

Technology Needs of the Canadian Voluntary Sector

IM/IT Joint Table of the Voluntary Sector Initiative

Supporting Document 3

All comments from interviews and survey
(Some identifying information was removed)



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SECTION: OTHER SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS

#	Survey Responses
1	Technology needs of conservation organizations should include essential equipment for discharge of their mandates via electronic water testing kits, GPS units, sophisticated compasses, etc....
2	#13 - Why just youth? The volunteer world is 75% - 40 and over. No screens on surveys.....they fax quicker!
3	#23 We serve the entire community of the city of London without focusing on any one population.
4	1) Using and promoting free software or those that are cheaper than expensive ones. e.g. linux versus Microsoft platforms, OS and applications related. 2) Partnerships between private IT sector and VSI.
5	A database of research re voluntary sector and it issues would be helpful, especially for micro organizations and those in remote locations that have limited IT infrastructure.
6	A difficulty we're running into is that our action is small and therefore the need for a complicated board is minimal. The executive is required however and our dilemma is maintaining the support of qualified individuals as volunteers. Would there be more success if this were done professionally from a more central location or using a local service to maintain the executive functions?
7	A national database of child abusers that can be easily accessed by youth organizations or a police record check capability that is consistent across Canada and provided as a service to youth organizations free of charge.
8	A national database on Volunteer agencies, accessible via the Internet, with links to the websites of the members would allow smaller organizations to get more recognition and better access to funding.
9	Access to and support for technological solutions is important but, in my view, it should not have the priority that support for direct contact should receive. While very much wanting to be able to communicate on a level - i.e. technology based - field with our volunteers and members, it is even more crucial to retain the ability to work in person with them as often as possible.
10	As National organization providing training, consulting, engaging in collaborative demonstration projects and applied research we need government assistance in converting courses to distance ed web based learning. We do not have the resources to do this in a country as geographically diverse as Canada we need to deliver information and skills in a different way
11	Assistance in accessing Volunteer Management Software, right now the best software is an American program that is quite costly, and perhaps negotiation to get a Canadianized version.
12	Be careful not to stray into direct competition with the private sector re hardware, software and IT support services. They can do it better and often cheaper. Focus on funding support and coordination and communication activities.
13	Board training could be offered without cost, as well as evaluation tools. Ways to access easily salary scales for coordinators of organizations, as well as for paid workers.
14	Computers and software come out of the Administrative budget for registered charities -



	which is fixed. Any way to allow charities to use technology without being penalized by Revenue Canada would be helpful.
15	Concerns that some of these services will work for some organizations and not others....Each service may need to be targeted for certain size, type of organization.
16	Consider to assist small cultural associations / clubs - criteria non-charity registered organizations.
17	Email, websites, teleconferencing, all wonderful things but of no use if your agency is working with 10 year old computer equipment. Our time and efforts are spent recruiting, training and delivering direct service - no time or \$ to even THINK about how technology that we can't afford could serve our needs. As a Meals on Wheels organization, we need our funds to serve our clients first, then volunteers and staff, then technology last.
18	Finding funding for web development, software and hardware. We receive many donated computers, however they are usually outdated and therefore very limited in everyday use.
19	Fiscal Year 2001 - Total Assets - \$25,400.00 Total Revenue - Donations: \$725.00, Interest \$ 1493.00 - Interest used to purchase 3- 500.00 Scholarships. Seems to me that small private charities such as ours could do with less government reporting including the Charity Income Tax form.
20	Has to talk about all above. All we need to buy is 1000 units of computer with all necessary software and with little money to give it to all of these organizations.
21	How is this initiative relevant to a small organization that provides international aid, but is not registered?
22	I have marked a one-stop website as a low priority as this already exists in Canada. Charity Village charityvillage.com is an incredible and comprehensive resource, and one that is widely used. I think it would be unfortunate to create a duplication of an incredible resource that already exists. I have marked these questions according to what MY organization needs, but we are blessed with management staff that makes our computer capacity and systems a priority. We also have a wonderful off-site network administrator. If I were answering according to what I feel the SECTOR needs, I would have answered many of these questions quite differently. I sense that up to date computer systems and technical expertise would be a much higher priority for many others in the not-for-profit sector.
23	I hesitate to refer to our American neighbours, but they have done a wonderful job in this arena. In particular their use of 'Circuit Riders" : experienced technical people who understand the not-for-profit and philanthropic arena and our technology needs. They can assist organizations implement an e-strategy in a cost effective way. Provision of funding dollars in a fashion similar to Ontario's Volunteer @action Online. As a National foundation that does considerable work in Ontario, I have applied to them for funding; however the funding will be short of what I require to take our interactive database pan Canada and I am not aware of similar federal funding opportunities to which I can apply.
24	I hope this will allow you to achieve your goal, taking advantages of minorities groups to keep ahead and continue to be a "Big Fish" meanwhile "small fishes" give you the tools---
25	Ideally, a way of sharing ideas and communicating between volunteer centres, as well as an improved VOE site would be beneficial.
26	In addition to the items listed above there needs to be a one stop shopping for all government data and furthermore the data needs to be free, some of the data requirements are: Census, Tax form, etc. and also base GIS maps (EAs, CTs, road networks, electoral boundaries, etc. There also needs to be some funding to enable the purchase of higher end GIS mapping software and resources for capacity building in this area. Finally, some sort of



