

THE SWIFTY FOUNDATION

# Finds A Voice & Fundraising Success with a New Website

The most common challenge for small and mighty nonprofits is balancing internal capacity with their determination to make a difference. This is especially the case when the mission of the organization is rooted in the personal experiences of its leaders. With so much heart, it can be difficult to carve out the time and space to craft your story with the right tools for success.

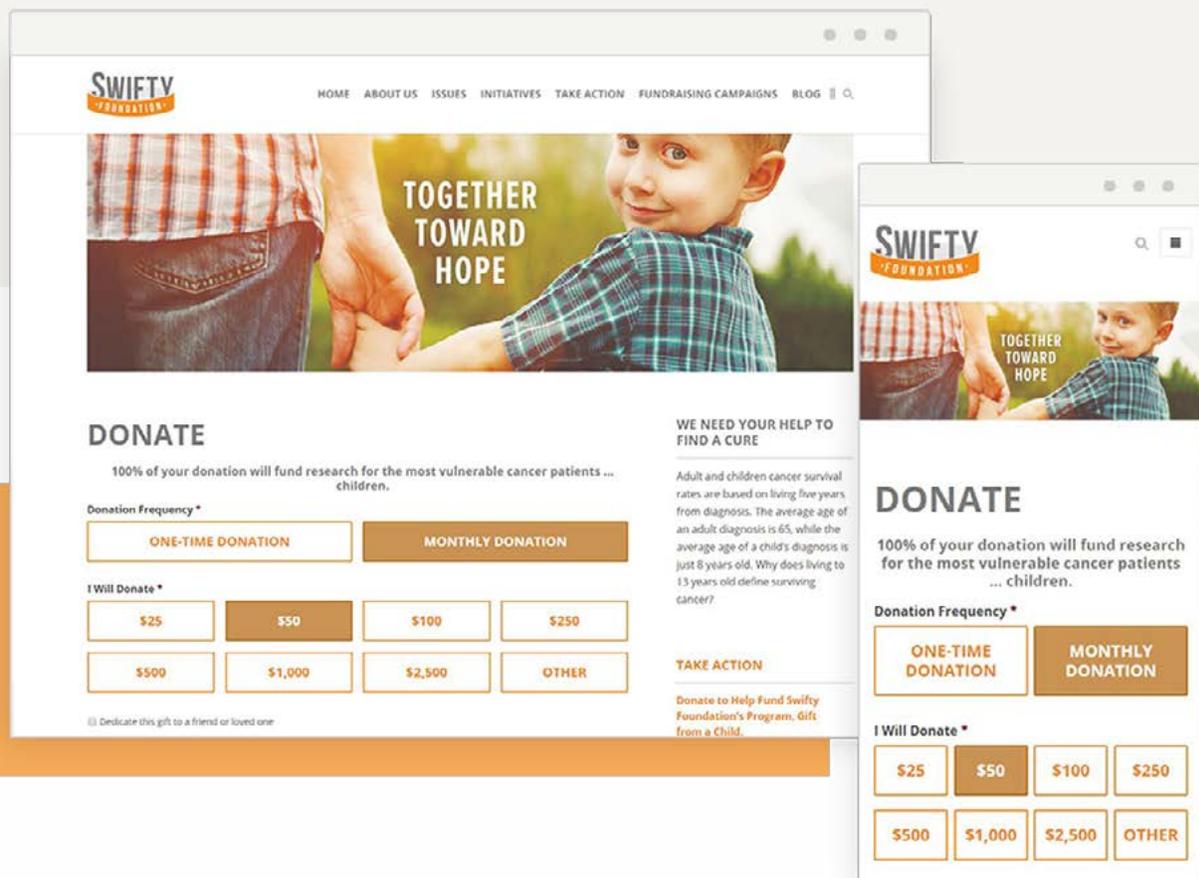
In creating a new website, The Swifty Foundation found a new way to share their voice and offer hope to the pediatric cancer community. And despite working in an area that involves loss and pain, they're building positive momentum for their movement that's anything but "small."



**“We had a tremendous response to the website. It was one of those things where people noticed, and they told us that they had an ‘a-ha!’ moment when they better understood what we did.”**

– GINNY MCLEAN

*Communications and Outreach Director, The Swifty Foundation*



# Swiftly Foundation: Funding Research and Fueling Hope

The Swiftly Foundation started with 15-year-old Michael Gustafason, who created the organization near the end of his battle with brain cancer. Michael's **Master Plan** was to become a tissue donor to empower childhood cancer research, and his legacy has continued to expand with the help of his parents, siblings, and a growing national network of supporters.

