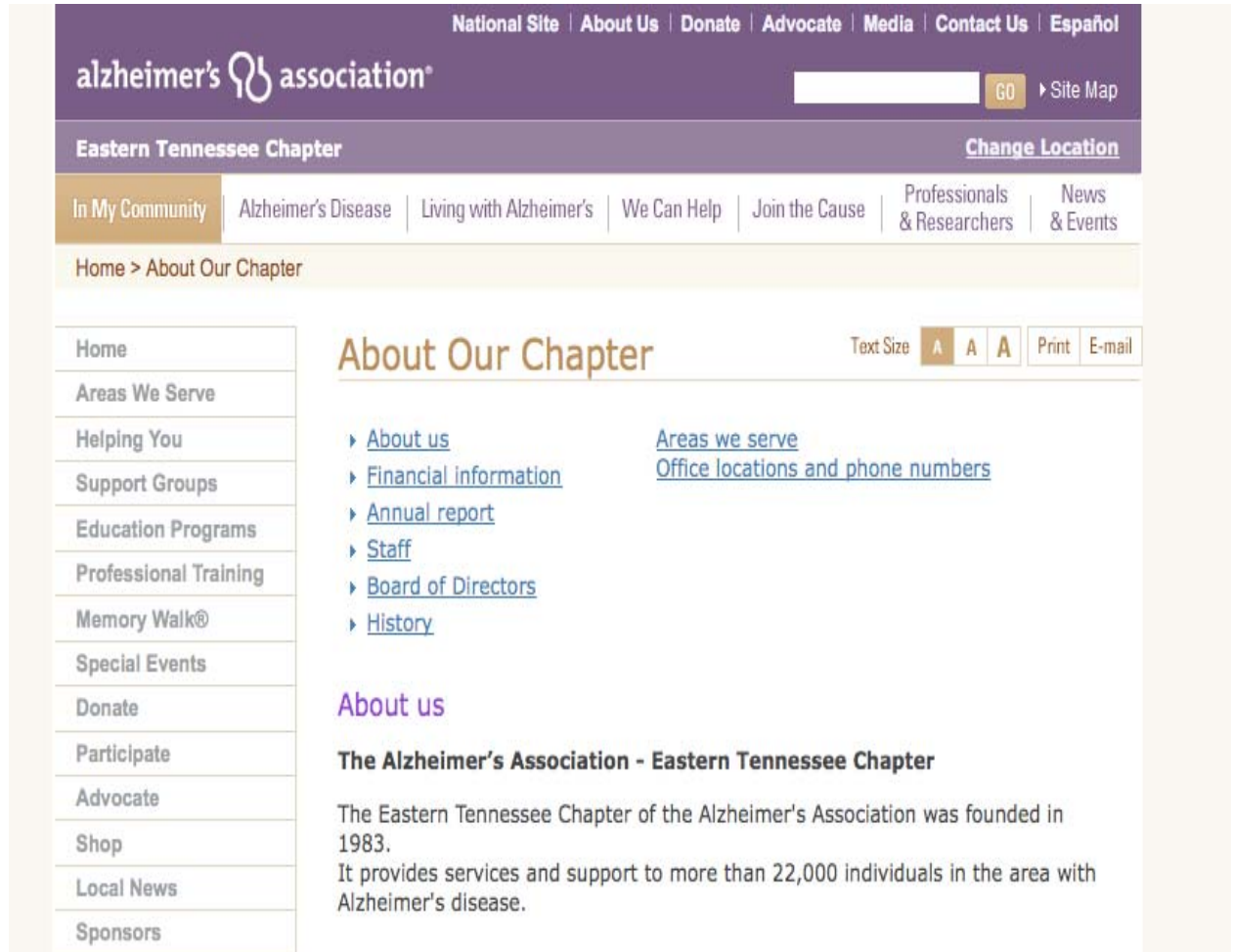


Figure 13. Regression Tree according to use of Program Information



APPENDICES

Appendix 1. A picture of the Alzheimer's Association Website



Appendix 2. Survey given at the 2009 Knoxville Regional Memory Walk

This survey is being completed as a study by a University of Tennessee student to examine users of the Alzheimer's Association website as consumers of technology and the website as a tool to understanding about Alzheimer's disease and the programs which the Association offers.

Thank you for your time to complete this survey.

1. In what capacity are you involved with the Alzheimer's Association (volunteer, support group member, caregiver, staff etc.)

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2. Have you used the Tennessee Alzheimer's Association Website (National Website information included)? Please Circle: (Y) or (N)

3. If Yes, how often do you visit our website?

~Daily                      ~Several times each month                      ~Once a week  
~Several times a week      ~Once a month                      ~ Less than Once a  
month

4. For what services do you use our website?

---

---

(Examples)

~ Educational Resources ~Information for Programs and Support Groups

~ Event Registration ~Information about Alzheimer's disease

5. Please rate the usefulness of the Alzheimer's Association website. Please Circle:

1      2      3      4      5

Very dissatisfied

Very satisfied

6. Please rate the ease of the Alzheimer's Association website. Please Circle:

1      2      3      4      5

Very dissatisfied

Very satisfied

7. Is there anything that you would like to see on the website in the future (including both the National and embedded Tennessee website)? If so, why?