	laser colour printing facilities, to enable organizations to publish more interesting materials.
27	In general, this is a good survey. In some areas where I put low priority it is because my organization is already doing some of this with our members, and I was answering from our perspective. we are a national membership organization - the questions below are not particularly appropriate. Please note below that I had to fill out an answer in #21 or I couldn't submit (I tried), but that does not reflect who we are at all! So, not all parts of the survey were that useful or well laid out....
28	Information on MAC as well as PC - we operate a MAC. Access to one on one consulting for specific questions on our system setup. Organize a way to get that corporations are upgrading - most could be donated to charities.
29	It could be extremely useful for the small-size voluntary organizations to receive support to obtain IT hardware and software as well as using it. This area is basically handicapping our organizational performance.
30	It needs to be easier for organizations to connect (#1/9) but the human services field necessitates interpersonal contact. This should not be discouraged between agencies by overloading technology. Also tutorials may be needed as many not profits don't seem to be trained computer operators (ie: emails)
31	Item 13 gets close to the main idea except it defaults to the IT CORP idea mentioned in previous IT reviews. This concept didn't succeed in its previous incarnation i.e. IT Youth for the Y2K problems. A Technical Help desk should be provided as a remote service, expert technical onsite and phone support to help the day-to-day problems that the non-profit sector faces routinely. The staff should understand the needs of the non-profit sector and work as "Circuit Riders" providing the right solutions for the specific non-profit and their budgets. A help desk service would improve efficiencies and productivity for the non-profits through a number of tangible ways including -backup protocols -technical planning -Disaster planning - Data recovery -Anti virus protection -Technical support for hardware problems. Since most non-profits fail to protect their data and don't budget for training and support properly they are ripe for major problems. Since computer users can be divided into two camps. " Those you lost data, and those who will.." It's natural to assume that non-profits require cost effective ' technical insurance'.
32	Just having access to the Internet can be expensive for small charitable organizations like ours. Anytime we can save on our operating budget, or save staff/volunteer time, we are willing to give it a try.
33	Kind of confusing and alot of information all at once. Needed more things (props) for presenting.
34	Legislation like the volunteer protection act available in U.S. to protect Canadian volunteers - executive directories from litigation.
35	Let's focus on sharing the information we already have, and look at easier and speedier ways to share that information. So many organizations don't have the time or the energy to use the existing technologies that are there. We need community based training and community based support to provide organizations with the power and capacity to "carpe technology." Another toll free number will just get lost in the shuffle.
36	Make universal software and updates available at reduced costs - organizations should be encouraged to obtain software that is able to share and communicate to others - we are sent messages or programs that we cannot open - the sender uses specialized programs - very frustrating.
37	Many voluntary organizations do not see the value of joining the information highway. We



	need access to good demonstration projects to use with education. Also a way to get out detailed success stories. Despite all the Industry Canada Programs over the last three years, a limited number of groups in our area have used the technology beyond the immediate agency response. At a time when our provincial government is talking cutting agencies from 600 to 100, we need to find a way to focus on community so the resources are not lost in environmental change. With a focus on building community capacity over individual capacity I believe is the challenge and what this might actually look like. For instance, creating a web ring to join on the individual web sites in a community together. We have typed into a Search Engine the keyword Vernon and we find Mt. Vernon Washington or Texas, so some way of developing a Canadian Search Engine would also be helpful.
38	More financial support is needed by a small voluntary organization such as ours; we are supported by the Department of Canadian Heritage under the Official Language Act and we are grateful for this. However, the support allows for only 2 part-time employees serving a volunteer Board of Directors. It is very difficult to carry out our provincial mandate with such limited resources.
39	Most not-for-profits organizations lack the necessary hardware to take advantage of technology. And of course, without the necessary hardware, training skills become a large part of the initial expenditure.
40	Network - keep us connected so we can help and educate each other. Somewhere (both net and papercopy). Where I can look up "which agency does this" "I want to do a presentation for agencies (certain type - search for that) to recruit more volunteers". Our agency wants to include more visible minorities, who are they? Contact person.
41	Our organization has an "Internet Depot", a room filled with computers and current software, but we lack the funds to hire somebody to coordinate programming. This is just one example of how an organization can be given the funds to have the equipment, but without the funds to hire the expertise needed to manage that equipment, it has become inactive. This lack of funds/funding opportunities to attract qualified people with expertise in IT is a real issue in many CBO's.
42	Our organization has used computers in every aspect of operations from the beginning (12 years). Management of databases, accounting, word processing, producing flyers / brochures / signs. We also operate a C.A.P. site providing free Internet access as well as basic computer instruction. We also use computers and specific educational software in our programs. We operate a computer-recycling program where we donate computers to families who could not otherwise afford them. Computer knowledge is essential in today's world. Children in homes without computers fall drastically behind children who do have computers at home. I might also add that we do not buy the latest and greatest. We operate all of our programs on used, donated equipment.
43	Perlys for non-profit organizations with maps with locations
44	Programming and fundraising for long-term growth, and customer member relation's management will be the biggest areas for technology to be applied in the next five years.
45	Programs should be realistic, details complete (Start to Finish, Eligibility, Available Funding) when applications are opened. NOT like Cap Youth Intern in 2001.
46	Re: Volunteers/Staff Question 11. In order to be competitive, staff should already come to a position in management, administration or development with the necessary computer skills, management and development skills. Inefficient to have to teach the basics. Hire skilled help from onset. Re: Question 14: Non-profit must enter the info. age to remain competitive efficient. Training in non-computerized machines (typewriters) is regressive. Also gives the



