Charity Digital: The Future of Marketing

The Changing Landscape of Social Media

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CHARITY MEETUP



What I Do:

- Digital Strategy
- Storytelling & Curation
- Community Building

Session Overview

Shift to Entertainment

The social media landscape is shifting from traditional networking to AI-driven entertainment. Charities must adapt to stay visible and relevant.

Real Impact = Organic Reach

We explore how non-profits can reach new audiences organically, bypassing big budgets through authentic content and smart platform strategies.

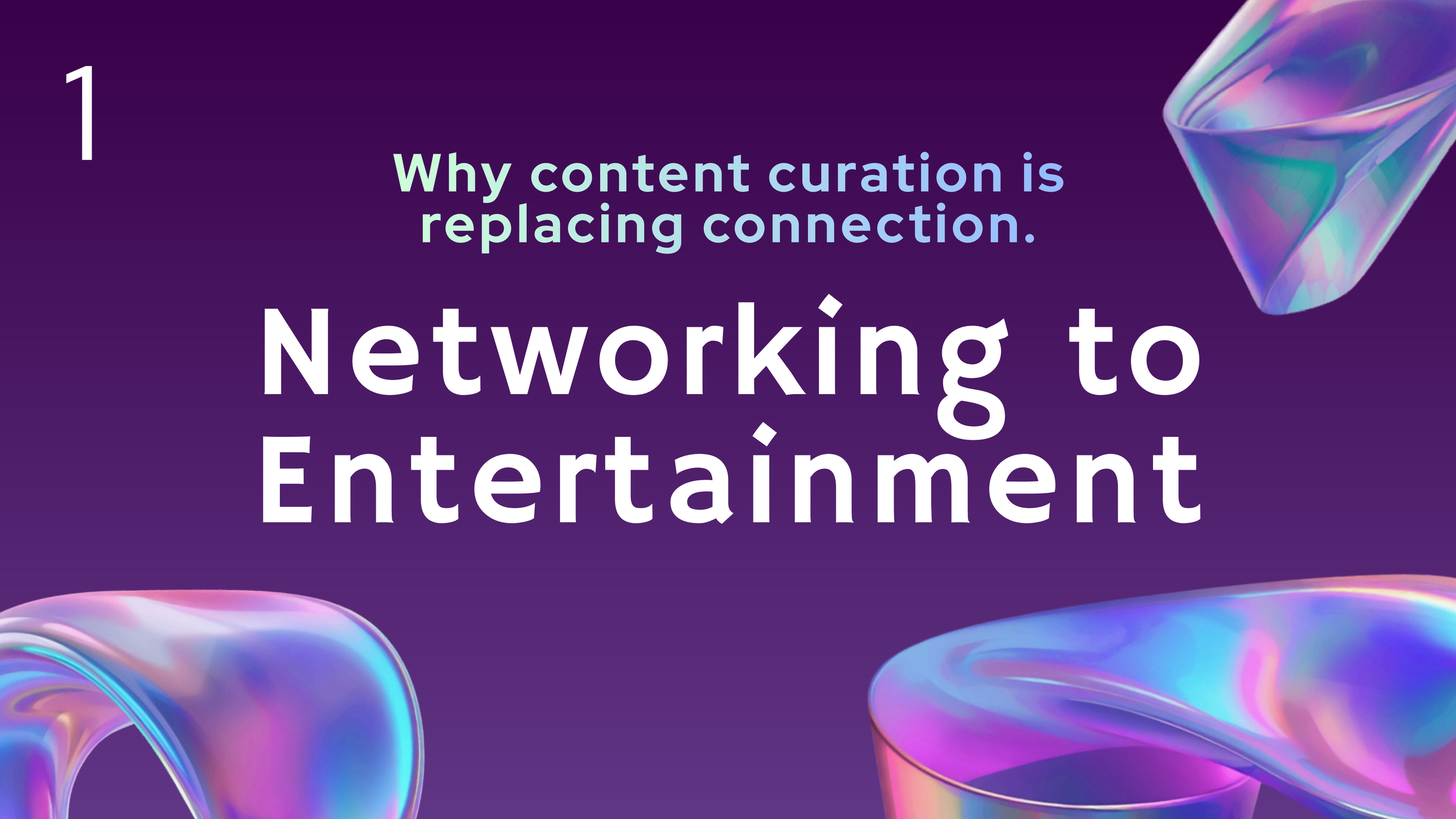
Deeper Connections

Discover how to build deeper, more meaningful supporter connections that go beyond vanity metrics and drive real-world impact.

