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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
WEBSITE DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT & HOSTING
DECEMBER 21, 2009 [UPDATED 01.04.10, ADDING EIN]**

Contents

- [1] Cover Page
- [2] Summary
- [2] Proposal Guidelines and Requirements
- [2] Contract Terms
- [2] Purpose
- [3-4] Description
- [4] Objective
- [4] Vision
- [4-5] Site Requirements
- [5] Timeline
- [5] Budget
- [5-6] Background of Organization
- [7] Audience
- [7] Discovery
- [7] Design
- [7-8] Development Guidelines
- [8] Site Specifications
- [8] Testing
- [8] Delivery
- [9] Tracking
- [9] Available Technology Resources
- [9-10] Qualifications
- [10] Evaluation Criteria
- [10-11] Format for Proposals
- [12] Attachment A
- [13] Attachment B



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SUMMARY

The Activist Nation is accepting proposals to design, develop and host the organization's interactive website. This will be a three-phase, concept to completion production. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and to provide the candidates with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

The Activist Nation is a recently formed non-profit organization (EIN: 61-1608364) based in Columbus, Ohio. The founders of the organization are Collin and Cristina, both of Columbus, Ohio.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

This is an open and competitive process.

Proposals received after 12:00pm ("noon") EST, Friday, January 29, 2010, will not be considered and will be returned unopened.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

If you wish to submit alternate, yet similar, solutions, please do so.

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of sub-contractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined in your proposal. Please provide the name, address and EIN of the sub-contractor. The Activist Nation will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of sub-contractors; however we retain the right to refuse the sub-contractors you have selected.

CONTRACT TERMS

The Activist Nation will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by The Activist Nation's legal counsel; and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

PURPOSE

The Activist Nation currently has a very limited web presence (<http://theactivistnation.org>, a Fan Page on Facebook and a Twitter account). However, an opportunity exists to complete a three-phase full build, including development/implementation, pre-launch campaign and continued maintenance / support. The site you develop will provide our organization the backbone to fulfill its mission of crowd sourcing global solutions to local issues. Upon completion of each phase, The Activist Nation will assume limited responsibility for website content creation and administration; however all content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of The Activist Nation.



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DESCRIPTION

Phase I (Design, database, Interactivity and mobile)

This phase is focused on the establishment of back-end usability tools, reliability, speed, mobility, search and interactivity optimization.

(See Attachment A for an image of our initial idea)

Must include the following:

1. Design a database-driven, professional-looking, user-friendly site with intuitive navigation, following established branding
2. Develop a member aggregation interface. The goal is to generate membership on-site and enable content sharing to Facebook, digg, etc. Membership should be organized, presented and given the ability to interact in a similar style to Facebook.
3. Develop a web-based administration tool that allows key management and field personnel to easily update content without accessing source code. This tool must also partner with the membership content upload capabilities. Media upload capabilities must include:
 - a. Text (with # and @ tagging, blog, comment, etc, from mobile devices and computers)
 - b. Photo (with geotagging, from mobile devices and computers)
 - c. Video – static and streaming (with geotagging, from mobile devices and computers)
 - d. Document (.pdf)
4. Develop a member interactivity interface. Must include:
 - a. On-site interactivity with membership- and management-provided content
 - b. Community forums & comment capabilities
 - c. Member profiles: photos, video, personal information and privacy settings
5. Develop a mobile version, including SMS interaction and iPhone/Android applications.
6. Install PHP software on the organization's computers and create an FTP server to transfer data to the website (as necessary)

Phase II (Pre-Launch and Launch)

This phase is focused on brand recognition, membership-building and the global launch of The Activist Nation.