	wrong message to funders/community partners: agency image appears unprofessional.
47	Recognize that many organizations operate in vastly diverse contexts...regardless of how funding is spent, ensure to build an adequate amount of flexibility that allows organizations to set their own bar for needs, outcomes and requirements. May make the funders' jobs more challenging administratively, but would also serve the unique needs of communities much better if those communities are allowed to determine their own qualifications, needs, challenges, solutions and outcomes.
48	Removing the barriers for agencies and organizations to interlink and communicate with each other would provide a great advancement in the work of Voluntary Sector. In particular, clusters of agencies and organizations with mutual mandates i.e. homelessness identify inability to coordinate on-going networking capacity as a high priority in improving services to those experiencing homelessness.
49	Software to add volunteers' hours with the flexibility to flag hours that correlate to our individual recognition process.
50	Software/Internet Portal Software that allows for volunteer tracking and outcome measurement to be done across regions. Software that allows connectivity between organizations with one central database service i.e. Samaritan Software. it is very important to have analysis of technology/software etc for the voluntary sector that is impartial....training in the use of technology is key if it is to be used effectively. I represent the Voluntary Sector Organizations of our Community and therefore encompass service to all sub sectors and all populations
51	Summary: Assistance for recruiting board members and developing effective leadership Basic funding supports for grassroots organizations Assistance with developing business, strategic, marketing, and human resource plans, proposal writing etc. [one stop shopping]*There are free services to organizations that are overseas i.e.: paid by CIDA - we need an at home program also
52	Support for contracting systems technicians
53	Survey should recognize the fact that the only volunteers non-profit housing organizations have are board who do not offer voluntary services to the general public rather they would seek out voluntary services from others. As well, survey should recognise subsidized housing separate from social services.
54	Surveys should be sent earlier to organizations earlier so we can have time to discuss the questions.
55	Sustainable financing is absolute highest priority. The rest of the priorities must remain secondary.
56	Tech. is very important but the way is showed here seems to be more useful for bigger organizations. Small organizations or new ones need some thing simple and easy to learn and to have access to the sources.
57	Technology, computers, software, Internet access, etc...is crucial for agencies to assist them in effective fundraising and enhancing their organizational infrastructures. They also need resources and ongoing training and support to use these tools effectively.
58	The high cost of software is a major hurdle to non-profit voluntary programs, as it can become the largest part of the budget, which is not generally approved by government sponsors or funders.
59	The strength of the net is the ability to share common resources over wide geographic areas. The focus of this program should be on facilitating those inter-relationships, and providing resources for all organizations to access them. More and more I rely daily on the Internet for



	research and resources, and am surprised and disappointed when an organization has to web presence. Smaller organizations in particular need assistance in moving this from the realm of smoke and mirrors to reality.
60	The technology is important. It is also important the direct contact with people personal.
61	There are many initiatives throughout the voluntary sector in Canada that are addressing several of the above-mentioned points. Is it the intent of the VSI to work in conjunction with those initiatives to further enhance their programs (through the provision of funding) or to independently develop programs that correspond with the highest-ranking priorities?
62	There is so much information out there and most volunteer organizations have so little time, information must be easy to get and in a format that is read quickly. As much as possible, it must be targeted at the relevant member i.e. for those concerned about funding or about board development.
63	These all sound like great ideas!
64	These are important issues. We have already made a big investment in equipment, email, websites, etc. a) Guidelines for standardization would be good. b) Information about specific (e.g. accounting) software for the voluntary sector. c) We have a big need for phones and email communication for isolated areas of the world.
65	This information should have been presented to organizations prior to this conference or workshop. The participants were rushed through this survey
66	Too often technology is the last priority in this sector. While the rest of the world zooms along, many organizations are still depending completely on pen and paper. It should not have to be a choice whether you have a computer, email, etc...or whether you fill the mission of your organization, they should be one and the same.
67	VSI should pay attention to the minorities community to help them develop their communities so the materials support in terms to raise them up in this society. Thank you.
68	Though important for voluntary sector organizations to be able to communicate with regional or global peers, the greater need is often found at the community level. This is where any lack of devices, resources, connectivity or training most directly impact the sector's capacity, so we must be sure that our improvements in technology are relevant to and accessible by the smallest local service agency. If so, then the remainder will likely also be well served. Regarding the need for organizational web presence, we would recommend a look at and regional duplication of something similar to the system that presently serves 125 United Ways across Canada. It is a "template" system that allows each organization to update and expand its website information according to whatever in-house ability they might have. It also has a basic layout, with minimum bells and whistles, that soon becomes familiar to the browsing public.
69	We are a midsized organization. Our current greatest challenge is collecting and tabulating data and then producing meaningful reports for management, the board and funders. Funding to increase the knowledge of technology solutions is crucial. Most small and midsized organizations cannot afford tech support.
70	We are a registered charity though we have a government funded computer system.
71	We are a small organization just for the County of Prince Edward. Also we are just getting started on Intro-net, email so we are not very skilled in these areas and how it can be of help or what our needs will be. As for our volunteers, we generally recruit and train our own to suit our needs.
72	We are a small organization. We do not have a computer or a fax machine. We have no plans to acquire either of these items in the future.



