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Bob Ottenhoff's Blog

Bob Ottenhoff's column has moved to the blogosphere. You'll find Bob's blog at http://ceo.guidestar.org. Check back often to see Bob's latest insights on issues and events affecting the nonprofit sector. [Go to Bob's blog >](#)

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New Year's Resolutions for Board Members

It's that time again—for turning over a new leaf, for reexamining our work and lives, for refocusing on what we really want, and for refreshing our commitment to good works. Here are some great New Year's resolutions for nonprofit board members. If you do these, you'll set an example and be a "spark plug" for your organization—and you'll also help make the world a better place through your favorite nonprofit. ... [read more >](#)

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A Good Brand Requires TLC: A True Story

My family has been going to the same dental practice for years. Although one of the most expensive in town, this is a group of professionals who pride themselves on acquiring and knowing how to employ the latest in dental technology (most of which seems focused on pain reduction, which I think is the reason my wife likes it so much). ... [read more >](#)

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Place Your Bets: How to Get and Preserve Government Funding in Tough Economic Times

Oh, yes, times are tough for all sources of funding, and they'll stay that way for a while because of the lag effect (see below). That you knew. What you may not know is that getting money from the government, whether at the local, state, or federal level, is a lot like gambling, and more like gambling than getting money from your donors, foundations, members, and users of your nonprofit's services. But there are things you can do to increase your odds. ... [read more >](#)

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The Timing of Your Mailings

With all the media we're exposed to—print and electronic—does it matter terribly when you mail to donors? Not really. In watching the mail for more than two decades, I haven't found a time when it makes sense not to mail. ... [read more >](#)

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Top-Rated Charities by City and Cause

Last month, GuideStar's partner GreatNonprofits published the first-ever "top charities" lists based on user ratings and reviews. (Most charity review systems rely on financial measurements to evaluate nonprofits.) The lists identify the highest-rated charities in 13 cities and 7 subject areas. ... [read more >](#)

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OMB Is Asking for Your Input

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has established Partner4Solutions.gov to gather solutions and best practices to improve service delivery, payment accuracy, and administrative efficiency and reduce access barriers in federally funded assistance programs. ... [read more >](#)

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IRS Updates, January 2010: Return Due Dates, Governance Check Sheet, and Spring Workshops

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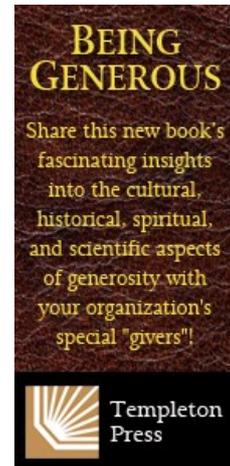
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[This Month's Webinars](#)



The IRS has published tables of the due dates for Form 990 and other returns nonprofits must file, released the governance check sheet that agents will use in exempt organization examinations, and announced the schedule for its spring workshops for 501 (c)(3) organizations. ... [read more >](#)

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This Month's Webinars

- Jan. 13—GuideStar Exchange: How to Give Donors and Funders the Information They Need and Want. [Register now >](#)
- Jan. 20—Stay Ahead of the Eight Ball in 2010: Tips from the Experts. [Register now >](#)
- Jan. 27—GuideStar Professional Solutions: Your Nonprofit Analytical Tool Kit. [Register now >](#)

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Yahoo-Powered Search Engine Funds Nonprofits

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- The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has earned \$13,000!

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