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What is Online Fundraising & Why is it Important?

Online fundraising is the use of online and mobile technology to help organizations of all sizes collect donations and improve both traditional and digital fundraising campaigns across multiple channels, usually through the means of a software platform. It encompasses both the technical and creative elements required to improve results, drive donations, and increase cause awareness for potential donors.

For many organizations, online fundraising is a major component in making sure your donors understand what your organization is and why they should donate to your cause. There are many aspects to online fundraising, from how you display your calls-to-action to the way your forms look across web and social media channels, and on a mobile device.

But the best online fundraising isn’t just about building a website and putting your nonprofit's donation form on it. It’s about making the entire online giving experience quick and easy. At MobileCause we believe these principles go hand-in-hand.

This guide is designed to familiarize you with all areas of an online fundraising software platform—from collecting information from your donors, to making sure your online giving forms are mobile-friendly, to building your donor database and marketing your cause to inspire donors to give. If you feel confused about any of the above, you are not alone. That’s why we’re here to help show you how to raise money online quickly and easily.
Why does my nonprofit need online fundraising?

Donations made on the web through online fundraising platforms continue to rise year after year. Although direct mail and in-person asks can be successful in generating donations for your organization, online donations are a much more efficient alternative. This holds true across organization sizes and segments, for everything from youth development services and education, to animal, healthcare, and just about anything else.

Many fundraising software platforms offer one or two solutions like donation forms and crowdfunding, or event ticketing and fundraising. There are also end-to-end online fundraising platforms like MobileCause that are built exclusively for nonprofits and include multiple solutions under one easy-to-use interface, making it easy for donors to give in whichever way they prefer. If donors can't easily give to your organization in a way that is convenient for them, you will likely miss out on invaluable opportunities to gain donations to your nonprofit.

Statistics show that a successful online fundraising setup can make (or break) an organization’s success. Investing in software to help you raise money online can have an exceptionally high rate of return compared to other types of cause marketing and promotion.

Will my donors be able to figure it out?

Your donors are smart, but they still need help. That’s why successful organizations are always working to improve their calls to actions and simplify the donation process for their supporters.

Fundraising platforms help organizations of all sizes do just that by making the process easier and easier year after year. The best online fundraising platform can net large amounts of donations and increased attention, but the wrong one can come with heavy costs and poor results—so choose yours wisely! In addition to making the donation process more convenient for your donors, nonprofit online fundraising also helps your nonprofit boost outreach, meaning your content will be placed where your donors and potential supporters will more readily find it.
Who is this guide for?

We wrote this guide for an audience of first-time fundraisers, seasoned fundraising professionals and organization members, and marketing managers in need of training resources. Most of all, we want you to walk away from this guide feeling confident about online fundraising best practices and how your organization can take advantage of its many beneficial features.

How much of this guide should you read?

If you are serious about improving your online fundraising efforts and are unfamiliar with the solutions fundraising software provides, we recommend reading the whole thing! We’ve made our best efforts to make it brief and easy to understand with helpful tips along the way.

Each section of this guide is important in understanding the most effective fundraising and communication solutions available to your nonprofit today.
Online Giving Makes it Easy to Donate

Think about the donation process like this: a donor is inspired by your organization’s message and wants to give, NOW.

How many steps do they have to take to do so?

The more steps you require, the more likely a potential donor is to lose their inspiration and never give at all.

Mobile-friendly online giving forms make it as easy as possible for supporters to take action in seconds, from anywhere. Supporters can quickly make donations, become a member of your organization, and even set up recurring gifts with just a few taps or clicks on any device.

By using a variety of promotional tools—shortlinks for web promotion, keywords for in-person and media calls-to-action, and QR codes for print campaigns—your nonprofit can direct all demographics of supporters to your donation form in the medium they prefer. How simple is that?
Collect Online Donations From Your Website

Giving should be fast, simple, and secure from every device.

That means creating smooth, streamlined giving experience that allows donors to contribute to your cause with a customizable, mobile-friendly donation page that can be easily and securely accessed from any page of your website. But first things first...

Your DONATE Button Should Be Prominent on Every Page

One simple way to increase online giving is to make sure your visitors have no trouble finding your DONATE or GIVE button when they visit your website.

It should be located in the upper portion of your website, on every page, and should stand out from the rest of the images and text. A good place for this is right above your top navigation. When the button is clicked, donors should be taken to your secure (https) and mobile-friendly donation page to complete their gift.

In addition to clearly communicating what each donation helps you accomplish, the design of your online giving page should reinforce the impact of the donation with:

- Campaign branding
- Videos and photos
- Suggested donation amounts
- Recurring gift options
- In memory/honor of option
- Custom data collection fields
What If My Website Isn’t Responsive?

If you don’t have a responsive website you should be sure to link all of your donate buttons directly to a secure, free-standing online giving page that is mobile-friendly and branded to look like your website to create a seamless experience.

If you do have a responsive website then simply embed your online giving form directly onto a webpage and the form itself will resize with your website.

**Did you know?** Mobile-friendly, responsive donation forms yield 34% more gifts than non-responsive pages because people can donate easily regardless of what device they’re on, be it a PC, tablet, or smartphone.
Easily Capture Donations From Email

Nonprofit organizations rarely see the success they want from email asks alone.

It may sound surprising, but consider this: **over half of all emails are now read on a mobile device.**

Makes more sense now, doesn't it?

Mobile-friendly online giving pages allow you to strengthen the effectiveness of email campaigns by giving your donors a streamlined way to donate from whatever device they’re on.

**Don’t complicate things!** Keep it simple with a prominent DONATE button or text link in your email. Once clicked it should take supporters directly to a online giving page where they can easily make a gift in seconds.