1

Why content curation is replacing connection.

Networking to Entertainment



The Algorithm Evolution

The Social Graph

Traditional feeds focused on seeing what friends and followers post. Reach was dictated entirely by your follower count and direct connections, favouring large, well-funded organisations.

The Interest Graph

Modern AI-driven feeds are based on user behaviour and interests. Small charities can now bypass big budgets to reach people who genuinely care about their specific cause.

Why It Matters

The shift from Social Graph to Interest Graph is the single biggest opportunity for non-profits. Authentic content now outperforms paid reach, levelling the playing field.

From Social to Interest Graph

Feature	Social Graph (e.g., Early Facebook, LinkedIn)	Interest Graph (e.g., TikTok, Pinterest, X)
Primary Connection	Who you know (Friends, Family, Colleagues)	What you like (Hobbies, Topics, Niches)
Content Discovery	"My friend posted a photo of their holiday."	"Here is a video of a niche hobby you've never heard of but will love."
Network Constraint	**Closed.** You only see content from people you have explicitly connected with.	**Open.** You can see content from anyone in the world, as long as it matches your interests.
The "Cold Start" Problem	**Hard.** You have to find and add friends before the platform is useful.	**Easy.** You just start consuming content, and the app learns what you like within minutes.

Leverage "Educational Entertainment" (Edutainment)

Interest graphs thrive on **curiosity**.
Users love learning about obscure topics, seeing how things are made, or understanding how a complex problem is being solved.

The Strength: Charities are filled with passionate experts, field workers, and researchers who know their subjects inside and out.

The Action: Turn your staff into creators. Have a marine biologist explain why a specific type of seaweed is dying, or show a day-in-the-life of a social worker navigating a local food bank. Giving people fascinating, educational value taps directly into interest-based algorithms.

Interest Based Examples

Old Social Graph Playbook	New Interest Graph Playbook
"Please share this post with your friends and family."	"Here is a fascinating look at how we solve this specific problem."
Focusing heavily on getting people to Follow your page.	Focusing on creating high-retention content that lands on the For You / Explore page.
Broad, generalised messaging to avoid alienating anyone.	Deep, specific, and passionate messaging that targets a distinct subculture.
Relying on the status/networks of wealthy board members.	Relying on the compelling nature of your on-the-ground stories.

2

Real Stories & Good News

Real Impact = Organic Reach



Raw Video Wins Hearts

Authenticity Over Polish

Highly polished corporate videos are out. Raw, authentic, behind-the-scenes footage from the frontline or volunteers is what captures hearts in today's landscape.

Raw Footage Captures Hearts

Audiences connect with genuine moments. Unscripted, real-world content from your mission builds trust and emotional resonance far beyond any produced campaign.

Charity Tip

Mobile footage of a successful project / event is 10x more effective than a studio-produced update.
Pick up your phone and start filming.

Behind the Scenes Wins

Volunteers, beneficiaries, and staff telling their own stories in their own words, this is the content that stops the scroll and drives donations.
User Generated Content v. powerful.

The Power of Impact



01

2s Attention Span

You have exactly two seconds to stop the scroll. Every piece of content must earn attention instantly or it is lost forever.

02

Entertainment Wins

Entertainment and emotional value now trump traditional brand loyalty. Non-profits must compete in the attention economy on equal terms.

03

Bite-Sized Inspiration

Short, emotionally resonant content outperforms lengthy updates. Distil your mission into moments that move people immediately.

04

Impactful Storytelling

Future marketing must inspire immediate action, not just broadcast news. Lead with human stories that compel supporters to act right now.

