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# Greyhound Pets of America

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## **Strategic Assessment Report**

**04/10/2025**

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## 1. Executive Summary

GPA Louisville is a small, community-driven nonprofit focused on helping retired racing greyhounds find permanent homes. Everything they do—from adoption placements to event organizing—is handled by volunteers. They don’t have a physical office, and most of their work depends on donated time, personal devices, and public support through donations and local fundraisers.

This assessment looks at how their current technology setup supports (and sometimes limits) the work they do. By walking through their existing tools, internal routines, and future goals, this report outlines ways to strengthen their systems without adding complexity. The focus is on practical improvements: simplifying the adoption process, making it easier to manage volunteers and donations, and reducing risks around data and access. These updates aren’t about overhauling everything—they’re about helping a volunteer-led group keep doing what they do, just a little more easily and securely.

## 2. History and Purpose

### 2.1 History of the *Greyhound Pets of America*

GPA Louisville is the local branch of Greyhound Pets of America, a national organization that helps transition retired racing dogs into regular homes. The Louisville chapter has been doing this work for years, driven entirely by volunteers who coordinate fosters, adoptions, and outreach. Over time, they’ve placed hundreds of greyhounds with families around the region. They don’t run like a traditional business or shelter—there’s no office, no paid staff—just people who care about the dogs and want to give them a better life.

### 2.2 Purpose of the *Greyhound Pets of America*

The mission is simple: give greyhounds a second chance. Once these dogs are done racing, they need homes, and GPA Louisville makes that happen. The team also spends time educating the public about what it’s like to have a greyhound as a pet. A big part of the work involves meeting people, answering questions, and helping adopters feel supported. Whether it’s through events, school visits, or social media, the goal stays the same—advocating for these dogs and making sure they’re matched with families who understand and care for them.

## 3. Management and Business Processes

The day-to-day work behind GPA Louisville’s mission follows a few core processes. These aren’t managed through high-end software or internal systems—they’re run through people, group chats, shared documents, and a lot of volunteer coordination. Still, the processes are clear and repeatable

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### 3.1 *Adoption Process*

The adoption process is a critical function of GPA Louisville, ensuring that retired racing greyhounds are placed in homes where they will be well cared for. The adoption process includes the following steps:

- **Application Submission:** Potential adopters are required to complete an adoption application, detailing their living environment, experience with pets, and household dynamics.
- **Home Visits & Interviews:** Volunteers conduct home visits to assess the suitability of the adopter's environment and answer any questions about caring for a retired greyhound.
- **Matching & Placement:** The organization carefully matches greyhounds with adopters based on lifestyle compatibility, temperament, and needs.
- **Adoption Fees & Contracts:** Adoption fees help cover veterinary care, and adopters must sign an agreement committing to the responsible care of the greyhound.
- **Post-Adoption Support:** GPA Louisville provides post-adoption support, including behavioral advice, training guidance, and medical assistance if needed.

### 3.2 *Foster Program*

The foster program is essential for helping greyhounds transition from the racing environment to home life before adoption. The program includes:

- **Foster Home Recruitment:** Volunteers sign up to foster greyhounds temporarily.
- **Training & Behavioral Adjustments:** Foster families receive training on how to socialize greyhounds and prepare them for permanent homes.
- **Medical Evaluations:** Fostered dogs receive medical checkups and necessary treatments before adoption.
- **Feedback for Adoptions:** Foster families provide insights into each greyhound's temperament, helping adoption coordinators make informed placements.

### 3.3 *Fundraising and Donations*

As a nonprofit organization, GPA Louisville relies on donations and fundraising to support its operations. Key fundraising efforts include:

- **Online Donations:** Supporters can contribute via PayPal and Venmo, with options for recurring donations.
- **Grant Applications & Sponsorships:** The organization seeks external funding through grants and corporate sponsorships.
- **Fundraising Events:** Events such as auctions, raffles, and social gatherings help raise awareness and funds.
- **Merchandise Sales:** Branded merchandise sales contribute to the financial sustainability of the organization.

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### 3.4 *Community Engagement & Awareness*

Public outreach and education are key components of GPA Louisville’s mission. The organization engages the community through:

- **Social Media & Website Presence:** Active updates on social media and the website help promote greyhound adoption, upcoming events, and fundraising campaigns.
- **Educational Events & Meet-and-Greets:** These events allow potential adopters to interact with greyhounds and learn more about their needs.
- **Informational Resources:** The organization provides guides on greyhound care, training, and responsible ownership.

