Quick Look at bostonchannel.com/commonwealth5

Boston's ABC 5 website, thebostonchannel.com, includes a charity / donor matching area called Commonwealth5.

Finding it is a little obscure. You have to know it is there and called commonwealth. From thebostonchannel.com you have to know to click on commonwealth to find the area.

I found the home page a little busy and oddly laid out. I did not realize the abilities right away. It was, however, clear what I needed to do to sign up, so that is that I did first.

Signing up as a donor was straight forward and easy.


Filling this in takes you to the 'new donor submitted' page from which you can login.
Welcome to the CommonWealth 5 site!  
Thank you for your interest in helping others.

If you are a charity or donor with an existing CommonWealth5 membership, please enter your username and password here.

If you are a charity and wish to open a new membership with CommonWealth5, or if you need assistance, send an e-mail request to CommonWealth5@thebostonchannel.com.

If you are a first-time donor and have not yet registered with CommonWealth5, please register here.

http://cf.thebostonchannel.com/bos/sh/charity/login.cfm

That takes you to the Welcome Donor page. The welcome page is not all that welcoming nor all that useful, although it covers the basics.

- Donor Home - self reference, i.e., this link takes you no where.
- Edit Account - edits the registration info (important ability).
- Donate Items - lets you specify something to be donated.
- View Past - see a list of items you specified.
- Logout
- To Commonwealth5 - takes you to the same main page as where you find the link to login.

Welcome Donor.

Please make a selection from the menu below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor Home</th>
<th>Edit Account Info</th>
<th>Donate Item(s)</th>
<th>View Past Donations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logout</td>
<td>Back To Commonwealth5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Commonwealth5 page has things like highlighted projects, how to donate, and many other links....
How To Donate

Directory Of Non-Profits
View a list of non-profits that offer a variety of services, and then link to their sites to find out how you can help. More Details

Donor-Charity Match Tool
From office furniture and computers, to old cars and unused tickets; your castaways could be treasure for a non-profit. Use this tool to find the right organization for your donation. More Details

Volunteer With A Non-Profit
Have some extra time? Consider volunteering for a non-profit agency that may need your special skill. Take a look at volunteer opportunities in your area. More Details

Adopt A Project In Your Community
Make a wish come true for a non-profit. From $500 to $5,000, these projects can happen with your generosity. Impact the community

The directory of non-profits is a nice simple list:
### Commonwealth Non-Profit Profiles

View profiles of nonprofit organizations supported by WCVB-TV. Learn more about an organization's mission, programs, and financial and contact information by clicking on the name of the charity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charity Name</th>
<th>WishList</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts Sober Housing Corp.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cambridge, MA</td>
<td>David Reese</td>
<td>617-354-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Baby Center</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hyannis, MA</td>
<td>Cindy Haynes Caswell</td>
<td>(508) 771-716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCESS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>Ellen E. Rooney</td>
<td>617-542-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts</td>
<td></td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>Paul Tonnessen</td>
<td>617-437-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARC Community Services, Inc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fitchburg, MA</td>
<td>Rosemary Wuoti</td>
<td>978-343-66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://cf.thebostonchannel.com/bos/sh/charity/front_charity.cfm

If you click on a charity, it shows the charity details, which are pretty simple:
The 'Donor Charity Match Tool' is deceptively named. The implication is that it will show you charities with compatible goals or needs you can fill. However, it is actually the 'Donate Items' page on the Donor Home page. There are a couple of problems here. (a) I expected it would come back and show which charities might be interested in the object/service. Rather it just e-mails charities which might be interested without giving the donor the chance to intervene. (b) there is no chance to review the charities interested and perhaps select who will get the e-mail. (I.e., this is not a donor-charity match so much as charity notification of donation. (c) there is no way to edit the donation details. E.g., provide more detail so that charities don't waste their time. (d) there is no way to withdraw your donation offer. Apparently, it is withdrawn only if a charity 'claims the item'. Although it appears the only way charities are notified is through the e-mail. It is not apparent that charities can 'browse available items'.

Charity Detail

Charity ID: 981
Charity Name: ARC Community Services, Inc.
Address: 564 Main Street
City/State/Zip: Fitchburg, MA 01420
Phone: 978-343-6662
Fax: 978-343-8852
Website: http://www.arccommunityservices.org
Contact Person: Rosemary Wuoti
Position: Vice President for Development
Email: rw@arccommunityservices.org
Donation Categories: Other
Mission & Goals: To create lifetime opportunities for persons with disabilities to reach their fullest potential by providing advocacy, education, employment, residential and recreational services.
Programs & Services: ARC Community Services provides vocational and day programs for developmentally disabled adults. ARC has a recreation program for children and adults providing numerous sports programs, Special Olympics, dances, trips and a weekend program.
EIN: 04-2226199
Exempt Date:
IRS Sanctions:
Financial Data:
Wish List:
Donate Item

Choose A Donation Category:
- Adult Books
- Appliances
- Art Supplies
- Automobiles
- Bedding/Linen/Curtains
- Building Materials
- Cash donations
- Children's Books
- Clothing and Accessories
- Clothing for adults
- Clothing for children
- Computers and Electronics
- Food

Volunteer Category:
- Construction/Trade Services
- Event
- Literacy/Reading
- Mentoring
- Other
- Tutoring
- Volunteer
- Walkers

If you are volunteering, what date are you available? 
(ex: 12/12/2004)

If you are donating items, are you willing to deliver the items?  
- Yes  
- No

Description:
Tell us something more about the items you are donating.

Submit Donation  Reset
The volunteer opportunities section is interesting. Charities describe exactly what they are looking for. (E.g., teach ESL, staff front desk during these hours, etc.) Donors can then browse specifically that list then contact the charities. Otherwise, donors can generically volunteer 'time' under 'donate an item.'

In addition, there is an 'events' section where charities list things like gala-to-benefit, 5k run, etc. Unfortunately, the event viewing page was not well organized. It was not sorted by date (nor could you sort it that way) and it mixed expired events with future events.