



Tech Teach-In **CASE STUDY**

Community Technology Network unites nonprofits with various companies for the Tech Teach-In (TTI), a free one-day technology-training event. The TTI is designed to increase nonprofit capacity, efficiency and collaboration, while infusing corporate employees with an opportunity to see their social impact and obtain career development.

CTN has produced four TTI events, with Salesforce and Google, which have helped over 100 nonprofits master tools like Google Analytics, Google AdWords, Salesforce CRM, and better understand website design and usability. The TTI offers technology overviews and allows nonprofits to work one-on-one with experts. Eighty-seven percent of TTI attendees reported an increase in product knowledge and how to effectively use it, with 70% of the attendees planning to use the information they learned in the next six months.

OVERVIEW

With an ailing economy, nonprofits must assist a record number of clients with fewer staff and dwindling financial resources. There are an abundance of tools to help nonprofits meet their mission, however organizations often lack the funds and staff to adopt them. Furthermore, companies are encouraging their employees to volunteer within their communities. However, it's difficult for these highly engaged and talented employees to identify rewarding volunteer opportunities that utilize their professional skills.

CTN identified a gap in nonprofit skills and training, and the desire for corporate employees with a passion for social change to find opportunities that effectively use their professional talents, and created the Tech Teach-In. The TTI is a one-day event that creates a conduit for nonprofits to gain in-depth insights from experts in databases, social media, website usability, analytics and search engine optimization.

In prior events organized by CTN, the day was broken into two sessions; product overviews in the morning and one-on-one Q&A sessions in the afternoon. One-on-one sessions focus on technology solution integration, troubleshooting and customization.



Each TTI saw a diverse array of Bay Area nonprofits, focused on various areas of human services, from education to veterans. CTN recruited and screened community-based organizations in the most need that fit the corporate partner's criteria. Nonprofit staff equipped to implement what they learned were encouraged to attend. After each TTI, attendees were surveyed to determine whether the event topics and format was efficient and helpful. Three to six months after the event, nonprofits are surveyed again to learn if and how they implemented the TTI knowledge.

Corporate partners made an investment of \$3,500 to assist CTN in the marketing, organization and production of the TTI. Corporate partners also donate meeting spaces and light snacks for the event. CTN performs analysis on data obtained during and after the events, and provides an

2012 TECH TEACH-IN SCHEDULE

Date	Corporate Partner	Product Focus	Attendees	Event Link
January 18, 2012	Google	Google AdWords, Analytics, Docs	40	nptechtraining.eventbrite.com
April 19, 2012	Google, Salesforce	Google AdWords, Analytics, Docs, Salesforce	37	techteachin.eventbrite.com
June 28, 2012	Google, Salesforce	Google Apps, Google Grants, Salesforce	35	techteachinjune2012.eventbrite.com
November 8, 2012	Salesforce	Website Usability	12	salesforcewebsalon.eventbrite.com

impact report that includes narratives, photos, testimonials and social media content to corporate partners. In exchange for this investment, CTN also includes the corporate partners logos on all Tech Teach-In related web and print collateral.

TRAINING NEEDS

CTN assessed nonprofit technology training needs and the biggest implementation barriers to ensure that training topics are in alignment with those needs. CTN found that the biggest hurdle to adoption was staff time, and the second largest barrier was user knowledge. CTN also identified fundraising, donor management and content databases/strategy as the top nonprofit training needs.

Fundraising	76%
Donor management	67%
Content database	62%
Content strategy	62%
Social media strategy	57%
Online fundraising campaign	57%
Other (web design, usability)	29%

CTN also identified what nonprofits did to help their learning and knowledge prior to the event, to create free and easily available resources. Online videos and product how-to pages were the most sought and used resources prompting CTN to work with corporate partners to create resources available during and after the TTI.

IMPACT

The Tech Teach-In events were incredibly successful in introducing organizations to new tools and teaching them how to effectively implement them, as 100% of attendees would recommend the TTI to a colleague. Nonprofit technology proficiency saw a huge increase and organizations reported that they were able to expedite essential tasks, allowing them to focus on the communities they serve.