Today, the Swiftly Foundation is focused on two major goals: making it possible for families to donate their child's tumor and tissue after death and changing the culture around autopsy donations to make them common practice. In the last year alone, the foundation:



**Created & Funded the 4th and 5th Centers of Excellence to Coordinate Tissue Donations**



**Awarded More Than \$1.5M in Research & Capacity Grants**



**Launched a Post-Mortem Tissue Initiative for Parents, Foundations & Institutions**



# The Challenge: A Website That Does Justice to the Cause

While Michael's vision was clear, the Swifty Foundation wanted to find a way to tell his story while building awareness about the core issue: a scarcity of brain tissue that's donated for research. From there, the foundation hoped to drive people to act, whether that meant connecting families with tissue donation resources or increasing fundraising efforts that could fuel their initiatives.



**“Most impressive and important to us was your personal attention and how important you made our cause feel. We truly felt your commitment to our mission and to helping us communicate that mission in an easy-to-follow way to our donors.”**

– PATTI GUSTAFSON

*Michael's Mom & CEO, The Swifty Foundation*

When they approached Wired Impact in 2017, the foundation felt limited by an existing website that they couldn't keep updated without the help of an outside developer. They viewed a website as an important part of building relationships with families and trust with the medical community, and a change was needed to give them control over their voice and keep people informed.

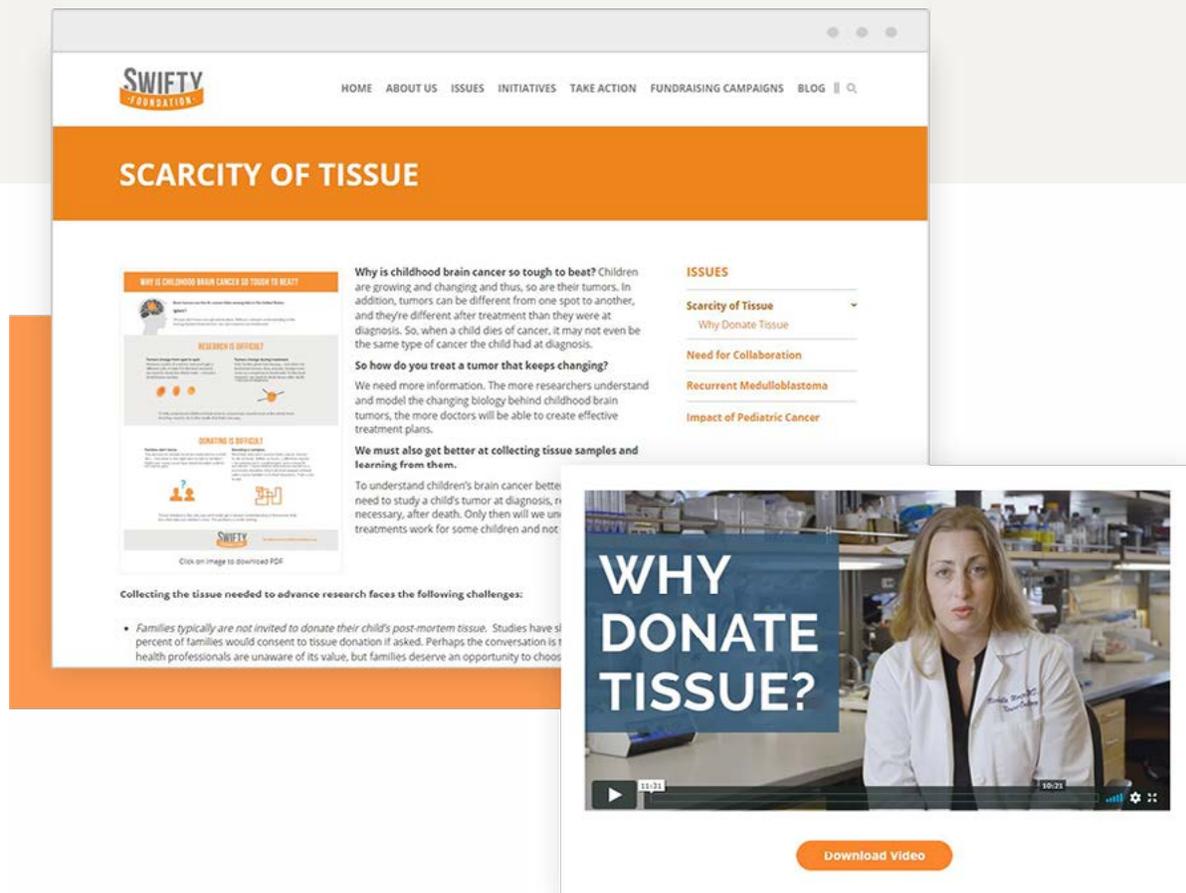
# Creating a Website that Inspires Action

Transitioning to a Wired Impact website gave the Gustafason family the flexibility they needed to explain Michael's plan and what the Swifty Foundation was all about. After consulting with our team on a content strategy and [website structure](#), Michael's parents, Patti and Al, were able to put his vision into words and consolidate their messaging in a way that could educate and inspire.