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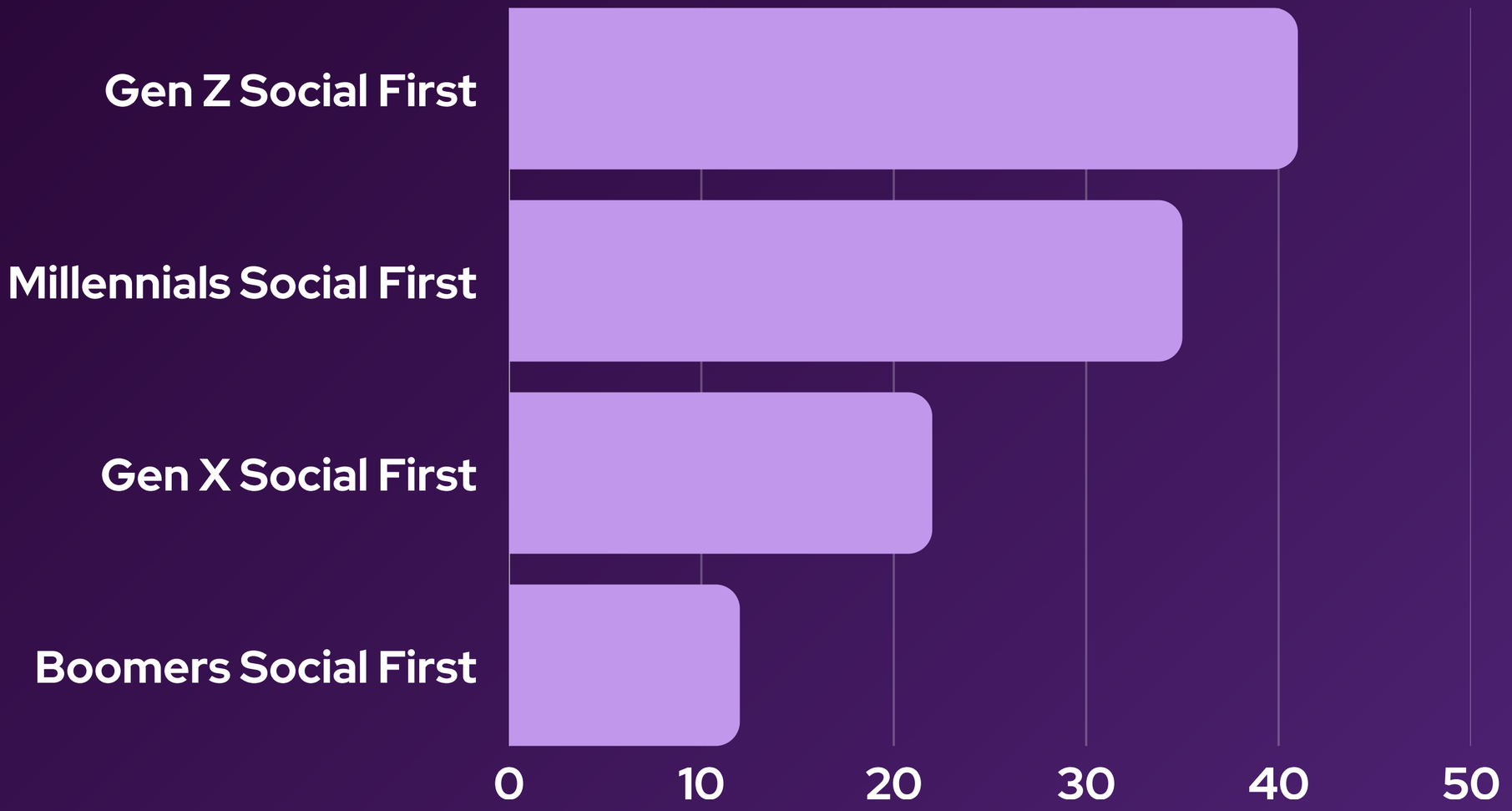
Evolving Discovery via Content

Social Search & Trust

The Rise of Social Search



The Rise of Social Search

01

Gen Z (Social First)

41% of Gen Z users turn to social media platforms first when searching for information about causes and organisations.

02

Millennials (Social First)

35% of Millennials now prefer social media over traditional search engines for discovering non-profits and charities.

03

Gen X (Social First)

22% of Gen X use social media as a search engine.

Sources: Google Internal Data; Sprout Social Consumer Insights.

Discovery via Content

Trust Dynamics

Audiences prefer the 'real person' perspective over highly optimised, ad-heavy search results. They want to see the human faces behind the charity.

Social SEO

Social SEO, captions, keywords, and alt-text is now just as critical as traditional website SEO for reaching new supporters.

