

NSSF Case Study (Non-Profit)



Rebranding Organizations; Awareness & Membership Drive

The National Shooting Sports Foundation or NSSF is the trade association for the firearms industry. Formed in 1961, NSSF is a non-profit organization that focuses its efforts on the business side of the firearms industry. It now boasts over 11,000 members that are mainly firearms and gun accessory manufacturers, distributors, dealers, and retailers along with a diverse group of outdoor-oriented business owners.

The organization has always been overshadowed by the more well-known and better-funded National Rifle Association (NRA), which concentrates its efforts on individual gun rights and gun laws. NSSF has been plagued as most non-profits as having serious awareness problems. This is due to a lack of funding and lack of expertise in the communications and marketing functions. The result of this lack of awareness hurt membership recruitment, renewal, and fulfillment of the organization's mission of being the voice of the industry.

After a management shakeup, we created a freedom within a framework to rebrand the organization, increase awareness, and strengthen the overall membership recruitment efforts. This was done through design, consistency in look and messaging, and highly cost-efficient communications.

Objective: Awareness & Gain in Membership

Target: Prospective and current hunters and shooters; NSSF members and prospective members

Summary: NSSF is the trade association for the firearms and ammunition industry. The mission is to promote, protect and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. Campaigns include recruiting members, gaining more participation from hunters and shooters, educating hunters and shooters on controversial topics and lobbying legislators and staff for favorable legislation.

Media: National Magazine, National Newspaper, Regional Newspaper, Regional Magazines,

Results: Various – Increased awareness to an all-time high; participation in hunting up 11 percent and membership rose over 28% in 18 months.



Print Advertising

The NSSF was criticized for not being known, relevant, or proactive. It is rare for a trade organization to advertise in the political arena, especially with an emotionally charged issue such as gun control, but as a sign to their current and prospective members, a national campaign was launched as current gun owners to accept and adopt the AR-15 platform. Research showed even gun owners were skittish in using what is now one of the most popular platforms for recreational target shooters. There was a movement to ban these types of firearms just because they looked different than traditional firearms. The campaign was educational and reached over 20 million users. The result was a better understanding of the firearm and legislation was defeated due to overwhelming hunter and recreational shooter support. This campaign also began the surge of membership for the NSSF as it proved it could play on a national stage.

YOUR FUTURE IS OUR BUSINESS
IT'S ALSO OUR MISSION AND PASSION

NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION



It's not just a job, it's a passion. We're the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association of the firearms, ammunition and shooting industry. By becoming a NSSF member, you enable us to attract, educate and inform new hunters and shooters in every state about the sport we love. Our enthusiasm moves more business for everyone. Whether it's in the field, on the range, in Washington, D.C. or at state capitols, we stand proudly as your voice. Help us make your voice louder and stronger where it counts.



For almost 50 years, our mission has always been to promote, protect and preserve our hunting and shooting sports. We're about choosing the most recent to increase participation and ensure a new generation of hunters and shooters. There's more than just a rifle in the air when you become a NSSF member. Besides privileges that range from significant national vendor programs to industry awards and national exposure, your membership is put to good use in promoting, protecting and governing the sport we love. To join, contact Bettina Stearns at (202) 426-1250 or nssf.org.

The future of your business depends on it.




WWW.MEMBERSHIPMEANSBUSINESS.ORG PROMOTE PROTECT PRESERVE

THE EVOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN HUNTING RIFLE


FROM SERVICE USE TO THE SHOOTING SPORTS

It's hard to think of a more traditional sporting firearm than a bolt-action rifle. Used by generations of hunters on everything from gray squirrels, the bolt-action has long been viewed as America's classic hunting rifle.


Seemingly "purpose built" for hunting, it's easy to believe that bolt-action rifles were originally designed for the outdoors. But that's not the case. America's favorite rifle isn't in fact a direct descendant of the World War I battle rifle, the 1903 Springfield. The then "new" bolt action of the Springfield offered smooth and rapid cycling of the action and allowed for the use of a more powerful cartridge, the .243, which also provided a big step forward in long range accuracy. As millions of hunters know, the .243 continues to be one of America's most popular big game hunting cartridges.