Must include the following:

1. Develop a pre-launch online promotional campaign that does the following:
 - a. Introduces The Nation to the world in a BIG way
 - b. Includes interactivity with The Nation's founders as they travel to universities across the globe to:
 - i. Engage with students through volunteer experiences
 - ii. Provide first-hand exposure of The Nation to our target audience
 - iii. Build momentum for a global launch
 - iv. Execute pre-launch membership contests, etc.
 - v. drives membership and builds brand awareness
2. Include a more robust Facebook Fan Page and suggest creative methods for continuing to engage / inspire the membership
 - a. Include other social networking, professional networking, traditional and non-traditional advertising opportunities
3. Execute a global launch of The Activist Nation in a creative, fun, genuine and engaging way

Phase III (On-Going Promotion and Maintenance)

This phase is focused on continued membership / recognition growth and maintenance.

Must include the following:

1. Continued promotion of TheActivistNation.org (search engine maintenance, marketing support, etc)
2. Continued membership contests and events



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3. Continued membership acquisition and engagement
4. Continued recognition growth of The Activist Nation's brand & work
5. Continued site maintenance, including 24-hour emergency support

The Activist Nation will maintain ultimate editorial control of content without significantly delaying the publishing of new information on the site. The Activist Nation will effectively manage web publishing processes, preferably by using a system with a browser-based user interface.

The look and feel of the website should be on par with the already-established brand standards (**See Attachment B**). Information should be presented as well-grouped, easily-discovered, easily-commented on and easily followed. A clean, yet edgy, interface is necessary. Members and prospective members must be able to discover The Activist Nation's mission and current content within the first 10 seconds and without prior interaction or training. When designing the site, think edgy, college-aged activism. Engagement first, information second, passion forever. For a brief overview of our model, visit

http://theactivistnation.org/?page_id=4

To be effective, TheActivistNation.org must be:

- ON-BRAND
- A brand new user experience
- Visually edgy, yet clean
- Easy to navigate / search
- Easy to log into (but not required to participate)
- Easy to interact with
- Quick to load and navigate
- Easy and intuitive to administer and update
- Ready to expand to meet new challenges without disrupting the user experience
- Safe and secure

OBJECTIVE

TheActivistNation.org is the central hub for The Activist Nation. Our objective is to build an online volunteer-based, activism-focused "third place" (apartment, school, theactivistnation.org) that is one-of-a-kind, engaging, interactive, member-driven, community-minded and constantly progressive.

VISION

The Activist Nation will provide the most comprehensive and sustainable issue resolution and solution implementation in the world. We will quickly build brand equity and develop a strong, diverse and global membership of young activists ("The Nation"). The Nation will solve issues all over the planet in an effort to move challenged societies forward in a positive direction by implementing socially-appropriate, sustainable solutions.

SITE REQUIREMENTS

Make it easy.

Design the site to be secure and reliable, with intuitive navigation, and a solid foundation on which to build our information creation, upload and exchange. All information should initially be presented in English, with the capability to support 10+ languages in the future.



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Make it compelling.

Develop a site that reflects The Activist Nation's mission to utilize global crowd sourcing in order to solve local issues. The site must be interesting and unique. This is a completely new online experience that the members must be proud of participating in. The use of new and emerging mobile technology will provide instant engagement and allow for direct and targeted campaigns.

Make it happen.

Have each phase tested and live as soon as reasonably possible.

TIMELINE

- This RFP is dated December 21, 2009. Proposers may also request a copy be sent via email by contacting Collin Burton at collin@theactivistnation.org.
- Proposals are due no later than 12:00pm ("noon") EST, Friday, January 29, 2010.
- Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time we may require interviews via Skype conference (or in person if your shop is in Columbus) on or about Wednesday, February 10, 2010. You will be notified if this is requested.
- The name of the candidate firm who has been selected will be decided on or about Friday, February 26, 2010.
- All other candidates will be notified on or about Monday, March 1, 2010.
- Engagement work complete and website live – deliverable date to be determined during Phase I.

BUDGET

Please provide several cost proposals to accomplish the scope outlined above. The budget must encompass all fees necessary for software licenses, development, testing, establishment and maintenance of the website.