73	We are a very small organization, which is reflected in the large number of priorities above. Our main interest is in raising funds.
74	We are small town and community based. This technology will play a part in the future, but not relevant in present.
75	We desperately need tech support due to limited funding. We are unable to keep up with the technological growth. Equipment and software is old and often second hand given through donations.
76	We have such a large population to serve (the brain injured in Nova Scotia) that public funding is vitally important. Studies done in 1999/2000 showed 2,200 adult Nova Scotians suffer a brain injury each year AND over 350 children per year. These numbers are cumulative; brain injury is a life-long disability. Nationally, the Ontario Brain Injury Association estimated in 1996, using census data from Statistics Canada, that the annual total number of Canadians was 45,589 - which are more Canadians than were killed in ALL of World War Two. Unfortunately brain injury, in this province as well as many others, is not considered separately and distinctly from other mental disabilities. In reality, brain injury is a cognitive disability - it is a physical injury to the brain, which manifests itself in cognitive deficits. As a result of mis-categorization in this province, brain injured survivors are classed as mentally ill or mentally handicapped. Neither of which are true. And neither do the medications and treatments for those two classifications work for brain injury. Our funding is therefore limited, as it is in many other provinces. And this "invisible epidemic" is ignored.
77	We need an internal network - computers, email, Internet access, for all staff. Sharing 3 computers with 25 staff is horribly inefficient. Need recognition that NGO's need to be "IT" literate and productive.
78	We need to lobby the tax authorities to allow donors at least the same write-off of taxes, for contributions to charities, as is now allowed to donors for contributions to political parties.
79	We would like to be financial support to create a club for "grandparents from Latin America with London" Because of the language barrier; we can access too much information available.
80	While the capacity and resources to upgrade both hard and software is critical for non-profits, it is also an important necessity for volunteers. The [organization name] has chosen to maintain older systems in order to ensure ongoing communications with Directors and volunteers who have old (at times, antiquated) systems and software. This has had a direct impact on the potential use of the member's only page on our web site.
81	Why was this not sent out in time for org. to study and return by fax as was originally intended.
82	Yes, everything is good, but most important is where, how, who to get this help.
83	Your classification of organizations is poor. What about service groups. community development groups,
84	We help youth to find a job or start a business. Technology is very important to our work. However, we do not receive enough money from government funders to support the technology that we need. This is a core expenditure. Money for core, operational expenses are difficult to get. All governments should recognize core and administrative expenses. Such as technology. Staff and clients rely upon technology. Furthermore, our population will increase our technology skills in the measure that it is readily available to the population.
85	Women equity is not a reality in Canada. Therefore women face more barriers that prevent them from using technologies; Physically challenged, aboriginal people, immigrants, lesbians, francophones, etc. Special/diversified initiatives organized by and for them must be planned



	otherwise women will be left out even more. Canada should be willing to be an example for other countries and revamp its image. Specialized groups should be created on issues listed above. Tools should also be given to use Internet.
86	Regarding question 2 : "A national website that would provide "one-stop shopping" of information for and about the voluntary sector... " You forgot to say BY the voluntary sector. Social ethics should be put in place about information dissemination (with respect to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Canada's international conventions) in order not to promote racism, sexism and homophobia.
87	Question 13. "Off-site centralized help" is a good idea but technical support is needed on site
88	Reduce the paper work of financing applications. Eliminate intermediaries. Avoid competing for profits. Improve networks.
89	Linux technology is free and more effective than Windows. Tools and training should be given to non-profits.
90	Using a free chat room for group meetings and/or online videoconferencing used to talk live. As an example, go to http://wm-mw.com/html/webmusic.html , click on "PaITalk" at the bottom right of the page and follow the instructions.
91	Not enough financing and more flexibility would be appreciated. It is important for non-profits to have enough financing to upgrade their technology. This survey does not reflect the needs of non-profits but rather those of the network. It is therefore difficult to address most of 17 issues since we do not even have adequate equipment to even start been concerned about them.
92	#1 More secured online ways to concert each other. #2 A translation tool from English to French of French to English. #3 An indexing tool specialized for the voluntary sector.
93	Help organizations, that already help non-profits acquire new technology equipment, further develop their activities.
94	VSI should help non-profits acquire tools to help them better fulfill their clientele's needs.
95	Having key people to give courses about some application softwares.
96	Help non-profits which have never had financing acquire working, processing and distribution tools. Non-profits should receive appropriate application softwares to help them produce their tax income declaration and financial reports (it is a priority).
97	Financing to purchase/upgrade their computers and application software. A real IT upgrade.
98	E-learning on the Internet. Help online. Connection on the Internet. Data bases access for training. Libraries on the Internet.
99	It is essential that IT groups are formed and financed in order to help non-profits which missions are not related with new technologies, better use them. Those non-profits loose too much time trying to understand, debug and upgrade their tools. Those IT groups could take care of those issues and also train volunteers and employees. Organizations would then have more time to concentrate on their mission. VOLNET organizations could be used as IT groups.
100	Questions 11-12-13 are difficult to answer since training, recruiting and technical are local.
	IT is no longer a burden and no longer obstacles to administer organizations. IT is essential information research tools that allow us to fulfill our objectives and to know about government resources.
101	Same as comment 100
102	Online forums where all questions are important and all answered.
103	Create a free and accessible database of foundations and donors existing in Canada.
104	Expand in some way to "VolNet" program. Help to transition houses in New Brunswick. They