THE MODERN SPORTING RIFLE

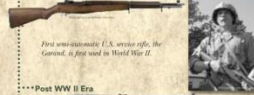
• WW I Era




• Post WW I



• WW II Era



• Post WW II Era



THE EVOLUTION OF THE MODERN SPORTING RIFLE
WWW.NSSF.ORG/RIFLE

Today's modern sporting rifles have hunt-specific features

For well over a century, many of our most popular sporting rifles have directly evolved from a service rifle of a particular era. And for good reason: battlefield requirements in a rifle such as accuracy, ruggedness, reliability and fast follow-up shots are features in a rifle equally sought by hunters and target shooters.

The first semiautomatic U.S. service rifle, the Springfield .30 M1, popularly known as the Garand, saw service initially in World War II. Not long afterward, a wide range of semi-auto hunting rifles and shotguns gained widespread popularity among both hunters and target shooting enthusiasts.

Today, the AR-15 is similar to the M-16 service rifle that first saw combat in Vietnam. To be sure, the AR-15



does not look like a traditional sporting rifle. Neither does today's high-tech camo jacket look like Granddad's traditional plaid-checked wool Mackinaw. What the AR-15 does look like is a modern, state-of-the-art rifle that employs advanced technology and ergonomic design. The result is an exceptionally reliable, rugged, versatile and accurate rifle available in versions with hunt-specific features for both big game, predator and varmint hunting, as well as many types of target shooting competitions.

Some hunters look askance at AR-style rifles, and understandably so. They don't look like any type of rifle they, their dads or granddads ever carried into the woods. Looks can be deceiving, however, and in the case of AR-style rifles, they certainly are. Packed with hunt-specific features, today's modern sporting rifle is an excellent choice for a wide variety of big game, predator and varmint hunting.



Vietnam War Era



Today

AR (Armalite) platform rifles are semi-automatic systems similar to military counterparts. Now offered with hunt-specific features, these rifles are popular for varmint, predator and big game hunting.



Website/Internet Marketing

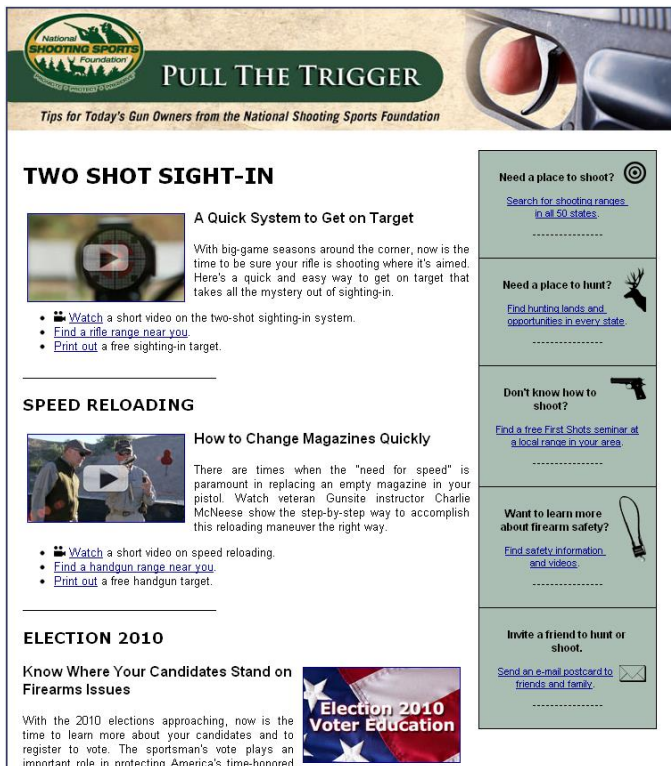
After a new “look and feel” was established in all sales and marketing materials, NSSF completely overhauled its website to make it the showcase of the organization. While most organizations were still relying on printed materials, NSSF designed a vibrant and content-loaded website that hunters, shooters, and the media could gain information within three clicks. Launched to coincide with its 50th anniversary, the site won numerous national awards which was supported by aggressive SEO, SEM, and email marketing campaigns. Triple-digit growth resulted in more awareness and a further record-setting year in membership for the organization.



