
COMMUNITY GIFT SHOP MAY CHANGE THE NON-PROFIT LANDSCAPE

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A Haliburton County based company, TechnicalitiesPlus, has launched a product that will benefit non-profits around the world! Their Community Gift Shop gives non-profit organizations an online tool for fundraising that helps people understand the issues facing those who benefit from their services as well as a concrete way to contribute to the well-being of their own community. TechnicalitiesPlus has designed a gift catalogue that can be customized to allow organizations to offer symbolic gifts that showcase the very items that an organization provides.

A Canadian Donor Survey released by Ipsos Reid in October 2011 shows that a third of Canadians give online and this is growing fast. At the same time non profits and charities are feeling the crunch of the economic crisis and the outlook for 2012 is not as optimistic. *"This does not bode well for discretionary spending and that means charities may very well feel the crunch,"* Steve Levy of Ipsos Reid noted. In fact non-profit organizations are having to fundraise more and more to meet escalating costs and dwindling government funding. But the good news is that 69% of Canadians give financial donations.

Charities raise over three times as much money through financial donations as they do through fundraising. And interest in online donation is increasing, this year hitting 31%. Levy says *"With more competition and looming economic pressures, charitable organizations are going to have to look at creative and engaging methods to make their point and meet their fundraising targets."*

Enter TechnicalitiesPlus of Haliburton County and the visioning of local residents Gena Robertson and Donna Enright. Gena is the Executive Director of SIRCH Community Services and Donna is the Managing Director for TechnicalitiesPlus, an IT business. Together they have created "Community Gift Shop" the online (and print) catalogue that gives residents of any community an opportunity to give back to that community.

Robertson thought of the gift catalogue as a fundraiser for SIRCH and for other non-profits that provide services to vulnerable families. *"The gift catalogues allow ethical giving on a local level. Ethical giving is about giving a gift that truly matters, a gift that brings with it hope and change. For example in Haliburton County there is poverty that no one sees, but that we as community members need to acknowledge and address. SIRCH sees families that live on less than \$1,000 a month, people who have never had dental care, children who eat cereal with water because their parents can't afford milk. We need to give in our own communities. Our neighbours, our children, our seniors, in communities across Canada, are struggling. The gift catalogue will change that."*

Enright adds *"Community Gift Shop allows people in communities to shape their future and their children's future and to change their world for generations to come."*

If you'd like more information about Community Gift Shop, or to schedule an interview with Donna Enright or Gena Robertson, please call 705-457-4044 or email: donna@technicalities.ca or gena_robertson@sirch.on.ca.