### 3.5 *Volunteer Coordination*

Volunteers are essential to GPA Louisville’s operations. The organization manages volunteers through:

- **Recruitment & Onboarding:** Volunteers receive training on adoption processes, event coordination, and fundraising efforts.
- **Scheduling & Assignments:** Volunteers assist with home visits, event staffing, and dog transportation.
- **Recognition & Retention:** The organization recognizes dedicated volunteers and provides opportunities for continued engagement.

## 4. **Current IT Environment**

### 4.1 *Hardware*

GPA Louisville operates without a centralized office or dedicated in-house infrastructure, relying instead on the personal hardware of its volunteer team. Technology-related tasks such as website updates, application tracking, and communications are conducted using individually owned laptops, desktop computers, tablets, and smartphones.

*Common hardware scenarios include:*

- Volunteer-owned laptops/desktops for web updates, document management, email, and administrative tasks.
- Mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) used for real-time social media updates, event check-ins, dog photography, and payment processing at adoption events.
- Peripheral devices, such as printers or scanners, may be used informally by volunteers at home but are not part of any coordinated, organization-owned infrastructure.

This low-cost approach suits the organization’s grassroots model, but it introduces long-term risks around device compatibility, continuity, and data security.

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## 4.2 Software

GPA Louisville leverages a variety of web-based tools to manage its operations, most of which are free or low-cost. Its public website is built using the WordPress platform and hosted via GoDaddy. The website includes a sortable table for adoptable dogs, embedded forms for adoption and foster applications, and a live Google Calendar displaying upcoming events.

*Key software elements include:*

- WordPress with the Panoramic theme for website content management.
- GoDaddy Managed Hosting, providing domain registration and site hosting.
- TablePress and DataTables.js plugins for interactive dog listings.
- WPForms or Google Forms for application collection.
- Google Calendar embedded for public event visibility.
- PayPal and Venmo integration for donation processing.
- Google Drive and shared docs for internal collaboration.
- jQuery enhancements, such as TouchSwipe.js and carouFredSel.js, for mobile responsiveness and UI interactions.

This toolset allows GPA Louisville to maintain an active online presence with minimal cost and effort, but improvements in standardization and automation could further enhance volunteer productivity.

## 4.3 Staff IT Skills/Training

As a fully volunteer-run organization, GPA Louisville's technical skill base varies significantly. A few key volunteers handle digital responsibilities such as website updates, content posting, and donation form maintenance. While they appear comfortable managing WordPress and other basic tools, there is no formal IT training, documentation, or onboarding process for new volunteers.

*Key points include:*

- Core volunteers manage tools like WordPress, PayPal, Venmo, and Google Docs with competence.
- Site updates, plugin management, and table configuration suggest intermediate familiarity with WordPress features.
- There is no evidence of a structured training program or cross-training for critical web tasks.
- Reliance on a small number of tech-savvy individuals creates a risk of knowledge loss and burnout.

Providing documentation and basic training resources would strengthen operational resilience and distribute responsibility more evenly.

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#### 4.4 IT Budgeting and Spending

GPA Louisville currently does not allocate a dedicated budget for IT infrastructure or technology upgrades. Most tools in use are free, donor-supported, or personally paid for by volunteers. Technology costs are minimal but unstructured, typically handled on an as-needed basis when a domain needs renewal or a premium plugin is required.

*Key financial characteristics include:*

- Hosting and domain services (GoDaddy) are likely billed annually.
- Plugin usage and CMS services are largely free or on free tiers.
- Donations are processed through third-party tools, eliminating the need for proprietary transaction systems.
- Volunteers cover incidental costs or seek community donations for tech needs.

While this model keeps costs low, it limits GPA Louisville's ability to proactively invest in improved tools, more secure infrastructure, or scalable solutions. Creating even a small, designated tech budget would support better planning and reduce dependency on individual contributors.

## 5. Envisioned IT Capabilities

### 5.1 Leadership's Vision

GPA Louisville leverages technology to support its mission of placing retired racing greyhounds into permanent homes. The organization uses its website as the central platform for driving community awareness, managing adoptions, organizing events, and processing donations. The leadership has demonstrated a clear commitment to:

- Maintaining an accurate, public-facing dog listing to connect potential adopters with available greyhounds.
- Providing online application forms to streamline the intake process for fosters and adopters.
- Embedding a live Google Calendar to ensure transparency and accessibility for upcoming events.
- Facilitating online donations through integrated PayPal and Venmo buttons to simplify giving.
- Using social media and email tools to promote adoptions, recruit volunteers, and coordinate community involvement.

These efforts reflect a focused vision to maximize outreach and operational efficiency using accessible, cloud-based tools. The organization prioritizes low-cost, user-friendly technologies that allow volunteers to maintain services with minimal training or technical oversight.