Hosting has been provided for 2 years via godaddy.com. Any costs for future hosting are not included in the budget for this project, and should be addressed separately. If your proposal requires migration of the activistnation.org from godaddy's hosting, please submit this estimate in line with the full cost proposal.

BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Founded in August of 2009, The Activist Nation is a solution-driven organization designed to utilize online global crowd sourcing and the aggregation of individuals' life experiences and education in an effort to help communities solve local issues. The Nation is committed to providing globally-minded individuals the opportunity to make a difference in the world. We do this through the use of online collaboration that leads to real world implementation. This online-to-offline practice is what separates The Activist Nation from all other online global issue resolution organizations. The current online volunteer opportunity providers do not consistently provide offline implementation opportunities for individuals. More specifically, these organizations do not allow volunteers to implement their ideas (rather than those of the organization), but The Activist Nation does.

Here's a brief overview of how our model works:

1. **Members of The Activist Nation identify issues in a community.** Let's say someone's volunteering with a Habitat for Humanity-style organization in Africa and they notice the children in the village are in need of proper sporting equipment.
2. **Members upload the issue to theactivistnation.org.** They provide photos, video and blog about the conditions surrounding their project. In this case, the village cannot afford the equipment because they are spending money on other necessities.



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3. **Other members have the ability to participate in the solution creation and implementation of each issue by engaging online.** Three members from three different countries want to help in three different ways. One member wants to donate money to help fund the solution. A second member suggests an NPO in Africa that would serve as an excellent partner for the project. The third member “raises his hand” to let the individual who identified the issue know that she would like to help with the actual implementation of the solution.
4. **Together, members develop a culturally-sensitive, sustainable solution.** Inexpensive sporting equipment is sourced from a local shop and provided to the children of the village.
5. **After implementation, the issue remains available online as a “success story”.** Future members will see the sporting equipment solution and utilize it as a model on which to build a new solution to a new issue. This also serves as a database that spotlights the successes of The Activist Nation.

On top of this simple model of identify, collaborate/solve and implement, Cris and Collin will be identifying larger issues that become “spotlight” issues. These spotlight issues require more attention and will involve Cris and Collin traveling to the location of the issue and working side-by-side with the issue identifier to ensure proper implementation. The website must highlight these issues as they are identified and provide ample real estate for tracking their progress.

Once The Activist Nation is well-established (~12 months after launch), we will introduce The Nation’s work to High Schools and Universities across the world with our “Education Nation” program. This educational opportunity allows students and institutions to build entire courses, local groups, a lecture series, etc. using our work as their foundation. Showing students that their educations are best served with a mixture of classroom theory and real world (global) experience is paramount to the continued success of the young, socially-minded movement that will be created with the launch of The Activist Nation.

The corporate and volunteer experience of the founders ensures the success of The Activist Nation as the organization will be attempting something that is new and unique. Combined, the founding members have 12 years’ experience in corporate America and over 20 years’ experience volunteering and organizing/participating in community-based initiatives.

The Activist Nation’s “products” should be presented in five different (yet overlapping) buckets:

1. Issue Identification and solution development
2. Solution implementation
3. Post-implementation follow-up
4. Local and global volunteer opportunities
5. Intuitive front page discussion board and local / Nation News
6. The Education Nation program (using the work of The Nation as “real-time curriculum” in High Schools and Universities)

In all cases, the website is immediately integral to the success and proliferation of The Activist Nation. For this reason, it is important that users are addressed in a transparent, easily digestible, exciting manner appropriate to their age group, life experiences and the value of their time / length of their attention span.

AUDIENCE

In communicating the non-profit, edgy, volunteerism-based and activist-minded image of The Activist Nation, the paramount theme should be that The Activist Nation is the global solution leader among young adults. This target must be comfortable with and inspired by the work The Nation is completing. We rely 90% on credibility among this age group and thus require our site, the “home” of The Activist Nation, to become their hang out spot. It should be somewhere they can provide their ideas, discuss issues, gain inspiration to participate in their own communities, find alternatives to traditional volunteerism (aka Habitat for Humanity, soup kitchens, etc) and ultimately discover new cultures through in-person implementation of their ideas.



