



February 28, 2013

Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash! This week's edition focuses on how to use mobile phones to connect to beneficiaries. One of Firelight's community organizations in Tanzania is using cellphones to monitor their programs. Their name is Elimu Community Light. We will be posting a blog on how they use mobile phones in the next couple months, so stay tuned! To visit ECOLI on the web go here: www.ecoli-tz.org To like ECOLI on Facebook go here: <https://www.facebook.com/Elimu.Community.Light>

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Call for Applicants) The Center for Universal Education Calls for Guest Scholars
(Call for Nominations) World of Children Award: Cash Grants for Individuals working for Children
(Resource) Engaging Beneficiaries Using Mobile Technology

Call for Applicants) The Center for Universal Education Calls for Guest Scholars

The Center for Universal Education at The Brookings Institution (Brookings) seeks to help build expertise on girls' education policies and programs in developing countries. This program is designed to offer guest scholars from developing countries the opportunity to pursue their own independent research on global education issues with a specific focus on girls' education. Guest scholars will also be supported to develop and implement a plan to share their expertise with their home institution to further build research capacity and expertise.

About The Center for Universal Education

As part of the Global Economy and Development program at Brookings, the Center for Universal Education (CUE) develops and disseminates effective solutions to the challenges of achieving universal quality education worldwide. It offers a forum for research, high-level dialogue, and public debate on a range of issues relevant to education in the developing world. In an effort to translate our report, A Global Compact on Learning, from commitment into action, we are committed to helping

build the knowledge base of what is needed to improve learning opportunities and outcomes for girls and boys in developing countries, especially those most marginalized and hardest to reach.

Global Scholars Program

The Global Scholars Program fits within the broader Global Compact on Learning work stream by aligning the research plans of the guest scholars with a collaborative research agenda. During their 4-month residency from mid-August 2013 to mid-December 2013, at Brookings, guest scholars will work with the Center staff on developing their specific research project, while also participating in a set of short workshops on different topics led by experts in the field. Guest scholars will draw on the resources of Brookings' scholars, as well as the extended public policy community in Washington, D.C. through participating in additional meetings and conferences and networking with the broader development community.

Applicant Requirements

Applicants should have a background in education, development, economics, or a related area, with at least 15 years of professional experience in either research/academia; non-government and civil society; government; or business. Successful applicants will have intimate understanding of education development issues and/or issues related to development and gender. Applicants who have not worked explicitly on girls' education previously are welcome but should include an explanation of how this focus on girls' education can be integrated successfully into their current and future work. Guest scholars will be expected to work on extensive, cutting-edge research, as well as a project proposal with the intent to implement their research in their home country upon completion of the program. Additional expectations of scholars include interacting with other Brookings scholars and the wider policy community, a demonstrated ability to conduct professional, in-depth research and deliver spoken presentations in English. Applicants selected for the fellowship will receive a living stipend of USD \$5,000 a month (subject to U.S. tax withholding), paid housing for the 4-month term, and round-trip travel expenses. Ph.D. or research background strongly preferred; Master's degree required. Strong analytical and writing skills required.

Program Requirements

Guest scholars must be available for a full-time, on-site affiliation with Brookings for the entire 4-month residency of the program. This affiliation is not an employment relationship but part of a fellowship program. Guest scholars are required to conduct extensive research on an approved topic. Guest scholars may have the opportunity to present their papers at a Brookings seminar or event at the end of the 4-month program. Each guest scholar is expected to be an active participant in Brookings and CUE activities, including, but not limited to, regularly-organized organizational staff meetings, informal discussions, seminars, presentations, and other CUE and Brookings events.

To Apply

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- Application questionnaire and project proposal. Download here in PDF format or Word format.
- A curriculum vitae or resume
- Two writing samples with citations
- Two letters of recommendation from professional references (emailed directly from references tocue@brookings.edu)

Application Deadlines

Term: mid-August 2013 to mid-December 2013

Application deadline: March 20, 2013, by 5pm EST

Selected for interviews: April 1, 2013

Results Announced: May 1, 2013

Deadline for Submission: Wednesday, March 20 at 5:00pm ET

For more go

to: <http://www.brookings.edu/about/employment/fellowship/2013/gbl13021>

Call for Nominations) World of Children Award: Cash Grants for Individuals working for Children

The World of Children Award provides funding and recognition to support life-changing work for children. By discovering and elevating only the most effective changemakers for children worldwide, they set the gold standard in child advocacy. It is currently accepting nominations for the 2013 World of Children Awards.

These awards recognize real-life heroes working to dramatically improve the lives of children. In addition to this, Honorees also receive grant funds and media attention, both of which help their gold standard programs grow so that they will ultimately impact the lives of even more children. Honorees who are selected to receive a 2013 World of Children Award must be able to attend the Awards Ceremony events in New York City.

Deadline for Submission: April 1, 2013

For more go to: <http://worldofchildren.org/nominate/nomination-form/>
(Resource) **Engaging Beneficiaries Using Mobile Technology**

An introduction to mobile outreach and fundraising for nonprofit organizations

How can you best communicate with your constituents by using text messages, web

pages, and mobile applications? Idealware looks at each method in detail to help you navigate the options to deliver content and engage users in donations and ongoing conversations.