CTN surveyed nonprofit attendees to assess their learning and the quality of the events. 87% of nonprofits said they knew more about the product and how to effectively use it and would use that knowledge in their work and beyond. Attendees like Soraya Okuda from the Valentino





Achak Deng Foundation who attended the Salesforce-led Website Design and Usability TTI reported,

“Wonderful insight into where a user’s eye is drawn, and when they may encounter frustration with functions on our site. It was wonderful to have the extended open mic session with user experience researchers and designers—having such a collaborative environment where people could jump into the discussion and provide a fresh opinion helped give a wider picture of the needs of the website.”

This statement and others from nonprofit attendees demonstrates how the TTI can benefit organizations and help them offer a higher quality of service, increase the number of clients served and engage more donors and volunteers.

Collaboration among nonprofit staffers also saw an increase, as the TTI attendees were able to adopt new products and share the newly acquired knowledge and resources with their colleagues for collaboration. Fifty-seven percent of attendees found the information at the TTI useful, with 70% intending to use the information in the next

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—Lydia Guel
Sacred Heart Community Service

six months. Iris Clyne from MOUSE Squad of California stated, “They gave me a list of priorities of where to start such as improving CTA buttons, our header and our nav system. Having a chance to talk directly with the experts in usability about our site and our needs is such an outstanding gift toward furthering our program!”

Furthermore, the TTI cultivated lasting relationships between technology company employees that can be considered unapproachable by nonprofit staff. Eighty-three percent of nonprofits felt the corporate employee volunteers were experts in their topic and conveyed the information clearly. Sixty one percent felt they were matched with a corporate volunteer that knew the topic well and 70% felt the corporate volunteers were interested to know about their missions and clients. Lydia Guel from Sacred Heart Community Service reported,

“Zach was super helpful, very supportive. He took the time to not just answer basic questions, but also to explain the “why” rationale behind the reasons they were built the way they were. The small group setting was much more comfortable to getting through special scenarios as well. Have more of these! This was a GREAT use of my time and I would love to make this opportunity available to other nonprofit partners. Thank you so much for making this available.”

The TTI also had an immense impact on the corporate volunteers. Each event left them with a huge sense of accomplishment stemming from the ability to see the changes their professional skills were having on nonprofits. Furthermore, many of the corporate volunteers developed relationships with organizations they worked with in the one-on-one sessions and continued to support them beyond the trainings.

TTI also provided corporate employees with insights into how nonprofits were using certain products, helping them do their jobs more effectively. Noël Kirmse, Customer Research Program Evangelist at Salesforce, echoes this by stating, “Our company was founded on the belief that we need to listen to our customers as we develop products, a vision that our CEO Marc Benioff engrained in company values since day one. Salesforce.com is the world’s #1 innovative company and we wanted to bring that innovation energy to the nonprofit world. We’re thrilled to use our expertise in this area to give back to nonprofits, who are often strapped for website development resources.”

CHALLENGES

CTN has encountered a few challenges in the execution of the TTI, including the cost in producing and evaluating the events. Forging new corporate partnerships is also time consuming and costly. Furthermore, evaluating nonprofit learning and how it has affected the organizations capacity has also been a challenge. CTN will do more in-depth, longitudinal evaluations of the changes in nonprofit capacity and collaboration resulting from the TTI. CTN also struggles with ensuring a diverse array of organizations attend the events.

NEXT STEPS

With additional financial support from foundations and corporations, CTN will increase the number of TTI partners and training focuses. CTN will establish partnerships with survey, event management, donor management database companies, and expand training in those areas. The number of TTI events will also increase from four to eight in 2013. CTN also hopes to offer these events in the South and East Bay, and increase the number of nonprofits served.

CONTACT

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ABOUT CTN

Community Technology Network (CTN) is a San Francisco Bay Area nonprofit dedicated to helping seniors, youth and adults with disabilities acquire the computer and Internet skills vital to achieving economic success. CTN recruits and trains people, like you and me, to deliver digital literacy and technology classes throughout the Bay Area to help underserved communities secure jobs, access information and unlock their true potential. In 2012, CTN has successfully trained and placed over 100 volunteers that gave more than 5,870 hours to transform over 4,753 lives through digital literacy.



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