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The students we are targeting attend Universities all over the world and must be reached as a mass audience, but with a personal voice. Thus, the secondary audience will be the Universities themselves. Early engagement with these institutions establishes legitimacy of The Nation and builds the foundation for a successful launch of Education Nation during year two of the organization's existence.

Another secondary audience key to the mission of The Nation is the global network of current volunteers / other NPOs. These individuals and organizations understand the value of volunteerism and have likely already thought, "How can I do more? How can I participate on a global level?" The Nation counts on these individuals to provide their insights and lend their expertise as newly-engaged volunteers work to develop solutions to issues.

Finally, young community-focused post-grads will round out the majority of The Nation's members. These individuals are generally artistic, laid-back and difficult to engage in anything that doesn't immediately catch their attention as being unrelated to pop culture. Think Hipsters.

DISCOVERY

Confirm audience, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, search optimization, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief.

DESIGN

Website information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, issue upload and interaction, home page and navigation templates for each of the navigation categories.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The website designed by the successful candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Create a content management system that will permit all members and administrators to instantly update website content
- Edgy, Yet Simple – The interface must be simple and appealing to our target audience(s). Issues, member interactivity ("Facebook wall"), volunteer opportunities, etc, must always be available and easy to locate.
- Easily updated – Once the site has been completed and accepted by The Activist Nation, the site will be maintained in majority by the successful candidate and partially by The Activist Nation staff, using commonly available software tools.
- Visually Appealing – The site must have an attractive mix of text and graphics, conforming to the desired look and feel, and in line with the expectations of our target audience.
- Common Theme and Design – As stated above, each section of the site should have a common look and feel that is in line with the already-establish brand standards. The use of photographs, fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the site.
- Mobile – The site must convert to commonly-supported mobile web browsers quickly and fully without losing the look and feel of the full version. All navigation and content must be readily available. An iPhone / Android application should be developed to ensure continued mobile engagement.
- Easy to Navigate – The site should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require only one level of visibility (no drill down) for a user to find the desired information. All drill down should be used only to deepen interactivity.



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- Development of flash-based web pages to accommodate the proposed navigation scheme.
- Development should include elements to support search optimization (key words or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site).
- Installation and setup of a MYSQL database (as necessary).
- Support for current email server for use by The Activist Nation staff (Initial number of users will be four).
- Provide necessary software and licenses to maintain site internally or externally, as decided by The Activist Nation.
- Development of member account / login feature. Users should be able to securely create an account / password, as well as a means of retrieving a forgotten login or password.
- Project Management – An assigned project manager must be made available to present information and coordinate with The Activist Nation's leadership, including a reasonable number of meetings to present design and development solutions.
- Once the website has been completed and accepted by The Activist Nation, the website design and all of its contents, software licenses and architecture will become property of The Activist Nation.

SITE SPECIFICATIONS:

The Activist Nation encourages creativity in the proposals submitted; however there are certain requirements for the website project. Your proposal must account for all of these requirements:

- Site must be compatible with commonly used versions of Internet Explorer, Firefox, Google Chrome, Safari and other common browsers. The website must not require plug-ins (beyond commonly-accepted applications such as flash player) as a default.
- The website must meet ADA requirements – The site should be developed to meet all federally-mandated access requirements adopted by the Federal Access Board under Section 508 Subsection 1194.22 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- The website must be build in accordance to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, provided by the W3C, and should also be easily accessible to the novice as well as the experienced internet user.
- Fast Loading Pages – The website must be designed with a supporting architecture such that each page loads instantaneously on a fast connection.

TESTING

Testing of the site on all applicable platforms is required to ensure website works as promised. Explain testing plan through development process.

DELIVERY

Delivery and uploading of site to client for internal hosting, to an outside third party, or hosting by consultant (to be determined).