Actionable Step

Optimise every post with relevant keywords and descriptive alt-text. Treat your social captions like landing pages to maximise organic discovery.

Why It Matters

People trust peer voices over polished ads. Authentic storytelling from volunteers and beneficiaries builds credibility and drives deeper engagement.

4

Community Over Followers

The Power of Niche

Micro-Community

Niche groups drive more fundraising and campaigning than thousands of passive followers who never engage.

Private Spaces

Intimate spaces like Instagram Broadcasts and WhatsApp Communities are exploding, bringing supporters closer than ever.

Level Playing Field

Success means investing in genuine gratitude and community building, not chasing empty follower numbers.

Stop Selling, Start Asking

Invite them into a conversation, not a pitch.

Ask for Opinions:

"Blue or yellow for our new community mural?"

Ask for Micro-Actions:

"Drop a ❤️ to thank our frontline volunteers today."

Ask for Perspectives:

"What is one thing you wish people knew about [Cause]?"

Tip: Lower the barrier to entry. A simple comment breaks the ice and trains the algorithm to find more people like them.

Stop Shouting into the Void: Be Magnetic

Shift from "Broadcasting" to providing genuine value.

The "Magnetic" Mindset: **What Value Can You Give Today?**

- **Knowledge:** Share the "hidden" expertise your frontline staff have.
- **Signposting:** Be the helpful voice that points people toward local solutions.
- **Belonging:** Use your stories to make the viewer feel like a vital part of the solution, not just a distant observer.

The Golden Rule: If your post doesn't teach, help, or move someone in the first 2 seconds, it's just noise.

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Summary

Practical Playbook

- **Try "Edutainment":** People are curious! Film a 30-second "Behind the Scenes" clip. Show how you prep the community café event set up, or sort the morning’s rescue feed. **Authentic** wins over polished every time.
- **Master Social SEO:** Don’t write captions; write **"Search Results."** Use clear, local keywords (e.g., "Mental health support in [Town]") in your first two sentences so the algorithm can find your neighbours for you.
- **Ask "Low-Barrier" Questions:** Stop "selling" and **start asking.**
  Use questions that are easy to answer to build a habit of engagement:

Good Luck!

Questions?

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Curious Comms Clinic (30mins free)

https://calendar.app.google/3sNfzgXCDVHhd7qd8

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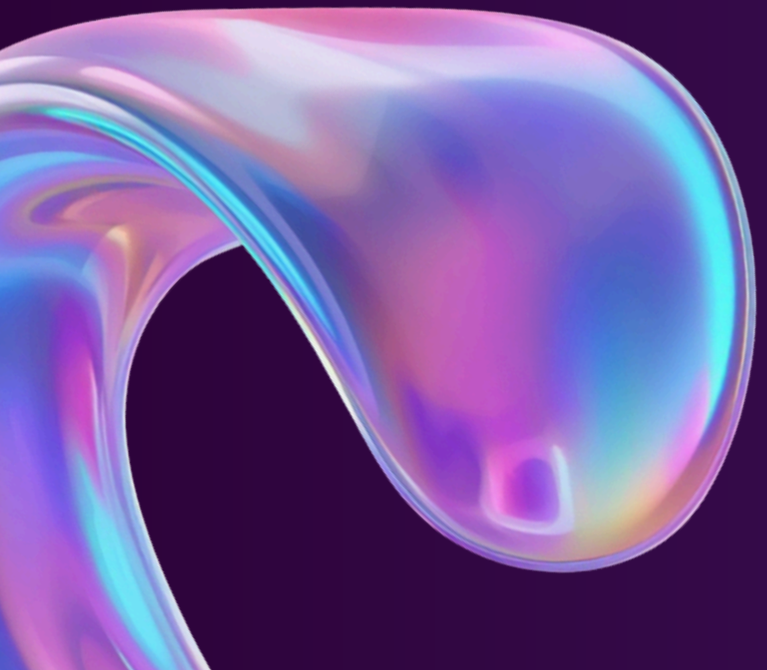

Thank You!

CHARITY MEETUP

Staying C.U.R.I.O.U.S.

A Practical Comms Guide for Small Charities

C - curiosity

U - unpolished

R - realness

I - intention

O - optimization

U - unity

S - shareability



Blog: https://charitymeetup.co.uk/charity-comms-staying-c-u-r-i-o-u-s/