	are funded only 80% of their operating budget and have to raise 20% in the small rural communities. This was a wonderful program.
105	Having in Canada an inexpensive and easy method to use online database of funders, etc..would be a plus for the country and put us in line with the technological world because we are behind.
106	In N.S., we have a large old (300+) year African Canadian. They are the largest minority group here and they have been subject to terrible, unrelentless racism. We deal with this in every piece of work we do, policies, programs, funding resources. Systemic racism often results in racism of omission. Studies, funding resources pertinent to this population of Canadians would be helpful. Hats off to a clear and accepted format for funding applications and good research on general funding topics. Most voluntary organizations are so poorly respected by \$, we are running to play catch up. We haven't time to do research extensively to support grants. Question #21 should have a choice of justice. Since there is no choice for justice, I have highlighted education but this would share equally with social services with youth at risk. Your choice! Question #23 – Large, long-term African Canadian Community (6833).
107	Is there a way to facilitate the donation of software licenses from governments or corporations when they upgrade to newer versions.
108	Keeping everyone apprised of good risk-management tips, techniques when working with volunteers.
109	Our agency offers over 86 computers for client use therefore many of our operational costs go towards maintenance and upgrades. Assistance with this would be appreciated. It is very important to consider ensuring that technology's accessible to persons with disabilities.
110	Please develop privacy policies in line with the Privacy Commission, especially in regards to databases, online direct mail, etc.
111	Please note that I know at least 2 non-profit organizations in this community that do not have internet/email. If this survey is only done on-line, their issues are never even raised, much less resolved.
112	Question #23 – Aboriginal Organization
113	Question #6 is especially relevant as such databases DO exist now but the cost to access them is too high for many smaller organizations.
114	Question #3 – There are databases, none of them maintained. This is tricky to do nationally. Who will maintain it? The Community Health National Atlantic has championed an Atlantic Directory and is collaborating with other organizations to do this. Question #7 – Won't happen. Government funders are not at a good place yet – evaluation, control, not outcome or results oriented. Question #8 – Don't know.....Not sure how this would work or what is meant? Question #12 – Again, hard to do at National level, maybe not?
115	Technology resources (equipment and support for clients is of particular importance. It is difficult to allow access to organizational systems due to confidentiality. Our youth clients are the best equipped to market and host a website/email address for other youth clients, but we are only able to allow them limited/restricted access to our existing systems
116	Thank you.....this was very user friendly and not too long
117	There is a need for more funds that should be given in the field and not through head offices. Funds are used by them but not reaching the small guys doing the work. We in sports need more funds in order to get Canada into the medals. We are a large country with an embarrassing record for medals.



118	There is a need for up to date technology in the non-profit volunteers segments in order to access funds in the most efficient ways possible. The formats/systems to access funds need to be shorter and simpler. Volunteers have a limited time to donate to writing grant proposals.
119	The questions raised in this survey will help identify existing gaps in resources available to the volunteer sector. Implementing a national strategy should be two-fold, firstly, focus on developing new strategies in under-served communities, and secondly the VSI should also consider supporting existing programs and services that are currently being delivered at the local level. We have developed the Community Resource Network of Greater Sudbury www.CRNET.ca. CRNET.ca aims to promote awareness of and provide support to the non-profit and volunteer sectors through the use of technology. CRNET.ca is an initiative of the Social Planning Council of Sudbury, through the generous support of FEDNOR and the Ministry of Citizenship's Volunteer @action.online program. We have identified the issues raised in this survey at our local level, and are working diligently to address these needs. We would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with a national strategy, to improve our program and provide assistance to under-served communities.
120	Very important to get technology training and discount rates and reliable good programs. Government donates computers to school, they should also consider donating to volunteer sections and non-profit organizations.
121	Web sites, databases and information sharing boards should not duplicate existing services such as Charity Village or the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy (although their database is expensive – perhaps subsidies for use?)
122	Accessibility online for persons with disabilities and Government websites to kindly stop playing “musical chairs” with URLs/online pages
123	A majority of the facilities suggested are already available from a relatively few sources. For instance, Charity Village has a wealth of information “for and about the voluntary sector”. The national organization of which we are a member “ www.catalist.org” has pertinent information and appropriate links on the website, as well as a list serve. A local information database “www.fourinfo.com” lists known agencies, events, volunteer opportunities, etc. IN OTHER WORDS, DO NOT DUPLICATE EXISTING SOURCES THUS CREATING EVEN FURTHER PROBLEMS. Too much information is as bad as too little!
124	All these initiatives are EXCELLENT! I attended one of the round table presentations and a lot of the concepts that we discussed are reflected here. Good work!
125	Concern about possible duplication with the efforts of several other national, provincial and local organizations. We are a relatively large organization for our market area and we prefer to deal with local suppliers. We are also currently members of four national organizations including Canadian center for Philanthropy (CCP), Canadian Association for Gift Planners, Association (CAGP) for healthcare Philanthropy and Association (AHP) of Fund Raising Professionals (AFP). Suggest that seed funding be created to create local and regional volunteer service networks.
126	Although I am appreciative of the work being done by this section of the VSI and also appreciate being asked my opinion. I think that you need to understand the context of my environment. Like many small volunteer centers, especially in BC, I am facing closure due to lack of funding. I received my layoff notice last week and when I read that \$10 million is to be spent on technology, I am jealous, angry and frustrated. WE MUST STABILIZE the volunteer center and entrench it as an important part of the volunteer sector. Not just so I can keep my job....I have other things I can do....but because it is the most efficient and cost effective



