

## **IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURS 22<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2008**

### **New report says online fundraising needs more than “donate now”: donors must be engaged on their own terms in online world**

- “Donate now” buttons forget all rules of fundraising
- Exploit modern e-habits via social networks and blogs, or “painlessly” as donors surf and shop, experts urge
- “Passion, persistence and partnership” lucrative cyber keys for charities, large and small

**Many charities overly rely on passive online fundraising tactics like “donate now” buttons that are, in isolation, a decade out of date; failing to more proactively engage with habits, interests and lifestyles of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century donor - according to a new report out later this month (*see attached report summary*).**

These are the key findings of *“Passion, persistence & partnership: the secrets of earning more online”*, produced by nfpSynergy, working with MissionFish - the innovative force behind eBay for Charity - and supported by the Institute of Fundraising.

The report has been published to mark the imminent relaunch of eBay for Charity, which has already raised over £5m for good causes. The new eBay for Charity platform is the result of a 12 month project, and will mean that every eBay user can donate to charity in a couple of clicks whenever they sell on eBay.

The report highlights a widespread missed opportunity. Although extremely cost-effective - raising an average of around £10 for every £1 spent on direct costs - online fundraising currently has relatively low impact as a portion of total voluntary income, averaging just 2% per charity (compared with 27% from supporter development and retention; and 7% from major donors). Moreover, larger charities - perhaps more able to invest in their websites and online functionality - are twice as likely as smaller ones (67% v 34%) to agree that income from the internet has grown strongly over the last 12 months.

#### **MissionFish UK’s Chief Executive, Nick Aldridge, said:**

*“In the last few years, charities of all sizes have become more confident and sophisticated in using the web to attract supporters. Many are exploring more innovative forms of e-commerce and integrated fundraising than were possible before the internet became mainstream. Meanwhile, charity staff are learning to engage the public in a deeper, more balanced dialogue, and are willing and able to explore partnerships with the big players online. An online strategy now involves far more than ‘click here to donate’. The web is teeming with possibilities, but charities - large and small - need passion, persistence and partnerships to effectively reap its rewards.”*

#### **nfpSynergy’s Driver of Ideas, Joe Saxton, said:**

*“Ten years ago, when the internet was shiny, new and fast-proliferating, many charities thought they could just sit back and watch the money roll in. Whilst they sat back, society – not least young, affluent professionals – did almost everything else online apart from click-and-donate. They paid bills, went shopping, bought cars, sought love – increasingly accessing the web where-ever and when-ever they wanted. And what a missed bounty of opportunity for those charities unwilling or unable to mirror and integrate with this lifestyle – complete with its blogs and social network spaces - first engaging with potential donors where their interests and habits lie and thereby, over time, subsequently motivating them to donate, whether on- or off-line.”*

**Five top trends and tips in charitable online income generation...**

1. **Charities are using the power of their stories online.** Putting stories online – whether from beneficiaries or front-line staff - creates great content and compelling messages for prospective and actual donors.
2. **Charities are engaging first and fundraising second.** The internet is now used as a tool for engaging people first – through blogs, emails, forums, interactive games etc; and only then persuading them over time to become donors in ways that match their interest in the charity and their preferred ways to give.
3. **Social networking is forcing charities to make friends.** Social networking sites are forcing charities out of their websites and into the places where people socialise. This is both scary and exhilarating - scary because charities are less in control on such spaces, their brand is more diluted and their competitors quite possibly their next door neighbours; exhilarating because of the passion and third-party endorsement that only those individuals who inhabit social networks can bring.
4. **Integration and internal communications are keys to success.** New media is, in reality, a multi-purpose tool – for communications, IT, fundraising etc – and, in which ever “department” it sits, it is vital that all the different users work together to maximise the coherence and power of the charity’s message. Earning online should be part of an integrated whole.
5. **Multiple income-generating partners are key.** The old paradigm of getting people to give money via credit card donation and a “donate now” button is gradually giving way to a multi-partnership model, whereby a charity may offer multiple ways to give and generate revenue. The most effective of these generally involve the mutually beneficial “hijacking” of a web user’s existing habits for a charity’s purposes. There are already ways of raising money online through search engines, auction sites (eBay for Charity being the largest and most successful), affinity partnerships etc. These partnership arrangements are a “painless” win/win for donors and charities. They reach new audiences, give supporters ways to raise money without giving, are usually low or no cost to set up and easily embedded into existing websites.

**A full copy of the 50-page “Passion, persistence & partnership: the secrets of earning more online” report or a 4-page summary is downloadable from [www.nfpSynergy.net](http://www.nfpSynergy.net) from early June.**

- ends -

**MEDIA INTERVIEWS: To interview MissionFish’s Nick Aldridge or nfpSynergy’s Joe Saxton about the report, please contact:**

**Adrian Gillan, T: 0207 6 22 99 11; M: 0774 086 7215; E: [adrian@gillanmedia.com](mailto:adrian@gillanmedia.com)**

### **Notes to editors:**

- **MissionFish**

MissionFish ([www.missionfish.org.uk](http://www.missionfish.org.uk)) helps charities raise funds on eBay by helping to run the eBay for Charity programme. eBay for Charity enables over 20 million eBay users to support good causes whenever they buy and sell on eBay. MissionFish is a registered charity (No. 1110538). Visit [www.missionfish.org.uk](http://www.missionfish.org.uk), or [www.eBay.co.uk/charity](http://www.eBay.co.uk/charity).

- **Institute of Fundraising**

The Institute of Fundraising ([www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk)) is the professional membership body for UK fundraising. The Institute’s mission is to support fundraisers, through leadership, representation, standards setting and education, in order to deliver excellent fundraising. The Institute represents over 4,500 fundraisers and 250 fundraising organisations, providing dedicated information and support services for Individual and Organisational members. The Institute is represented across the UK by a range of National, Regional and Special Interest Groups, offering an extensive programme of networking and training events. The Institute is a charity registered in England and Wales (No 1079573) and Scotland (No SC038971) as well as a company limited by guarantee (No 3870883).

- **nfpSynergy**

nfpSynergy ([www.nfpsynergy.net](http://www.nfpsynergy.net)) is the UK’s *only* think-tank and research consultancy dedicated to the charity sector and not for profit issues. It provides ideas, insights and information to help voluntary and community organisations thrive in an ever-changing world. Regularly harvesting the social and charity-related views of public and parliament, media and business - not to mention not for profit organisations themselves - nfpSynergy has a vast and ever-growing knowledge pool from which to extract and deliver insights.