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## ABOUT NETWORK FOR GOOD

Since 2001 Network for Good has been instrumental at helping tens of thousands of nonprofits raise more funds by engaging supporters and donors in a more meaningful and impactful way. Refreshingly easy to use Donor Management Software, Fundraising Pages, and Personal Fundraising Coaches provide nonprofits with a complete fundraising solution, reducing their need for disparate systems, saving them time and enabling them to raise more funds to support their mission.
Do you know what motivates and inspires your donors?

Do you know why they support your organization? Most importantly, do you know why they keep coming back? If you don’t, you’re making your work harder than it needs to be. Understanding why donors give affects every interaction and piece of communication you have with them. Whether they were asked by a friend or family member, or sought out your mission, motivation is what inspires donors to make that first gift. How you cultivate that motivation is what turns first-time donors into lifelong supporters and advocates of your organization.

This guide will show you the primary reasons why donors give—and one big reason why they don’t. Plus, methods to inspire your donors and keep them engaged, and how to use your data to accomplish all of your fundraising jobs.
Charitable Giving Hits Record High

First some good news...

For the third year in a row, charitable giving reached an all-time high. In 2017, giving exceeded $400 billion for the first time, according to Giving USA 2018: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2017.

- An estimated $410.02 billion was donated to charities across the country.
- Total giving increased 5.2%.
- Individuals gave $286.65 billion, representing 70% of all giving.

Americans continually prove that they want to make a difference and are dedicated to contributing to the causes that matter to them.

So, where are charitable donations going, and what’s motivating this surge in giving?

### Where are donations going?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF FOCUS</th>
<th>CONTRIBUTED \n(\text{(in billions)})</th>
<th>TOTAL GIVING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>$127.37</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$58.90</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Services</td>
<td>$50.06</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>$45.89</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>$38.27</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Society Benefits</td>
<td>$29.59</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Affairs</td>
<td>$22.97</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Culture, Humanities</td>
<td>$19.51</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment/Animal</td>
<td>$11.83</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7 Reasons Why Donors Give—and 1 Why They Don’t

There are as many reasons for giving as there are nonprofits worthy of donations. Each donor will have a unique, personal reason why charitable giving is part of their household budget. Don’t be afraid to ask your donors why they support your organization. Track their response in your donor management system for future engagement, deeper relationships, and a treasure trove of stories and testimonials.

Mission-driven
Donors first come to your nonprofit because they believe in your mission. Whether inspired by a loved one affected by your work, motivated by a desire to give back to their community, or driven by sociopolitical issues, donors are eager to feel part of something purposeful. That passion keeps them connected to you. Be worthy of their commitment. People are more likely to give to organizations that they trust. Show your donors how their gift is being used.

Desire to make a difference
There is a lot in this world that is out of our control. When donors feel their gift has a direct impact on improving a situation, they feel empowered. Be transparent about what you’re using donations to accomplish. From your general fund to specific campaigns, seeing what programs and work donations support is essential to a donor’s confidence in your organization. Providing suggested donation levels offers donors the opportunity to maintain their giving, or perhaps contribute a stretch gift. Stay within a reasonable price range, however. If donors feel you only want major gifts, and that their $50 won’t help your cause, they’ll donate their money elsewhere. That’s why it’s so important to keep accurate records of their past giving, so you can tailor your solicitation to match their capacity to give.
Personal satisfaction
Generosity makes us happy. Donating to charity creates similar brain activity in the regions connected to the experience of pleasure and reward. Scientific studies have proven that generosity stimulates dopamine, which causes happiness. The pleasure systems in the brain are stimulated when we do something nice for others. And it doesn’t matter if the donation is $20 or $200. The sense that a donation can make a difference inspires hope and optimism, regardless of the amount. Donating over long periods of time even reduces stress and strengthens the immune system. Happy people give more, and giving makes people happy. It’s a win-win.

Family and upbringing
For many donors, charitable giving is a family tradition, handed down from generation to generation. Children whose parents discussed giving are 20 percent more likely to give to charity than children whose parents did not discuss giving with them. Behavior learned at a young age stays with us into adulthood. For other donors, the childhood lesson of sharing now manifests as charitable giving. However giving was taught, it has become a lifelong character trait. Donations can take the form of gifts honoring or memorializing loved ones, bequests and planned giving, or simply continuing the tradition of giving back with regular donations to favorite organizations.

Personal stories
This one can’t be stressed enough. Donating is an emotional act, and people connect more to personal stories than statistics or broad statements. A story that captures the imagination and motivates your audience to take action is the foundation of your success as a nonprofit leader. From your nonprofit’s history to community programs to profiles of members and beneficiaries, you have great stories at your fingertips. Put a human face on your facts and statistics, and get to the heart of the matter. Share that with your donors so they can connect with your work on a personal level.

Religious beliefs
Every major religion teaches good will, caring for others, and charitable giving. And donors practice what they preach. Giving USA’s 2017 Special Report on Giving to Religion discovered that 62 percent of religious households give to charity of some kind (religious or secular).
Social networks
The power of social media combined with the ease of online giving has contributed to the rise in popularity of peer-to-peer giving in recent years. These initiatives help nonprofits raise more money by amplifying your message through peer-driven campaigns. Social media has made peer-to-peer giving easier and more popular. It’s hard to say no when our friends or family ask for support. Plus, participating in social campaigns is fun. We want to share our experience and our passion with our network. The more people see their peers involved in a cause, the more likely they are to participate and donate. Just look at the success of the ALS Association’s Ice Bucket Challenge, which raised $115 million for ALS research and awareness, and had everyone from your friends and neighbors to celebrities posting videos of a bucket of ice and water being dumped over their heads.

