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Nonprofits seek creative alternatives to weather down economy

As the nonprofit sector adjusts to a rough economy, more groups are turning to [Grassroots.org](#) for solutions. Membership has nearly tripled in the last eleven months for the organization, which gives 501(c)3 groups free technology tools, including web building, web design, graphic design, language translation, and SEO consultation, among other resources.

In Sept. 2008, only 680 organizations used [Grassroots.org](#) services. In less than one year, membership has spiked to nearly 2,000 nonprofits, and [Grassroots.org](#) has given 501(c)3 groups \$1,117,671 worth of technology tools.

Member organizations each have access to \$26,293 worth of tools annually. That savings allowed [Getting Tools to City Schools](#) to fund its first delivery to P.S. 335 in the South Bronx.

“Thanks to [Grassroots.org](#), our start-up organization has created a strong professional presence on the web,” said Dennis Kitchen, director and founder of the Brooklyn-based organization. “Just as we help schools and students with free tools, [Grassroots.org](#) has done the same for our nonprofit.”

That work builds the capacity of nonprofits nationwide, said [Grassroots.org](#) Executive Director Shane Hankins.

“By providing free web and technology services, we save nonprofits time and money that they can use to implement real change,” Hankins said. “It’s rewarding that even in a down economy, start-ups can grow because we gave them free tools.”

Beyond web strategies, [Grassroots.org](#) members use the free services to build stronger donor and volunteer bases. Massachusetts-based nonprofit [Tailored for Success](#) landed a \$10,000 grant in 2007 after joining [Grassroots.org](#).

Founder and president Elizabeth Hart said the grant funded **Tailored Impressions**, a consignment shop that helps economically disadvantaged women return to the workforce.

“This store also allows us to reach constituents who would not be eligible for our services due to financial guidelines,” Hart said. “The positive impact of **Grassroots.org's** services will be felt for many years.”

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