

High Impact eAdvocacy

User-Centric Technology Planning

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Overview

- ▶ Aspiration is documenting our approach to tech planning and platform design
 - An amalgam of many approaches, learnings
- ▶ These slides capture the high points
 - It is still very much a work in progress
- ▶ We believe this type of process...
 - Delivers solutions users actually want
 - Builds capacity; saves time, money, stress
- ▶ We invite you to try the approach
 - We will provide NGOs free guidance

Essential Points

- ▶ Job 1: Have a comms/engagement strategy
 - “Think out loud”
 - “Let users in, and let them help drive”
- ▶ Understand who you are building for
 - Recruit members from each user audience
- ▶ Engage target users from the start
 - Even when they are hard to engage
- ▶ Focus on value delivery, not features
 - You need to believe the solution will be used
- ▶ Deliver iteratively

Communications Strategy

- ▶ Think out loud, as you go
 - Act as facilitator, not miracle worker
 - Include the voices of others
 - “Tease out the mandate”
- ▶ Generate a document trail
 - Don't keep it all in your head, that's a #FAIL
 - Use email announce, document milestones
- ▶ Have a project home place
 - Basecamp, Blog, ...

Know Who You Are Building For

- ▶ Consider three meta-categories
 - Target users
 - Administrators
 - General or anonymous users
- ▶ Define your user types
- ▶ Validate your thinking
 - Find real people who represent user types
 - Verify they want what you are building
- ▶ Establish user investment in process

Describe What You Are Building

- ▶ Focus on function not features
 - Value delivery, for the win
- ▶ Employ end-user vocabulary
 - Everyone should be able to understand
- ▶ Author “user stories”
 - How a type of user gets value from solution
- ▶ Circulate for feedback
 - Do not live in your head!
- ▶ Prioritize, prioritize, prioritize

Build Based on Best Practices

▶ Draft an RFP

- Even if you plan to build in-house, it can be valuable to get a competing external bid to drive clarity and priorities

▶ Solicit multiple proposals

- Prioritize proposals that detail process and generate intermediate documents/milestones
- “Pass” on proposals that convey “we'll just build it for you” and don't build your internal capacity

Build Iteratively

- ▶ Focus on “Minimum Viable Product”
 - You want running code in front of users in weeks, not months or years
 - Let user feedback drive priorities, shape thinking in subsequent iterations
- ▶ Keep core documents tracking reality
 - Have your audiences evolved?
 - Which user stories are done, changed, added, deferred?

End Of Section

- ▶ Questions?
- ▶ Comments?

Thank You!



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