	mechanism for strengthening the sector as a whole. This questionnaire will most likely be answered by people who are paid to sit at their computers and think about the issue. The little people who run the many voluntary organizations at ground level are working at their paying jobs. We must have Volunteer Centers to keep track of the wider issues and trends and needs and changes such as Information Technology advances. I know you will only be able to focus on IT answers but please, please, please recognize the context you are working within. Thank you for all your hard work.
127	Core funding and capacity building are important things for the VSI to consider. So many groups are constantly giving support to other groups but many times we don't have the resources or the capacity to do so. Most funders will not fund organizational capacity building and many groups are weak in similar areas. Most funders will also not fund core activities yet they are essential to our programs.
128	Develop linkages to the open source/free software community. Software such as the Linux operating system are free multitudinous and quite capable. Support is community-based. There are LUGs (linux user groups) that are quite helpful. Linux is also much less demanding on hardware thus breathing life into older (cheaper) PC's. See http://www.becta.org.uk/technology/techseminars/250700/powyslea.pdf
129	Disabled access computers, information sharing, funding, printed work. The disabled community is ignored by many of the comments on this survey.
130	Emergency Program funding more available, especially in light of Sept. 11 th . Municipal resources will be severely stretched and due to reduced funding availability and programs, the citizens will be the ones losing out.
131	Funding for the volunteer coordinators and bringing the standard of their job role to par with a Human resources position. On-line training for management with credited courses, Information and guidelines for a new organization for starting up a volunteer base system.
132	I believe a key items is the need for STABLE and RELIABLE services for voluntary organizations. Although there are more than enough ISPs to choose from, it would be ideal if voluntary organizations did not have to go through the in-depth research to find the best and most cost effective provider, which can be very time-consuming. Often people in voluntary organizations do not have the expertise to make well-informed decisions, so it would be a great help if there was a reliable source of information or service to turn to.
133	I feel it is vitally important that voluntary agencies have access to computing and communications technologies which are up to date, can be upgraded regularly and are easy to use and easily and economically maintained. Far too many agencies, in my experience, struggle with a patchwork of obsolete technologies which are underpowered and difficult to use, prohibitively expensive to maintain and repair and do not provide easy access to Internet resources, including the ability to have a recognizable Internet presence.
134	If NVI develops a website, it would be ideal to have links to other AVAs. i.e.: PAVR-O, CAVR, etc. I feel it will be imperative for NVI to work with the local AVAs websites already existing in order to avoid duplication and perhaps NVI can serve as a central body.....an idea.
135	It is imperative that volunteer organizations have access to multi-year funding sources and stabilized reporting systems to avoid duplication of effort. More and more valuable time is required for writing grant applications and reporting, taking away from time providing the valuable services to participants and the community.
136	Much of Canada is geographically isolated; we need to look at technology to help us reduce the isolation. Unfortunately, much of Canada is also technologically isolated -- all too often IT solutions are derived in large urban areas but there are many areas in Canada where things