Tax benefits
The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) will impact every individual and organization. Primary changes affecting charitable giving include an increase in the standard deduction and elimination of personal exemptions. If the standard deduction is more beneficial than itemizing, and donors can’t write off their donations anymore, will they still give as much? Although we won’t know for a few years the lasting impact these changes will have on charitable giving, we know that altruism is the driving factor for why people donate. Use your donor management system to analyze your data in order to put your organization’s energy and funds where it will do the most good.

Network for Good Resources: TCJA and Charitable Giving

Read Tax Reform and Charitable Giving for Nonprofits
Download our 10-Point Checklist to Make the New Tax Laws Work for Your Nonprofit
2/3 of donors wish they could give more to charity

81% say their primary concern is nonprofit transparency and understanding the impact of their gift

65% would give more if they had more insight into the impact of their giving

#1 Reason Why Donors Stop Giving

Aside from the fact that sometimes charitable giving simply isn’t in a donor’s budget, the primary reason donors don’t give is that they stop thinking they (or their gift) matter to your organization. The common cause for this change of heart can be traced back to a few easily preventable issues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>SOLUTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too many solicitations.</td>
<td>Track and examine your donor data in order to avoid asking for gifts when you should be saying thank you, or asking for an inappropriate amount (either too little or too much).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations only ask for money.</td>
<td>Send newsletters, invitations, and thank you messages as well as appeals. Ask your donors to volunteer or share something on social media as another form of engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of trust in how nonprofit is using gift.</td>
<td>Be transparent with your donors and show them exactly how their gift is being used. Include impact markers for all campaigns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting to Yes: How to Inspire Your Donors

Use what you know about your donors’ motivations to connect them to the personal and specific elements in each appeal. Tell one individual’s story, share how your work is helping that person, and then use your data to show tangible proof of how their gift will make a difference. Every action, no matter how small, leads to greater change. Showing your donors that you believe their donation is significant—whatever the amount—magnifies the ripple effect of even the smallest gift.

Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

–Robert F. Kennedy

Follow these simple touchstones to create campaigns that are Connected, Rewarding, Actionable, and Memorable (CRAM), and your campaigns will “cram” their way through the clutter and catch your donors’ attention.

1) **Connect** to things your audience cares about; such as making a difference, being part of a community, feeling good about themselves, feeling heard, etc.

2) **Reward** people for taking action, both emotionally and tangibly. The most effective rewards are immediate, personal, credible, and reflective of your audience’s values.

3) **Action** that is specific, easy to do, and measurably advances your mission offers an immediate sense of gratification.

4) **Memorable** campaigns are unique, catchy, personal, tangible, desirable, and closely tied to your cause.

Once they’ve taken action, thank them for participating, and encourage them to tell their friends about their support of your campaign or organization by providing a link to share on Facebook, Twitter, and email.
Using Donor Management to Improve Fundraising

Improving your fundraising all comes back to donor management. All the inspiration and motivation you arouse in your donors means nothing if you don’t have the proper tools to track their engagement, record their donations, thank them for their support—and contact them again. The right donor management system won’t magically produce donations. It will, however, make you a more efficient, more effective fundraiser. You will save time and increase productivity. All of that will allow you to do more of the quality work you’re known for in your community. And that will help you be a better fundraiser.

Network for Good is dedicated to small nonprofits. We value the work you do in your community, and we know the jobs you need to accomplish. Our all-in-one donor management system allows you to track your donors’ activity with your organization, send appeals and thank-you letters, and launch campaigns with branded, designed donation pages.

At-a-Glance Reporting

You don’t have time for complicated reporting. In order to successfully manage the day-to-day jobs you need to do, you need to be able to track and analyze your donor activity. What campaigns are on course to meet goal? How are you doing compared to last year’s performance? We understand your busy day, and designed our dashboard to keep the most important fundraising and marketing info close at hand.

- View a breakdown of your year-to-date donation totals and the total percentage of gifts associated with each designation.
- Visualize which of your programs are doing great and which might benefit from more attention.
- Review recent activity performed by administrators and donors.
- Quickly see active and lapsed donors, and check what communications they’ve received.
- View campaign results, including total raised, percent to goal, number of gifts, and how much time remains in the campaign.
- Use filters to pull reports and share this information with colleagues or board members.
Campaigns
Your primary job as a fundraiser is to solicit and steward donors for your organization. The success of any campaign or event depends on its presentation. Is it engaging? Is it attractive? Is it shareable? We know the methods that attract and retain donors, and we’ve designed an online giving experience that is easy to use for both you and your donors.

- Simplified giving process for your donors.
- Automated thank-yous and receipts instantly acknowledge gifts.
- Mobile compatibility ensures campaigns look the same across devices.
- Customizable pages featuring logos, colors, and images/video.

Communications
Relevant, personal contact throughout the year—not just when you’re soliciting—turns first-time donors into lifelong donors, increases mid-level donor involvement, and cultivates major donors. To achieve that caliber of engagement you need the right tools and technology. An integrated system that can track all of your donor information and let you easily communicate with supporters ensures you’re always sending the right message at the right time to the right people.

- Designed communication templates for attractive announcements and updates.
- Personalization and segmentation capability for all messages.
- Capture meaningful information about donor motivation, interests, and engagement with custom fields.