

Fayette County Community-Based Organizations Sector

Why Is This Important?

Non-profit agencies provide a wide variety of services to citizens including human and social services, religious services, community sports and athletic facilities, and public entertainment. Like any organization, community-based organizations need technology to manage operations, apply for grants, reduce costs, improve client services and better serve the community. Unfortunately, their budgets are typically limited and they often depend on outdated technologies and donated services. As a result, community-based organizations must be creative in order to serve their constituents in the best manner possible. Fortunately, there is no shortage of creativity among community-based organizations and many are using innovative solutions to offer important local services. As with other sectors, the Internet is an enabling factor for these creative solutions. Currently with the State's Association of Nonprofit Organizations more connectivity and resources are available for this sector.

When it comes to community-based organizations, the best technology practice is for the organization to present a clear vision of the organization's mission, goals and activities through a well developed website. Applications like online donations, volunteer forms and continuing education allow the visitor to get involved without ever leaving home. Features such as photo galleries, virtual tours and streaming videos allow the visitor to become engaged in the online experience and invested in the organization with the click of a mouse.

Fayette County Community-Based Organizations

- Family Net/Special Needs Children, www.fayettefamilynet.com
- WCO MOPS for mothers, <http://fccwch.org/mops/>
- Fayette County Community Action, <http://www.cacfayettecounty.org/>
- Heritage Memorial Ministries, www.heritagememorialchurch.org
- YMCA, www.fayetteohioymca.com

Where Are We Today?

Fayette County community-based organizations include religious, educational and charitable organizations. The following are some examples:

- Family YMCA

- United Way of Fayette County
- Community Action Agency
- Special needs children resource groups
- Heritage Memorial food and clothing

Community-based organizations are committed to reaching out to citizens around the area to provide arts, services and entertainment. These organizations use technology to simplify activities, reach more citizens and better serve the community

Some community-based organizations see the Internet as a way of increasing giving and promotion. The local United Way now has their current campaign and the ability to donate online. The campaign posters and training brochures can be printed from their site. Since community-based organizations are charged with being the best possible stewards of donations, technology is viewed as a great way to save money.

Community-Based Organizations Sector Assessment Overview			
Category	Current Assessment	Future Vision	Additional Comments
Networked Places	NA	NA	
Applications & Services	NA	NA	
Leadership	NA	NA	

The Fayette County eCommunity Leadership Team found that the community-based organizations sector did not participate in the assessment phase.

- **Networked Places** – In the category of Networked Places, Fayette County’s community-based organizations sector is currently at stage 0 on a 0 to 5 scale.
- **Applications & Services** – In the category of technology Applications & Services, the community-based organizations sector is currently at stage 0 on a 0 to 5 scale.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology Leadership within community-based organizations in the community, Fayette County is currently at stage 0 on a 0 to 5 scale.

Where Do We Need To Be?

The Fayette County eCommunity Leadership Team sees great potential for the use of technology in the community-based organization sector but understands the sector is limited in its resources and ability to implement changes within a brief period. The team has set goals to move the community based organizations to stage 1 on a 0 to 5 scale. The team's vision includes:

- Some organizations use VoIP to save money.
- Some office workers have converted from desktop computers to portable wireless devices.
- Many organizations have an informational website.

How Do We Get There?

Priority Projects

- Develop an affordable “package deal” for non-profit organizations, working with local providers.
- Develop a technology plan to share resources and train staff.
- Use more web based meetings and trainings.

Other Potential Projects

- Facilitate collaboration and cooperation among community-based organizations to help them share the costs of technology and expertise.
- Encourage organizations to develop websites using advanced features and functions.
- Use websites to help recruit and retain volunteers, and enable volunteers to sign up online.
- Leverage the online list of employment opportunities available locally via www.work.net and www.myworknet.com.

The eCommunity Leadership team did not have representation from the community-based organization sector.

In working toward the implementation of the sector-specific goals, Connect Ohio recommends that additional participants be brought into the process, who may include technology providers, subject matter



experts, other community organizations, and the resources of agencies and commercial providers of products and services to the community-based organizations sector.

Sage Cutler, Southwest State Operations Manager for Connect Ohio will continue to work with the sector leaders to advance selected projects toward their completion. By leveraging Connect Ohio's project management process, its research information, and its partners, projects will be defined, developed, and reviewed to help assure that the local teams are equipped to execute them. Connect Ohio will assist in the identification of funding sources, introducing technical resources, and helping to define the measurable goals that will ensure that the projects are actionable, measurable, and valuable.