	<p>like DSL or cable aren't available or are far too cost prohibitive for small organizations. Simple online training can be done (our organization has done it) without involving complicated technology -- it works even with a slow modem! Similarly, any solutions or initiatives must take both small and large organizations into account. Again, it is commonplace to see solutions for large, national organizations that just aren't feasible for a small, local organization. It is difficult to find a one-size fits all solution, but please give consideration to the range of organizations that make up the voluntary sector. Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) has been providing online training in volunteer management for our members since 1998. We have published two "tips & tools" resources to help other organizations get involved in this type of training; they can be downloaded at http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/wired/cover.htm and http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/tiptool/cover.htm. CLO would welcome the opportunity to participate in further discussions on this subject.</p>
137	<p>Our organization relies extensively on technology because it does save us an enormous amount of time. Finding volunteers who are computer-savvy is a challenge though - but really, part of that problem is that we don't have our own office where we can supervise and train staff. This is an issue for small organizations who need volunteers.</p>
138	<p>Question 21 doesn't provide an answer for our organization. We are a volunteer emergency response organization, representing the 12 volunteer Ground Search and Rescue Teams in the province. I would expect that you will find quite a number of volunteer emergency response organizations in the country (Search and Rescue, volunteer fire departments, community volunteer medical responders, EMO volunteer, Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Systems volunteer) and there should be a category for us in the survey.</p>
139	<p>Some of the items I've listed as Top 3 or High Priority items could be easily and efficiently done by capitalizing on some of the investments already made across the country. For example, videoconferencing suites could be housed on the network of community colleges and community access centres (CAP sites) across the country and made available to the Voluntary Sector. Why? Technically, the colleges are or can be set up to support the infrastructure. Such an initiative would drive more and more community members to the college campus and access centres. Larger Web development companies are now developing or using intermediary software that help their clients to take a more proactive role in managing their Web content (without having to become HTML experts). By providing such a service, in a centralized way to voluntary organizations across the country, would collectively lead to financial savings, but also avoid unnecessary duplication and grief. Speaking of cost savings. Imagine what the Voluntary Sector is spending collectively on IT support issues across the country. Making IT assistance available across the country, would translate into significant savings for the sector - savings that could then be more appropriately used to pursue the mission of the organization.</p>
140	<p>The Internet has the potential for people to empower themselves, rather than being just another form of data collection and information sharing. We need to find ways for the voluntary sector to share, collaborate and work as networks. We also need to find ways for our members, to create online and contribute to the work of the organization. We need ways to ensure everyone has a voice online - in an inclusive and equal environment. This is an opportunity to think creatively about our work, examine it thoroughly, and rethink our approaches. Some funding for a pilot of revamping a few NGO's into "digital" organizations might produce interesting results.</p>
141	<p>The technology will only enhance the existing structures. As a result it will be necessary to determine how organizations are currently operating. With regard to providing e-mail and/or domain names for voluntary sector organizations there is potential for a lot of duplication and</p>



	waste. For example people may not want yet another email address for their voluntary sector participation. It might make sense to provide an umbrella under some structure like a Freenet (i.e. National Capital Freenet) where both organizations and individuals could share the service. With regard to administrative issues and organization with a limited need for technology could still use services provided through a Freenet using a Thin Client model. This could give organizations access without the need for a lot of technology on site and also ensure that the IT experts are available for maintaining and updating the software.
142	There should be a coordinated system of filtering upgraded government computers to the non-profit sector.
143	There was nothing in your survey about web access to software i.e., asp's (application service providers) I feel this is one of the best tools for organizations to access software, with no need for in house technical support, infrastructure, etc. We are going this route for our accounting, fundraising and other uses. It only requires a dumb terminal and an Internet connection to run the most sophisticated software - can be accessed equally from any location, i.e. home or office or while traveling. Also, check out this web site for up to date info about technology for non-profits: www.techsoup.org . It's great, and you can subscribe to a regular email newsletter that's full of great information
144	Too much information will be given by larger, more "techie" oriented organizations leading to an overlooking of smaller, less resourced organizations that have the same if not greater importance. Is this information gathering and sharing or advertising???
145	We are very lucky in that we have computers for the Volunteer program and a certain degree of support but I have worked in many other organizations where this is not the case. All volunteer programs should have their own computer to be able to work on and interact with others. I would be lost without my email and I don't know how others do it if they don't have an email address and/or their own computer. I would also like to see a database program that would be easy to use to keep track of volunteers, significant information about the volunteer (start date, significant events, birthdays/anniversary, issues/concerns, volunteer hours,etc.....). There may already be one out there but I need to know about it and then how to use it effectively.
146	Within the VSI, I speak for groups who are often made up of volunteers from immigrant backgrounds. They have very limited budgets and often use web-based email addresses in order to save on costs. I am most concerned about access to funds for buying and upgrading soft and hardware. I wonder if you have seen the study that says on-line learning adds to a woman's workday.
147	Would the VSI be willing to partner with Technological Corporations to provide the resources to agencies such as ours? If so how can this be accomplished and it what time frames is this goal possible?
148	The primary conclusion of an assessment conducted by Community Services Council Newfoundland and Labrador (CSC) of voluntary sector organizations in our province shows that there is a need for technical support in order for the sector to make better use of Internet connectivity and technology.
149	Access to computers and Internet is an impediment to many voluntary organizations effective use of technology. Industry Canada's VolNet Program, of which CSC is a delivery agent, has helped to alleviate much of the financial burden of purchasing computers and Internet connectivity for voluntary organizations. Over 500 voluntary organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador have received Internet connectivity through the VolNet Program. In addition, toll-free technical support, training, and reduced cost computer equipment, as offered through



