

Edward Lang:
(IN PROGRESS)

This graph is to show that if you really want to scare an IT department, go back and say, “I need this.” Demand it right away. They’ll probably pretty quickly come back to you and say, “You know what? There are probably some people out there I should be talking to to help us along.”

This shows all the different things that organizations like yourselves could attempt to do, both from a collaboration as well as an e-business strategy perspective... everything from being able do donor management, to volunteers and advocacy. It would be very easy to overwhelm an IT staff immediately.

The Internet is a great leveling field, because as long as you can move data electronically it’s very easy to take a business solution like this and put it into an overall platform or strategy.

Here are some key solutions to consider. The idea of customer-relationship management, that’s one of the most important trends that we see happening, as well as e-service. We did mention personalization; that’s very important. It is very critical to get more than “Dear Ed Lang.” It’s more important to figure out who Ed Lang is as an individual.

So whether you read the recommendations off an Amazon.com site (and I appreciate your candor that you don’t), the idea that technology exists out there to be able to focus in the target segment that you’re going after, as well as the message, is very important.

You should be able to recognize the fact that I’ve donated to your organization in the past. Thank me for that, show me the types of things that you’ve done with my money, and come back around and ask for it again.

Being able to integrate it with processes you already have in place is going to be very important, as well as being able to serve up the resources that you already have in your organization.

As I finish this list of some of the key applications, hopefully it will encourage you to see that there are some challenges out there, being able to do everything from taking money and making sure that you don’t become like a retail mall. But there are types of applications and tool sets specifically designed for smaller organizations, so you shouldn’t walk out of this room assuming that if you don’t have a million-dollar IT budget, you can’t get started. That’s simply not true.

I’m going to go through partnering very quickly. You do have some very valuable assets out there that you can leverage, things like a strong brand name as well as a lot of domain expertise. What I would say is leverage that in the negotiation. If you have tech partners that you want to work with, you should be showing what your assets are and using them very strategically in the types of relationships that you’re able to forge.

The most critical thing is to make sure that you align the business directives of your organization and the partnership. Trust me, because strategic partnerships are my fulltime job now, it’s amazing to me how many people get that kind of “velocity” mentality going and think it’s important to partner, and don’t ask the correct questions to make sure that you similarly align the your group’s mission statement with that of the partner. It’s very important to make sure you do that.

The people who have partnering strategies, how often do you meet with your partners? Throw out a number or two.

In my own personal practice, we have monthly conference calls and I force a quarterly meeting with my partners to make sure that we're constantly status-checking the missions and principles so that the relationship continues to make sense moving forward.

You don't have to go for the grandest partnership. A lot of times people feel like that have to cut that great big relationship that requires a 35-page document with the lawyers to figure out that that's not true. There are all types of partnerships that you can forge with other companies. And remember, from its most strategic nature all the way down to referral-type relationships, you should definitely be pursuing all different kinds of avenues.

Evaluating them is going to be very important. Aside from making sure you're compatible, there are some things that you should do. Most importantly, do a lot of due diligence. I would agree with Vinay on choosing an ASP; ask certain questions like what their technology is and how financially stable they are.

Make sure the technology is delivering a lot of value to you. Make sure it's empowering you and it's delivering the e-business strategy that you're interested in having.

Here's a quick little list of negotiation tactics. It's very easy to get an agreement in place. What is the typical cycle that it took some of you to cut your partnership? Just a quick answer. A year?

I can joke about this because in my former life I was an attorney. I wear my bus-dev hat at CVENT and I cut the deal very quickly, then I take eight months to actually paper it.

The idea is that you don't have to do that. Being able to forge a partnership or relationship is very important, but being able to take it in small steps sometimes is more critical to the success factor, because you can figure out exactly how to work the relationship for the long run.

Some final thoughts. Here are the 10 lessons learned from e-business. Hopefully, you won't encounter many of these, or at least these will be good words of wisdom to remember that there are different approaches to Internet-related implementations. Design, thinking about it, strategizing is always going to be the most important.

But the single biggest one is to make sure you have the right people and the right buy-in. I can't stress it more than Vinay – you have to be sure you have the right metrics in place and that you're happy with the types of things you're striving for. The truth of the matter is that when you walk out of here, it's not necessarily going to be about money for the next 18 months to two years. A lot of it is going to be about relationship, acquisition, branding, and having a general strategy, and making sure people know how to find you in an electronic, digital age.

Tuckman:

We are running distinctly short on time, and we do have a cocktail party coming up, so let me wrap up with a slightly different perspective than we had originally planned.

One of those buried set of words that's critically important to the discussion today is the term, “business model.” As I listened to these various presenters with their various

solutions, what came back to me is that we in the nonprofit sector tend not only to be mission-driven, but also to be very heavily dependent upon being able to persuade our board. If you look at this in terms of a spectrum, at the simplest level you’re basically talking about that 386 and some local technician who you’ve hired for \$40,000 and you’re chugging along and you hope to get by.

If you go across that spectrum, there is a range of alternatives, particularly for those of you who go, as I do, to many of the nonprofit conventions. In the last few years, more and more services are appearing online to allow you to contract out. These are people who say in essence, “I’ll do your books for you online,” “I’ll do your fundraising for you online.” Many of you are now familiar with the Fidelity Vanguard line, “We’d like to replace your investment committee, or at least augment it by investing your assets online.”

This whole notion of contracting plays in because if you’re going to go to a board of advisers or a board of directors of a nonprofit, one of the things you’re going to have to be able to say is, “Here are the alternatives, and here is what they’re going to do for the nonprofit organization.”

And I thought you did a very important service for us as our last speaker, Edward, in terms of talking about the compatibility of the partners in the buy-in.

In terms of parting words for the audience, what would you want to say about various alternatives, and when they’re right for the nonprofit community? And since there are a lot of researchers in the audience, one of the most important things for the researchers is for all of us to try and catch our research up with the pace of change so that we can supply some additional data in this area.

What parting words would you have on the alternative business models and when they’re used, Ed?

Lang:

The critical thing is to track the business models that are evolving. There are a lot of organizations from a technology perspective that will bring an application in-house. These are companies that are split between product and service. A lot of you are probably familiar with buying everything from Microsoft Office to much more proprietary-type systems. Those organizations are going to continue to exist, and it’s kind of exciting from the perspective that they’re going to architect their solutions to be more Internet-compatible.

The other thing to do is to go to the other end of the spectrum, which is this application service-provider model, but to keep in mind that you can have a blueprint. The main thing to do is to make sure that as an organization internally; that you have the right strategy moving forward with your platform. It’s less important to be very solution-oriented today as it is to make sure that you’re putting the correct money in the strategic places that you need moving forward. And that’s more of a platform basis.

It’s amazing to me how the United States in particular is so caught up when they buy software to buying solutions. The biggest advice I can give is to make sure you’re buying software that fits a business requirement you have. You don’t know how many times I can throw great solutions in front of someone and they say, “That’s a very important thing. I would love to have it.” And then I ask the very important question, “But is it something you need to have?” And not understanding the difference between

those two questions is sometimes where internally a lot of the struggle comes when you're trying to implement these solutions.

What I would recommend is to make sure you have a general blueprint in place. Go out and examine some of the models that are being discussed today and to make sure that you're buying solutions that actually meet the business needs and requirements you have internally.