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TRACKING

Must implement tracking software to produce user defined site log reports. The Activist Nation's Administrators require an all-inclusive metrics tool to help us better understand and measure web visitor behavior to improve website performance and availability. (This information may be offered through hosting service).

- Web traffic analysis (must include country of entry)
- Path analysis
- Visitor trends
- Page views
- Entry pages
- Top pages
- Exit pages
- Page – length of stay
- Technical analysis: browsers and platforms
- Issue type and timeline analysis (for donor reporting purposes)
- Mobile usage (browser and iPhone / Android application)

AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

The Activist Nation will provide logos and some photos. Copy can be provided upon request.

Launching the site is the man priority of The Activist Nation. The two founding members will be directly involved in the development of the site, and will contribute as needed to the content, stylistic direction and functionality of the site as it takes shape.

QUALIFICATIONS

- List the five websites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL must be submitted.
- Describe your experience in producing sites for community-oriented and/or grassroots clients.
- Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.
- Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to produce our website (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc)
- How many full-time staff members does your firm employ? Please include a copy of your firm's organizational chart.
- Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- Briefly describe the percentage of your web staff that will be working on this project relative to your entire staff (using full time equivalents). For example, if you would use five staff on the project and you have ten web designers and developers, the percentage would be 50%.
- What type of team will be assigned to this project? What will each person's role be? Please include a brief professional background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project (at minimum, include each individual's capabilities & number of years of experience).
- Briefly describe your firm's project management process.
- Explain your business model.
- Discuss any planned IPOs, mergers or acquisitions.
- Discuss any hardware / software vendor partnerships.
- Discuss your testing and support plan.



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- Explain your service level agreement (SLA) structure.
- Provide a time frame for completion. The time frame for completion of the project will be evaluated.
- In addition, time frames will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested.
- Terms and conditions.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will form the basis upon which The Activist Nation will evaluate proposals. The mandatory criteria must be met and includes:

Three (3) copies of your proposal must be received no later than 12:00pm (“noon”) EST, Friday, January 29, 2010. Your proposal must include a cost proposal as described above. All costs associated with the delivery of the project should be presented in a flat rate, fee for service format.

Deliver proposals to the attention of:

Collin Burton
The Activist Nation
PO Box 15171
Columbus, OH 43215

...or they may also be emailed to: partners@theactivistnation.org

Proposals that meet the mandatory requirements, as stated above, will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Suitability of the proposal – The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- Aesthetic Capabilities – Prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user-friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers in message-appropriate tones.
- Candidate Experience – The candidate firm has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Value / Pricing Structure and Price levels – The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer.
- Depth and Breadth of Staff – The candidate firm has appropriate staff to develop the site in the time frame needed.
- Proposal Presentation – The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLAs).

FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Length and Font Size:

Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications and budget should not exceed 35 pages (not including Hosting Attachment information).



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Title Page:

The Activist Nation, Website Development Proposal, your company name, address, website address, telephone number, fax number, email address and primary contact person.

Cover Letter:

Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company (1-2 pages).

Proposal:

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. You should also touch on your ability to deliver the project in the timeframe noted above (3-10 pages).

Qualifications:

Provide the information requested in the Qualifications section (10-20 pages).

Budget and Fees:

List budgets as requested above. Identify staff you anticipate working on the project and their hourly rates for work that may be needed to complete the project on time.

Attachments:

Hosting options/information:

Do you provide hosting? If so, please provide answers to the following questions:

1. How often do you backup?
2. How often do you have down time?
3. How often do you upgrade software / hardware?
4. Please describe your technical support.
5. Please describe your security.
6. Do you have a high-speed, direct connection to the internet?
7. Please describe your methodology and service level agreements.
8. Pricing, terms and conditions.

If you do not provide hosting, please suggest a vendor / partner to provide this service and provide answers to the above questions.

Thank you for your time and good luck!