The era of phone booths and answering services is gone. **Mobile phones are so ubiquitous that a year ago, 88 percent of households had them—and that number's only on the rise.**

Regardless of your organization's demographics, chances are that a majority of your constituents use mobile phones. Many people who don't have reliable access to a computer still have their own mobile phone; on the other end of the spectrum, those who like to stay on technology's cutting edge have access to increasingly sophisticated smartphones. This widespread use means nonprofits are finding it more valuable to communicate with constituents using text messages, web pages, and mobile applications.

Even basic cell phones can be used for text messaging, and every day nearly 2.5 billion text messages are sent. There are no hard-and-fast rules governing this emerging means of outreach, which can be used both for one- and two-way conversations with constituents, or as a platform for giving.

Mobile websites convey more information in a graphically pleasing format. Mobile users can likely see your existing website, but some modifications can make it easier to use on phones. Mobile applications are designed to run specifically on smartphones, and typically combine a useful service with organization-specific information.

Which method is right for your organization? Let's look at each in more detail to help you decide.

Text Messaging

Text messages allow you to spread information, ask for help, and even have two-way conversations via subscribers' cell phones.

At its most basic, broadcast text messaging is very similar to broadcast email — you can send a message to every cell number subscribed to your list. How do people subscribe? They can sign up on your website by entering their cell number, or they can text you to join. You might, for example, post signs at an event asking people who want to subscribe to send a specific keyword (e.g., "hunger") to a particular short code (e.g., 56456).

You can also use text messaging for two-way conversations by using software that allows for branching logic following if/then scenarios. For example, you could ask people at a rally to send a text if they'd like to help. Everyone who responds gets a text message back asking, "Can you volunteer Saturday from noon to 3, Yes or

No?". Users who reply "Yes" are sent directions and a confirmation; users who text "No" are asked about other opportunities. Two-way texting provides more complex and detailed communications than single-direction texts, but it also costs significantly more.

By integrating texts with a database, you can also create automated text communications. The Blue Ocean Institute produces a seafood information service — users text a type of fish to a short code (e.g., "King salmon" to 56456) and get a text in return with information about that species. This technology can work both ways — after the Haiti earthquake, for example, people sent text messages from the field for collection in a database.

If you're interested in a broadcast text campaign, there are a few ways to go about it. The easiest is to send an email to a subscriber's cell phone text email address using a typical email client or broadcast email tool. For example, if you send a regular email to 5558675309@vtext.com, it will show up as a text message on the phone of Verizon Wireless's subscriber at the number 555-867-5309 (vtext.com is Verizon's text-based email domain). This free method works best for small groups, but if your list grows beyond a couple dozen recipients, you may find the provider blocking your texts.

A better way is to use a hosted application geared to support mobile text campaigns. Similar to broadcast email packages, these tools let you manage subscribers, send messages, and have more complex two-way conversations. Vendors in this space include Mozes (very inexpensive text and voice campaigns only, starting at \$10 per month), BulkSMS (broadcast texting at about \$.05 per text), and Mobile Cause (texting starting at \$69 per month, but it also supports mobile giving and pledging, as described below). More full-featured options include Mobile Commons and Mobile Accord, which cost several hundred dollars per month or more but support more complex text and giving campaigns.

If you want a complicated campaign that integrates a text-messaging platform into your database, your best bet may be to work with a programmer and a vendor that provides an application programming interface (API). An API allows a programmer to set up functionality to pull text messages into or out of your database. Most of the full-featured options include an API, but some, like Clickatell, offer only an API, making them more affordable. Expect to pay around \$.04 per message with Clickatell, which is popular in the nonprofit and open-source space, or more with commercially focused tools like MBlox, SMS Everywhere, and Cell Trust.

Get the Code

If you want people to be able to send texts to your organization (e.g., to subscribe, engage in a two-way conversation, or donate), you might want to use a "short code" — a five- or six-digit number that takes the place of an actual phone number. It's possible to purchase your own short code from mobile providers, but it's

expensive—about \$500 a month for a generic code or \$1,000 for a vanity code, like "UNICEF" spelled out on a telephone keypad. It's cheaper to just use a code that's provided by the mobile texting or mobile giving vendor that you use. The added bonus is that most vendors have put some thought into creating codes that are both easy to use and easy to remember.

Mobile Giving

Mobile giving — donating money by cell phone — was relatively unknown until the American Red Cross brought it front and center in the days following the Haiti earthquake. Suddenly, mainstream media outlets were featuring articles about the technology, and now everyone wants to try it.

The Red Cross showed that mobile giving can work on a global scale, but for most organizations it's better suited to live events and more contained environments. For instance, the United Way held a fundraiser at a Louisiana State University football game, using signs around the stadium to encourage spectators to donate \$5 by texting the keyword LSU to a number. This \$5 charge was added directly to donors' phone bills. The United Way raised more than \$9,000 during the game.