Year-To-Date Comparisons	DEC, 2010	DEC, 2009	Monthly Difference %	YTD 2010	YTD 2009	YTD Difference
Total Visits	341,254	300,609	13.52%	4,172,296	2,927,978	42.50%
Total Pages Viewed	409,607	289,748	41.37%	5,081,172	2,839,436	78.95%
Unique Visitors	189,020	153,332	23.27%	2,397,067	1,592,115	50.56%
Return Visitors	39,310	35819	9.75%	461,506	330,271	39.74%
Average Time On Site	0:06:03	0:09:54	-38.89%	0:10:17	0:11:50	-13.10%
Single Page Visits	64,294	42,776	50.30%	730,913	557,169	31.18%

Email & Viral Marketing

A new monthly email marketing newsletter helped establish the organization as progressive while increasing its awareness in a positive light. “Pull The Trigger” was an instructional and interactive newsletter for shooters, hunters, and industry professionals that pulled content from experts. The newsletter was so well done, other entities began using the content from PTT to use in their own newsletters. This was a free and valuable service provided by NSSF. The organization expanded its free services by establishing a video presence on YouTube as the largest information channel in the shooting industry. With videos that ranged from “how-to” videos to updates on key firearm events, the monthly “Shooting Sportscast” is still active and vibrant today. The program was launched at the beginning of NSSF’s 50th Anniversary with a look back at the inception and history of the organization. This was distributed to all the current and prospective members. Membership jumped over 28% in the first six months after the release of the video.



National SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION
Tips for Today's Gun Owners from the National Shooting Sports Foundation

PULL THE TRIGGER

TWO SHOT SIGHT-IN

A Quick System to Get on Target

With big-game seasons around the corner, now is the time to be sure your rifle is shooting where it's aimed. Here's a quick and easy way to get on target that takes all the mystery out of sighting-in.

- [Watch](#) a short video on the two-shot sighting-in system.
- [Find a rifle range near you.](#)
- [Print out](#) a free sighting-in target.

SPEED RELOADING

How to Change Magazines Quickly

There are times when the "need for speed" is paramount in replacing an empty magazine in your pistol. Watch veteran Gunsite instructor Charlie McNeese show the step-by-step way to accomplish this reloading maneuver the right way.


- [Watch](#) a short video on speed reloading.
- [Find a handgun range near you.](#)
- [Print out](#) a free handgun target.

ELECTION 2010


Know Where Your Candidates Stand on Firearms Issues

With the 2010 elections approaching, now is the time to learn more about your candidates and to register to vote. The sportsman's vote plays an important role in protecting America's time-honored


Election 2010 Voter Education

Need a place to shoot? 

[Search for shooting ranges in all 50 states.](#)

Need a place to hunt? 

[Find hunting lands and opportunities in every state.](#)

Don't know how to shoot? 

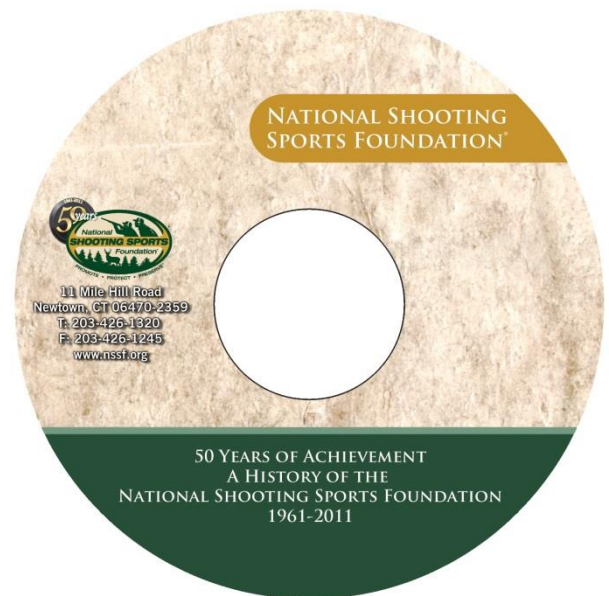
[Find a free First Shots seminar at a local range in your area.](#)

Want to learn more about firearm safety? 

[Find safety information and videos.](#)

Invite a friend to hunt or shoot.

[Send an e-mail postcard to friends and family.](#)



Collateral System & Educational Materials

One of the key services of NSSF was informational campaigns directed at multiple audiences. These audiences ranged from members to hunters to shooters to the media. The look and feel enhanced the new image of NSSF along with the new tagline. The cohesive materials were so professional and attractive to the specific audiences, that members soon purchased them to be included with their products to give new customers more information on being a better shooter, gun owner, and environmentalist.



Brochures for Collateral System

Like almost all non-profit and national organizations, the annual report is the showcase and single most effective bragging opportunity for its annual efforts. NSSF never had an annual report before 2009. This now is a recruiting tool for membership drives and to increase credibility with existing members.