In addition to keeping the issues front and center, the website would focus on how to take action and stay connected. From peer-to-peer campaigns to storytelling on the blog, the Swifty Foundation site was going to turn into a hub of activity that could grow over time just like the organization itself.

For Ginny McLean the lone paid staff member, moving to a Wired Impact website fulfilled her need for a simple approach that came with hands-on support:

“You guys were fantastic about giving us advice and sorting out what we needed in terms of functionality. We didn't need a fully custom design, but it was important to me to have quick and personal help when I need it.”



# Ongoing Impact

Since launching the new website, the Swifty Foundation has met their goals and then some. In fact, three of their top landing pages are all in the Take Action part of the site, where visitors are encouraged to do things like donate to or create their own fundraising campaigns.

**800+**

website donations  
totaling \$170,000

**\$207**

average donation vs.  
\$115 industry average

**3.76%**

overall conversion rate  
across the website

The site serves as a donation engine throughout the year, but never as much as during the foundation's **year-end annual appeal** when traffic doubles. Ginny's campaign promotion typically includes email, direct mail, and social media, and she directs people to a blog post where supporters learn about how their donations will be used, ways to give, and the campaign's progress to date. In 2018, a **second post** was needed when they reached their \$300,000 goal early!

Fundraising success has also translated into growth for the Swifty Foundation's initiatives and relationships with medical experts across the country. They are ahead of schedule for the creation and funding of Centers of Excellence at top universities and hospitals, which help families coordinate, process and share donated tissue through "tissue navigators." In addition, the foundation recently launched the Gift from a Child initiative to reach more families and doctors about tissue donation and support parents walking this difficult path.

**“What makes me most proud is seeing a family continue a child's legacy. When you've made enough of a difference in someone's life that they'll reach out to say 'thank you' after they just lost a child, that's a big impact. And it's growing.**

– GINNY MCLEAN

*Communications and Outreach Director, The Swifty Foundation*

# What's Next?

The Swifty Foundation isn't slowing down anytime soon. As the primary funder of the Gift from a Child, they're even more focused on empowering brain cancer research through tissue donation. Along with their funding partners, the initiative advocates and educates about tissue donation and provides crucial funding to make it happen across the country.

It's just one of the many ways that the foundation continues to honor Michael's life in an effort to shape the conversation around pediatric cancer. Their voice is stronger than ever.

Visit [The Swifty Foundation website](#) to learn how they're making an impact on research and connecting families and researchers through tissue donation.

The screenshot shows the Swifty Foundation website with a navigation bar including HOME, ABOUT US, ISSUES, INITIATIVES, TAKE ACTION (highlighted), FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS, and BLOG. A banner image features a group of people at an event, with one person holding a sign that says "148" and another holding a sign that says "Happy Birthday". A white t-shirt with the Swifty Foundation logo and the text "SWIFTY FOUNDATION" and "SWINGIN' FOR SWIFTY" is also visible. Below the banner, the "TAKE ACTION" section is titled "TAKE ACTION" and includes the text: "We'd love to have you as part of our movement against Childhood Cancer. Check out the various way to get involved below and help us bring awareness and find a cure." Three call-to-action buttons are displayed: "Donate" (with a dollar sign icon), "Volunteer" (with a heart icon), and "Fundraise" (with a megaphone icon). Each button has a corresponding description and a "Give Today", "Join Us", or "Start Today" button below it. To the right, a section titled "WE NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND A CURE" contains text about cancer survival rates and a "TAKE ACTION" sub-section with links to "Donate to Help Fund Swifty Foundation's Program, Gift from a Child." and "Love Your Melon Beans".

## Start Your Nonprofit's Path to Growth

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Creating an effective online presence is an important part of raising awareness of your cause and motivating people to act. See how a Wired Impact website can help launch your nonprofit to the next level.

[EXPLORE OUR APPROACH](#)