In the United States, donations charged directly to the phone bill are currently limited to either \$5 or \$10 each. Expect to be charged a 5-7 percent service fee on each donation, and you won't actually receive the money until donors pay their phone bills. You also won't get any information about donors beyond their phone numbers, limiting your ability to engage them further.

A substantial limitation for small organizations: as per an agreement with the phone carriers, only organizations with annual revenues of more than \$500,000 are eligible to set up mobile giving. The rules about this are under review, with the hope that more nonprofits might soon be eligible.

On the surface, mobile giving campaigns are simple — users text a keyword to a short code, and their carriers add the donation to their cell phone bills — but the details are a little more complicated.

Only two organizations facilitate mobile giving campaigns. The most commonly used is the Mobile Giving Foundation. Mobile Accord's mGive Foundation is a newer organization with similar services. These organizations make it possible for you take online donations, but they won't actually provide the functionality to communicate with donors; you'll need to work with one of the vendors described in the Mobile Texting section in order to do that. Mobile Cause, Mobile Commons, Distributive Networks, and Mobile Accord, as described above, will all help you facilitate mobile giving.

If your organization isn't large enough to qualify for a true mobile giving campaign, or if you want a simpler option, consider mobile pledging — it works much the same

way, except users simply pledge to donate a certain amount with a text message. Your staff or a hired service can then follow up on those pledges via phone, or you can ask those who pledged to pay online with a credit card.

Websites and Apps for Mobile Phones

Almost all phones these days support text messages, but an increasing number of phones support web browsing and mobile applications as well.

Providing the ability for smartphone users to browse your website is relatively straightforward. Smartphones will show almost any website, but some look better than others. Because phones' screens are typically portrait-oriented — vertically tall — while computer monitors are typically landscape-oriented, typical websites tend to require left-to-right scrolling. The top left corner of your web page is a crucial place to place navigation elements to allow mobile phone users to easily browse.

Some tweaks to your existing website might provide enough support for your mobile users, but you could also consider creating a second, simplified site streamlined for mobile phones. Free of animation or design elements that might not work on phones, this site would be a pared-down version of your regular site that scrolls vertically. For an example, compare <http://m.ebay.com> to <http://www.ebay.com>.

Rather than requiring people to remember a separate mobile web address, you can include instructions in the coding language that try to automatically recognize when users are viewing the site on a mobile phone. This is less than 100 percent reliable, however, so it's a good idea to also include a link on your site directing users to your mobile site.

Instead of logging into your website, smartphone users can also download an application right onto their phone. These days you can find an app for nearly everything, and users are installing them left and right, and, in some cases, paying for the privilege.

Mobile apps pose an interesting, if still experimental, possibility for nonprofits. For example, the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program has a mobile app that re-creates their popular pocket guide to help consumers make smart choices when purchasing or ordering seafood, and provides it for phones in an interactive format. As another example, the Salvation Army provides an app with selections of Christmas music, for which they charge a small fee.

The growing number of competing phones creates a challenge for app designers, because apps are platform-dependent — those designed for iPhones won't run on BlackBerries, and vice versa. And that poses a challenge for organizations, too. You need to either make educated assumptions about your users and desired audience, or build multiple apps for competing platforms. And while there are a few tools —

like AppMakr, Sweb Apps, and MobBase — that allow non-technical users to create very simple mobile apps (for instance, one that simply provides text or images), for the most part, creating a mobile app will require a programmer.

Free apps still dominate the marketplace, but users are willing to pay a few dollars apiece for apps that manage to be both useful and cool. And that's the challenge — for an app to be popular, it has to be useful. This sounds like common sense, but there's no shortage of businesses creating apps that disseminate brand but don't add any value to users.

Wrapping it Up

As mobile phones rise in ubiquity, even to the point of replacing landlines, it becomes more crucial for organizations to evolve with the technology and leverage their popularity to engage new and existing constituents. Text messaging, mobile giving campaigns, and mobile apps and websites each offer a different approach with different strengths and weaknesses.

Whether your organization chooses one approach or several, you've got a host of options to deliver content and involve constituents in ongoing conversations. You might ease into it with a simple text campaign while modifying your website to be more welcoming to mobile users, or you might set the world ablaze by developing a "killer app" that gets downloaded by the millions. Whichever path you choose, you're moving in the right direction; mobile technology is not going away anytime soon.

For More Information

- MobileActive.Vast resources about using mobile phones for social good, both within the United States and in the developing world (<http://mobileactive.org/>)
- Text to Save Lives: Mobile Giving Takes Off (ReadWriteWeb).A useful overview of mobile giving (http://readwrite.com/2008/06/04/text_to_save_lives_mobile_giving)
- Building Websites for a Mobile Phone (Idealware).A quick look at considerations and more resources for mobile websites (<http://www.idealware.org/blog/2010/03/building-websites-for-mobile-phone.html>)

For more go to: <http://www.techsoup.org/support/articles-and-how-tos/engaging-constituents-using-mobile-technology>

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused

organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.php>. We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.

For more information contact:

Firelight Foundation
740 Front Street, Suite 380
Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA
www.firelightfoundation.org
+1 831-429- 8750