As part of the Web Monetization project, I conducted two interviews with member organizations of Food Rescue Alliance (FRA) and received two survey responses from community stakeholders that have a relationship with one of these organizations. In addition, I received web engagement and social media data from one of the organizations surveyed.

While this is a small sample, I believe that it is still representative enough to provide information about FRA members as a whole. The mediocrity principle states that, when examining a small sample, it is most likely that data collected is a representation of the average within that group. With consideration for this small sample size, I still believe that these interviews provide a valuable insight into FRA member organizations as a whole.

When looking at websites specifically, I found that most organizations are utilizing content management systems, especially Wordpress or Squarespace for their web designs. One of the surveyed organizations had just transitioned from Wix to Squarespace because they felt that Squarespace could better support their needs. Specifically, this organization was interested in regularly updating a public-facing data stream regarding the pounds of food they managed each year. They found Squarespace was able to better handle the regular updates needed for this public-facing data.

Next, both of the organizations I interviewed had utilized outside consultants to design and construct their websites. Both of these organizations had websites that had a similar architecture to each other. This suggests that shared web design support could reduce the operational costs of member organizations, without them losing functionality. Especially for smaller organizations that are unable to hire full time staff to manage web presence, this would allow for increased functionality and improved user experience in their websites.
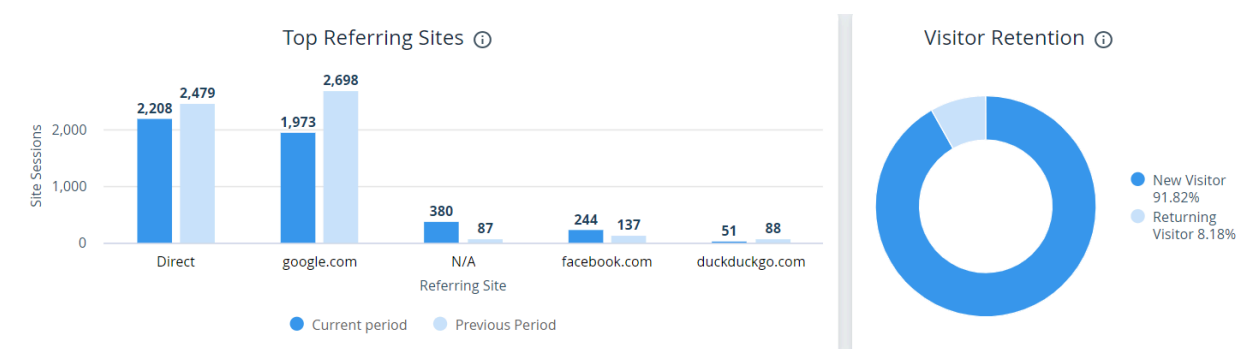
When looking at the web engagement statistics provided, only a very small percentage of website visits are from repeat visitors. Even though this organization had averaged 150 website visits per day, only a small number of these visits were caused by people visiting the site more than once. Both of the organizations I spoke to shared a desire to integrate data visualizations into their sites which would aim to target repeat visitors.

Another problem for the public relationships that these organizations have built is educating the public on their mission and the services they provide. For example, both organizations

mentioned struggling to manage small volumes of food, and frequently having to turn away food donations from private donors because their systems are unable to handle this type of donation. The public *wants* to help, but they are not aware of *how* to help. In addition, one of the organizations shared a struggle to educate people struggling with food insecurity about the regions of the city they serviced, since several similar organizations operate in different neighborhoods of the metro area where they are located.

In the survey results from people who engage with these organizations, both volunteers and people who have utilized these services reported that they utilize the internet to gather news and data, and engage with entertaining content. Both of the survey responses came from people who were between the ages of 45 and 64, something that I also saw reflected in the engagement statistics from this organization's email list. There is reason to believe, then, that members of FRA are experiencing similar issues found in many nonprofit organizations with capturing support and engagement from Gen Z and Millennials.

I believe that there are major opportunities for FRA to support the implementation of tools that drive repeat site visits and support from younger community members. I especially believe that these findings support further development of [interactive data visualizations](#) for these organizations to embed into their sites. Of course, this requires developing an API that can interface with the logistics software these member organizations use to manage food donations.

In addition, both of these organizations reported difficulty managing social media. A quick review of several other member organizations' social media pages suggests that these organizations are struggling to support this new communication strategy. After one organization hired a dedicated social media manager, year over year follow rates increased by 13% on Instagram and 37% on Twitter. This growth is much higher than the industry average, and suggests that social media users are interested in the work being done by these organizations and are not engaging because there is not enough content to engage with.

	February 17, 2021	May 17, 2021	% Change
Facebook (likes; follows)	853; 956	882; 999	3.40% ; 4.50%
Instagram (followers)	584	660	13.01%
Twitter (followers)	38	52	36.84%

Because social media is the main way to contact younger generations, and because social media activity plays a key role in the algorithm promoting a page's content, an automated social media bot that utilizes data from Rootable may also be a worthwhile addition to public outreach tools provided to member organizations. These automated tools are extremely easy to develop

for Twitter, which makes it convenient that this is where active engagement showed the largest follower growth for the organization that provided data.

The larger of the two organizations I spoke to mentioned that they are unable to utilize the Robot for all of their systems because it does not support a non-negotiable need. While building an interactive data visualization tool and social media bot would be valuable to drive web traffic for these food rescues, to do so the features of Rootable must support their operations. Otherwise, no benefit to public outreach will outweigh the barriers to adoption caused by a mismatch between system capabilities and logistic needs. Currently this organization is utilizing excel spreadsheets for inventory tracking between locations. They mentioned a willingness to try Rootable if it is able to support their needs.

To conclude, I believe that connecting Rootable to the public facing web of these organizations through social media and interactive visualizations is a valuable consideration in FRA technology strategy moving forward. These tools will help organizations deepen relationships with existing stakeholders by driving their repeat engagement with web content, and build relationships with new followers by increasing the visibility of these organizations on social media. Supporting web engagement and social media outreach will almost certainly increase annual revenue, with or without Web Monetization. As these tasks can be automated and centralized, and because these organizations are struggling to perform these tasks currently, I believe that FRA should consider utilizing shared resources to add this functionality to websites and social media in the near future.