



To: freecyclemodsquad@yahoogroups.com

From: "Deron Beal" <deron@rise-inc.org>  Add to Address Book  Add Mobile Alert

Date: Fri, 27 Aug 2004 12:07:36 -0700

Subject: Fw: [freecyclemodsquad] Re: freecycle's future

Ed,

Thanks for the constructive criticism. For starters, a quick point for you: you mentioned that it is not fun for you. If it ain't fun for you, then for goodness sake don't do it (or help us make it better, which is what I'm guessing you are helping us to do with your e-mail to the modsquad). There are certainly members of your group who'd love to help you out. I firmly believe in Joseph Campbell's comment to "follow your bliss." You co-owner Joanna had indicated to me a while back that you both were seeking new local mods to take over anyway, right? If it's just a rocky spot in the road and overall you enjoy moderating, then by all means help us all make freecycle better. No one person can do this alone - heck, it ain't even easy with a veritable army of giving good people volunteering all over the place, as we all know!

As regards the freecycle.ca site, in addition to their illegal use of the freecycle name which we are currently contesting and the fee for it's use, it also has no e-mail function and is limited to about 10 categories and, sure, it runs well with 120 postings for an entire month. We should be flattered by their copycat of us. However, let me be clear in that the owners have expressed that they will only "allow" us to continue our yahoo group thing, as they claim to own the name in Canada. A fee-charging company claiming ownership and hopefully "allowing" us to continue is not someone I am willing to work with.

Could we have done something as basic and easy? Yes we could have, but I don't see this as an improvement. I want to have an excellent site with all needs met where people/mods say this is much better than yahoo groups and it doesn't have ads and offers things like an e-bay styled "rate your gifting" with this person in order to keep an eye on chronic no-show-ers, etc.

Have we tried designing a new and excellent webpage with volunteer programmers? Yes, we've actually tried this three different times with one programmer or the other bailing out. The bottom line is that some

money is required for this as it is too much for me or for jeff davis or for other totally volunteer programmers alone or as a team to pull off. Am I working on finding this money? Yes, frantically. Have I asked mods to ask their members for donations? No, not really because I believe we should have the 501c3 in order to be "respectable" in order to do this -- and even then I shy away from asking members for donations because, well, we are freecycle, not feecycle and i can't help thinking we may be able to avoid this somehow.

I believe in this coming month these funds will be in place even though we don't have the 501c3 status which foundations demand. Sponsors unlike private foundations are less demanding thus my approach to sponsors at this time. FYI: We are currently an incorporated nonprofit called The Freecycle Network and we have trade name and Service Mark protection, but the IRS 501c3 status is still pending (likely approved in nov/dec as application sent in early July): this is what people need in order to declare a tax deduction federally.

Could we be doing more as a movement of volunteers? Maybe, but not much more. Is there hope for something better free from yahoo? You can bet your bottom dollar! By not commercializing, by not requesting fees from members, by still not having staff etc, things will take a bit longer. That's a fact.

I'll be asking for more volunteer help for committees, etc. as we move forward too. We are creating a noncommercial global gift economy like has never previously existed. This is an awesomely beautiful thing. But without selling out to commercial interests, in due respect to Ed, I don't feel that we've missed the boat, but that we are on a speed boat the likes of which have never before been seen (first group founding date: 5/1/03). Have we hit a few rough waves particularly regarding webpage design? Yepp. I have a list of about 20 webpage designers whom we will soon be able to integrate into a webpage design project with modest payment for their services.

Anyway, thanks to everyone for all of your help in so many ways. And thanks Ed for reminding us of what is still possible.

Deron