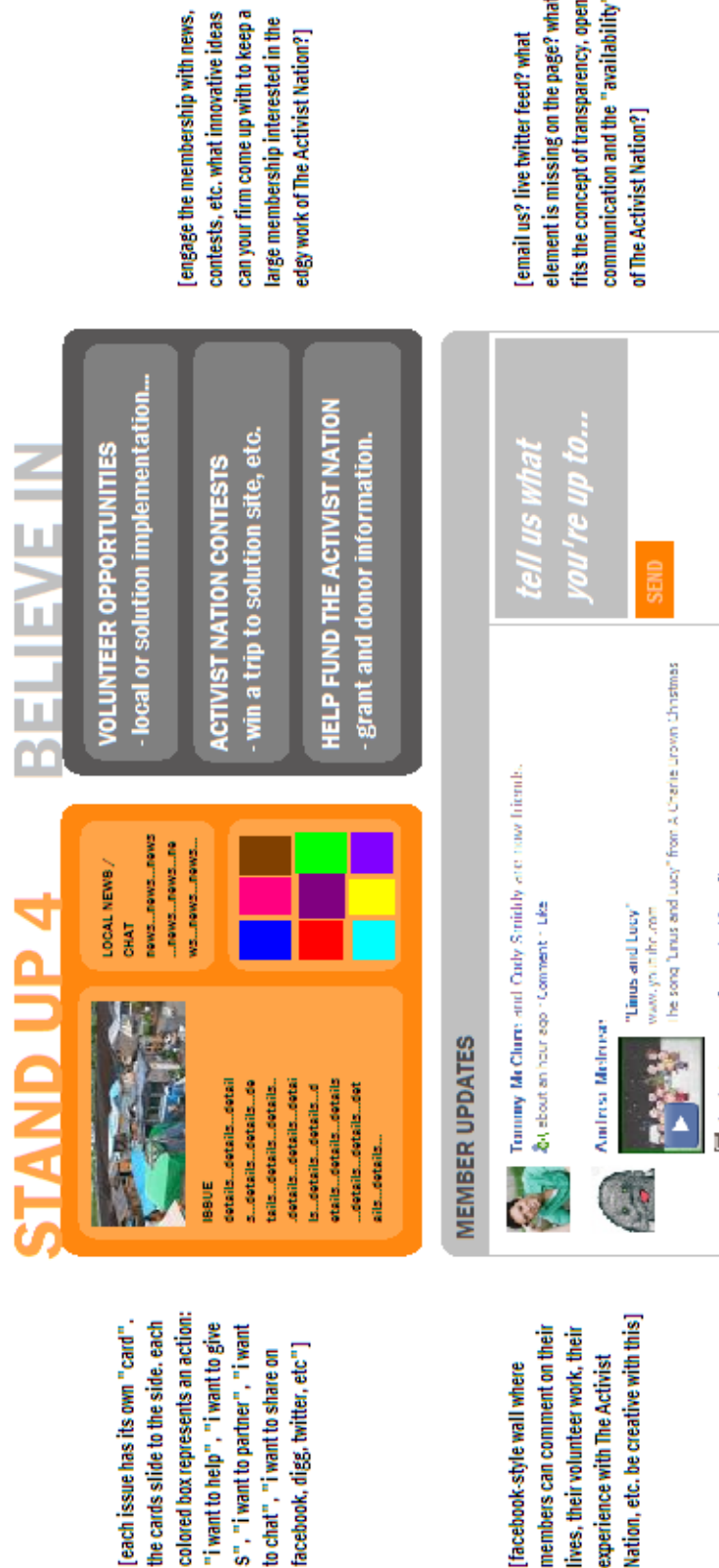
Collin Burton (Chief Ambassador to The Activist Nation // collin@theactivistnation.org)

Cristina Beasley (Lead Ambassador to The Activist Nation // cris@theactivistnation.org)



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ATTACHMENT A – INITIAL SITE CONCEPT





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ATTACHMENT B – BRAND STANDARDS

Business Cards (Back)



Business Cards (Front)



Letter Head

