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January 20, 2011

### It's the Donor's Ballgame

A little old man shuffles up to the ticket office at the University of Michigan and asks whether he might buy a ticket for the big game with Ohio State the next day. "Something near the 50 yard line would be nice," he says.

The ticket seller guffaws. "There hasn't been a ticket available for that game for weeks ... anywhere in the stadium."

"Okay," the little man says and walks away.

About an hour later, the athletic director and the football coach are summoned to an emergency meeting. The president is apoplectic. "An alum just walked into my office a few minutes ago and is talking about giving the University a hundred million dollars. In our conversation, he mentioned that he couldn't get a ticket to the Ohio State game tomorrow. I don't care if you have to bounce the president of the United States or the Pope, give him anything he wants." ... [Read more](#)

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### How to Develop a Brand for Your Nonprofit

So you're starting a nonprofit organization or have one and want to know how to build or strengthen your brand. Well, what is a brand? Is it advertising, your spokesperson, a logo? We have heard of the Red Cross, Oprah, McDonald's. These are all brands. And while there may be positive or negative perceptions about each of these, you'll notice their missions are easy to define—providing disaster relief when needed, inspiring people to live better lives, and providing a cheap, convenient meal. They are all based on making a clear promise to their audience. Essentially, your brand is the reputation you have for delivering on your promise.

What does this mean for a nonprofit? A strong brand will help the organization stand out from the masses of solicitations, distinguish its cause from other organizations doing similar work, and inspire others to support them. The best brands elicit positive emotional responses because people understand and identify with each one's mission and know that the organization is consistently true to it. When carefully developed and nurtured, the brand becomes the fabric of an organization's culture. ... [Read more](#)

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### IRS Updates, January 2011: New Form 990-N Threshold, Free Health Care Tax Credit Webinar, and More

The IRS reminds smaller nonprofits that a higher filing threshold has gone into effect for Form 990-N; invites smaller businesses, including nonprofits, to attend a free webinar on the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit; has published new fees for exempt organizations for 2011; and has released instructions and withholding tables related to the payroll tax cut.

**New Form 990-N Filing Threshold.** The filing threshold for Form 990-N, also known as the ePostcard, has been raised for returns covering the 2010 tax year that are filed in 2011. Most exempt organizations with gross annual receipts of \$50,000 or less may now file Form 990-N instead of Form 990-EZ or 990. Private foundations, however, must continue file Form 990-PF, regardless of organization size. ... [Read more](#)

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