	VolNet, has helped ensure that participating organizations are able to take full advantage of the Internet.
150	Question 13 was chosen as a Top 3 priority however, this relates only to the first sentence in this question. In our view, a toll-free technical support line is a top priority however a national "I.T. Youth Corps" is not necessarily the best way to implement this support
151	The Community Services Council is about to launch www.enVision.ca , a vortal and Virtual Resource Centre for the voluntary sector in Newfoundland and Labrador. The vortal contains numerous content areas, many of which are mentioned in this survey, including: news and updates, funding sources, a database of non-profit organizations, website creation and hosting software, volunteer recruitment, training opportunities, toll-free support, and much more.
152	Consultations conducted by the CSC in 1999 highlight the importance of training, access to timely information, research, e-mail communication and provision of databases as key applications in developing Internet content areas.
153	It is imperative that rural and remote organizations are included in any national initiative surrounding technology and its possible uses. Older equipment and poor infrastructure often impedes voluntary sector organizations from taking full advantage of technology. Thus, videoconferencing, and web based meeting tools may be restrictive for some organizations. Without high speed Internet access, full use of newer technologies is hindered. Implementation of the National Broadband Task Force Report "The New National Dream: Networking the Nation for Broadband Access" will be a good first step to ensuring that voluntary organizations can access new Internet technologies such as videoconferencing, that require high capacity bandwidth.
154	Sector inclusiveness is important when developing and implementing technology solutions for voluntary sector organizations. National databases, training, and technology initiatives should be available to a wide-range of sector groups including smaller, less formal organizations. A national website or other initiative that limits participation to large, formal organizations will hinder smaller groups from reaping the benefits. These smaller organizations are often the most in-need.
155	Localized and/or individualized training is also important for voluntary sector organizations and their use of technology. Training, if delivered on-line needs to be timely and relevant to the sector's needs. Assessment of on-line training needs should focus on a wide-range of organizations and be sensitive to the needs of rural and remote organizations. Small, rural, and remote organizations will be the key recipients of any on-line training since many do not have access to training offered in urban centres around the country.
156	Question #3 – There are numerous databases already out there, but none are all inclusive or well maintained. The Community Health Network Atlantic has championed and Atlantic Directory is collaborating with other organizations on this.
157	Question #4 - There was a lot of talk about this and most was positive. The Provincial Caring Partnerships Committee has a provincial website and will link to the small local groups. The local groups are finding it hard to build web sites but in some cases use summer students to do this. Once up, and the student is gone, the website is not maintained. Several of the people mentioned having websites http://www.geocities.com/canada/nb/organizations/or with URLs of this type.
158	Questions 6-8: People were skeptical of anything in here. They don't believe the government will reduce administration and paperwork requirements. All agreed it was needed though.



159	Question #11 and 13: This section was found to be confusing. Question 11 deals with training both online and distance. Question 13 deals with the youth corps who would go help them learn how to use their computers in a one on one or classroom (CAP site?) fashion. There is an overlap between these two questions. Question 13 also deals with toll-free technical support. Perhaps these could be broken into 3 questions: 1) one-on-one or classroom training in computers....2) Online/distance professional development or management education 3) Toll-free technical support or help line.
160	Question 17: Got a lot of discussion. Comments were all leaning towards computers being viewed as office supplies, like photocopies or pencils. There are many problems in small organizations in getting enough computers for staff. When they do get funding for staff, they don't have computers for them.
161	That Volunteer Canada help with funding for Volunteer Bureau start-up
162	In terms of the recruitment issue, I believe that the biggest gap has always been at the board of directors level, resulting in boards formed of friends of insiders rather than representing a governance structure in the best possible way.
163	Would depend on "strings attached" Chat rooms for volunteers to connect. Confidentiality would be an issue. Development of databases that could reflect outcomes and evidence based decisions. Opportunities for volunteers to provide input into needs and development of technology.
164	#23 We serve the entire community of the city of London without focusing on any one population.
165	A centralized warehouse where surplus computers from the public/private sector could be overhauled/upgraded and redistributed to the volunteer sector. #4 – We already have. #5 We already have. #10 – We already have. #13 – We seem to be doing okay in that area. #14 – Like What? Computers are pretty simple for most tastes.
166	A key area of need would be to ensure that there is accurate and up to date contact information and address, phone numbers, emails of agencies, government departments and corporate partners.
167	As many of our volunteers are senior citizens providing equipment and training at local seniors centers would assist many non-profit organizations. This would have to include a technical support back-up program/personnel which could be junior/senior high school, cub, scout youth.
168	Government and Industry are currently upgrading their computers from Pentium 2's to 3's or even 4's. In my opinion, the surplus computers are more than adequate to meet the needs of most voluntary organizations.
169	I think it is critical that the voluntary sector have more access to long term stable funding and funding that will sustain care operations. Any technology programs developed need to include means to ensure that organizations can commit the staff time to learn to use and then to incorporate into their day-to-day operations.
170	Initiatives for ASP or applications development
171	More flexibility from funders to allow organizations "overhead costs" to hire paid staff for volunteer programs in order to support volunteerism in each agency/organization. #6 – CCP already provides that information. #12 – VOE, Charity Village and Board match already provide this – why invent the wheel? #14 – Do you mean going back to typewriters?
172	Our organization is about to embark on a project to create a website for volunteer training and more importantly as a site that is accessible by password to give volunteers instant access to documents necessary to implement a community fundraising program.



173	Search engine that focuses on voluntary sector. Free or inexpensive hosting of website (ours is currently donated but feel vulnerable in a weak economy).
174	Thanks for the opportunity to provide input!
175	There must be funding for tech support for small agencies. The new system of social services has put a strain. Small but efficient organizations in time spent at community meetings etc. The larger agencies have more fundraising capability and are well equipped. They also have much stronger lobbyists for fundraising with political sectors hence more funding.
176	A way must be found to equip the smaller agencies to compete or we will find the choices greatly reduced for the public and those in need of specialized services. Parents must be able to research the services and educate themselves as to the strength of various agencies.
177	This program is long overdue