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## 5.2 Top 10 Technology Issues

*The following list identifies the top technology-related issues impacting GPA Louisville's effectiveness and sustainability:*

1. **Lack of Centralized Data Management**  
Adoption and foster applications are collected online but stored in disconnected formats with no unified database or tracking system.
2. **Overreliance on Individual Volunteers for Technical Maintenance**  
Website updates, plugin management, and content posting rely heavily on a small number of volunteers with no formal documentation or cross-training.
3. **No Central IT Governance or Policy Framework**  
There is no documented strategy for IT access, permissions, data storage, or volunteer onboarding.
4. **Absence of Formal Training Resources**  
Volunteers receive no structured IT onboarding or support, which limits scalability and efficiency.
5. **No Device or Access Management**  
All work is done on personal devices with no coordinated policy on how data or accounts are handled.
6. **Lack of IT Budget Allocation**  
Technology costs are ad hoc, with no annual planning or budget line for tools, software, or upgrades.
7. **Limited Website Automation**  
Tasks such as removing adopted dogs from listings, sending confirmation emails, or managing event RSVPs are done manually.
8. **Data Security Risks**  
With sensitive user information submitted through forms, the lack of encryption policies or secure storage methods introduces privacy risks.
9. **Minimal Reporting or Analytics**  
The organization lacks the ability to run reports on adoption rates, form submissions, or volunteer engagement from existing tools.
10. **Dependence on Free Tools Without Long-Term Evaluation**  
While cost-effective, tools like Google Forms, TablePress, and PayPal may not meet the organization's needs as it grows or scales.

## 6. Closing the Gap

### 6.1 Recommendation 1 - Website Enhancement

Regularly update the website's content and design to improve user experience and ensure mobile compatibility.

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## 6.2 *Recommendation 2 – Adoption Application System*

Develop an online submission and tracking system for adoption applications to streamline the process.

## 6.3 *Recommendation 3 – Integrated Donation Platform*

Implement a unified donation management system that consolidates data from PayPal, Venmo, and other sources for better tracking and reporting.

## 6.4 *Recommendation 4 – Volunteer Management Software*

Adopt tools designed for non-profits to manage volunteer information, communication, and scheduling effectively.

## 6.5 *Recommendation 5 – Data Security Measures*

Establish protocols and utilize security software to protect sensitive data, ensuring compliance with relevant regulations.

# 7. **Conclusions**

GPA Louisville is doing real work that matters, and they're doing it with limited tools, volunteer time, and community support. Their current setup gets the job done, but it leans hard on a handful of people and personal devices. There's no formal structure for managing tech, no system for tracking data across efforts, and no clear plan in place for what happens if someone steps away.

This report isn't about suggesting big changes they can't manage. It's about making things easier: giving them a better way to handle adoption applications, track donations, protect sensitive information, and train new volunteers without starting from scratch every time. These updates don't have to be complicated—but they do need to happen if the group wants to stay consistent, reduce risk, and keep supporting greyhounds long-term.

# 8. **Appendices**

## 8.1 *Basis of Analysis*

- Strategic Alignment Model (SAM) to evaluate how IT capabilities align with GPA Louisville's mission and operations.
- SWOT-based analysis to examine internal strengths and weaknesses in technology infrastructure.
- IT Portfolio Management to assess the maturity and effectiveness of software, hardware, and human IT resources.

Input was gathered from discussions with volunteers and organizational stakeholders familiar with GPA's daily operations and digital practices.

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## 8.2 *Technology Inventory*

Based on internal review and stakeholder input, GPA Louisville currently uses:

- Website & Hosting: WordPress CMS hosted via GoDaddy
- Website Theme: Panoramic (customized for nonprofit use)
- Applications & Forms: WPForms or Google Forms
- Donation Tools: PayPal and Venmo integrations
- Scheduling: Google Calendar for public event visibility
- Plugins: Tools for content formatting and visual interactivity
- Collaboration: Google Drive and Docs
- Devices: Volunteer-owned laptops, desktops, tablets, and smartphones used for admin, events, and social media
- Peripherals: Informal use of printers and scanners by volunteers

## 8.3 *Top 10 Technology Issues*

**See Section 5.2.**

## 8.4 *Strategic Planning/Visioning Documents*

Stakeholder conversations and existing practices provided insight into GPA Louisville's strategic priorities. While no standalone documents were available, the organization's vision is reflected in its volunteer processes, outreach goals, and IT usage patterns.

## 8.5 *IT Budget/Spending Documents*

No formal IT budget documents were shared. Stakeholders noted that technology-related expenses are handled on an as-needed basis, with hosting and minor software costs covered by volunteers or one-time donations.