---

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(Optional)

8. Gender:- Please Circle:        (M)    (F)    (T)

9. Age Range - Please Circle:

~ 60 +

~ 40 to 59

~20 to 39

~19 or younger

10. Ethnicity- Please Circle:

~ American Indian/Alaskan Native

~Asian

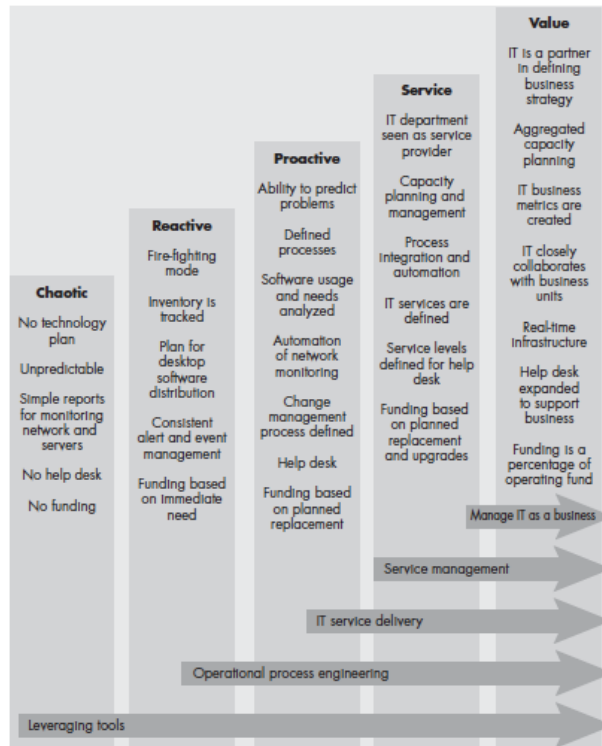
~ Black

~ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander ~ White

~Hispanic

Appendix 3. The Five Stages of Managing Technology from Managing Technology to Meet Your Mission: A Strategic Guide for Nonprofit Leaders

Figure 1.1. The Five Stages of Managing Technology.



Appendix 4. Definition of a 501(c) 3 as related to their tax exemption and mission

Source: U.S. Internal Revenue Code: TITLE 26, Subtitle A , CHAPTER 1, Subchapter F, PART I, 501 ([http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/26/501\(c\).html](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/26/501(c).html))

501. Exemption from tax on corporations, certain trusts, etc.

(a) Exemption from taxation

An organization described in subsection (c) or (d) or section 401 (a) shall be exempt from taxation under this subtitle unless such exemption is denied under section 502 or 503.

(b) Tax on unrelated business income and certain other activities

An organization exempt from taxation under subsection (a) shall be subject to tax to the extent provided in parts II, III, and VI of this subchapter, but (notwithstanding parts II, III, and VI of this subchapter) shall be considered an organization exempt from income taxes for the purpose of any law, which refers to organizations exempt from income taxes.

(c) List of exempt organizations

The following organizations are referred to in subsection (a):

(1) Any corporation organized under Act of Congress which is an instrumentality of the United States but only if such corporation—

(A) is exempt from Federal income taxes—



(i) under such Act as amended and supplemented before July 18, 1984, or


(ii) under this title without regard to any provision of law which is not contained in this title and which is not contained in a revenue Act, or

(B) is described in subsection (1).

(2) Corporations organized for the exclusive purpose of holding title to property, collecting income there from, and turning over the entire amount thereof, less expenses, to an organization which itself is exempt under this section. Rules similar to the rules of subparagraph (G) of paragraph (25) shall apply for purposes of this paragraph.

(3) Corporations, and any community chest, fund, or foundation, organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or educational purposes, or to foster national or international amateur sports competition (but only if no part of its activities involve the provision of athletic facilities or equipment), or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, no substantial part of the activities of which is carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided in subsection (h)), and which does not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

Appendix 5. Memory Walk Registration Page



**WE'RE ON THE MOVE TO END ALZHEIMER'S**

alzheimer's association®

**memory walk**

Nationally presented by Genworth Financial

Registered Walkers: **LOGIN**

**SIGN UP | DONATE | EVENT INFORMATION**

**Information**

- Home
- View Our Sponsors

**Visitors**

- Sign up to Walk
- Donate to a Walker

**Total Donations : \$50,555**

**Knoxville Regional Memory Walk 2009**

**Includes: Claiborne, Grainger, Hancock, Knox and Union Counties**

**Where:** Knoxville, TN  
Second Presbyterian Church  
2829 Kingston Pike near Sequoyah Hills

**When:** Saturday, April 18, 2009

Email this site to a friend

Friends Asking Friends

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