**Email Giving Tip:** Be sure to track and test your email campaigns to get the best conversion rate possible. Try A/B testing subject lines, sending times, calls-to-actions, and imagery.
Online Giving From Social Media

If your organization wants to increase awareness for your cause, it’s no secret that you need to be on social media. The majority of current and potential donors have at least one social account, making it a great way for you to share your mission and progress, and promote donation calls-to-action to encourage followers to give to your organization.

Social is mobile — 65% of all social media activity occurs on a smartphone. Which means that when you share your content and photos through Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, the majority of people seeing it are on a mobile device.

Make it easy and apparent as to how your social followers can donate by linking to a mobile-friendly giving page from your posts.

Online Giving Best Practices for Social Media:

• Encourage followers to click shortlinks in Facebook and Twitter posts
• Encourage followers to text to donate in response to photos on Instagram
• Embed your donation page in a tab on your Facebook page
• Encourage followers to text to donate while broadcasting on Facebook Live and give donors shoutouts as their names appear on your fundraising thermometer
• Empower social followers to make micro donations of $1 or more—it all counts!
Online Giving for Nonprofits via Text Messaging

When it comes to getting in touch, there’s no better way to talk to your supporters than directly on their mobile device—in fact, over 92% of Americans own a mobile phone.

Even better, the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) gives nonprofits special permissions, meaning you can upload any phone numbers you have on record and start contacting your donors in a matter of minutes.

Text-to-donate keywords are the easiest way for supporters to give at home or on the go. All they have to do is text your unique keyword to a 5-digit shortcode and they’ll receive an instant reply with a secure link to your donation page where they can complete their gift.

Text GOUSC to 51555 or go to mcause.us/gousc to see example
**Best Practices for Sending Texts to Donors**

- Send at least 3 different texts with compelling content before asking for a donation
- Send links to videos, web pages, social campaigns, and sign-up forms
- Integrate text reminders with other marketing sends to increase conversions on every channel

**Best Practices for Fundraising by Text Message**

- Build list of mobile subscribers with keywords
- Grow your list of mobile subscribers by collecting mobile number on forms
- Upload and validate the mobile phone numbers you already have in your database

**Did you know?** Text messages have a **98% open rate**, meaning you can almost guarantee they will be read by your audience. This means that creating a great mobile giving experience is more important than ever.
Get Online Donations From Direct Mail

Times have changed. Today’s donors find direct mail to be annoying. Plus, donor acquisition mail only yields a 1.0% response rate even if you do everything right.

Increase direct mail response rates by making it easy to give online. Empower your donors to give in the way that they prefer, be it by sending a text, going to your website, or scanning a QR code to make a donation.

Online donation instructions should be prominently located on the envelope and within your letter. Even better, USPS offers a 2% discount on postage if you include a QR code on your envelope.

Online Giving Best Practices for Direct Mail Fundraising:

• Track every online donation made in response to direct mail by using a unique link
• Strengthen donor records by collecting mobile numbers and emails
• Strengthen direct mail campaigns with simultaneous text message reminders

Did you know? **35% of donors** say they prefer to respond to direct mail by giving online.
Capture Donations From Television Appeals

Securing a television spot means potentially securing a huge boost in donations and awareness for your nonprofit. So take advantage of the audience you have and give them an easy way to donate!

**Text-to-give keywords** are the simplest call-to-action for television. Even better, you can include your website URL along with your text-to-give keyword to yield the highest possible donation totals for your organization's campaign.

Many of these donations, especially when it comes to timely issues such as disaster relief, are made on impulse in response to increased media coverage and celebrities asking their fans to support the cause. This heightened awareness combined with an easily accessible online giving page that can be accessed from anywhere means maximum success for your organization.

**Online Giving Best Practices for Television Fundraising:**

- Track every donation made by using a unique text-to-give keyword
- Recognize donors in real-time by displaying their names on a live fundraising thermometer
- Provide your website URL for an alternate means of giving
Generate Donations From Radio Broadcasts

Radio asks can be tricky because there is nothing for viewers to see, and they are often not in a situation where they can write anything down. Radio hosts and nonprofits need to streamline the donation process to make it easy for listeners to make donations. Text-to-donate keywords can help.

Make it easy to give on the go. The best ways to promote online giving and turn your listeners into donors is to instruct listeners to text-to-donate with a simple, easy-to-remember keyword, or instruct them to go to your website.

People listening to the radio are usually on the move whether they are in their car, at the gym or at work, so keep this in mind and make your call-to-action clear!

Online Giving Best Practices for Radio Fundraising:

• Make your call-to-action as simple and easy as possible
• Give on-air thanks to donors throughout broadcasts to inspire more giving
• Promote your campaign until the fundraising goal is reached

See how Steve Harvey promoted his campaign by radio to raise over $1 million in just one month.

https://youtu.be/6XR239hTL-E
Easily Collect Donations Over the Phone

Whether you’re a university with a student-run call center or an organization hosting its annual volunteer phonathon, online giving makes the process smoother than ever.

Simply provide your phone representatives with a link to your secure online donation form, and they’ll be able to collect donor information and enter it into the form to submit their donation with just a click.

**Online Giving Tip:** Instantly send GiveLater donation page links by text message to donors that don’t want to give their credit card information over the phone to allow them to complete their gift at a later time. Additionally, you can send 3 automatic text message reminders to follow up if they do not fulfill their pledge.

**Did you know?** Donors are 4 times more likely to connect with your nonprofit when they are contacted on their mobile phone. Use phone number validation to identify the mobile numbers you may already have in your donor database.
Engaged Supporters Equal Event Success

In fact, with the right technology, getting people involved and excited about your charity event can be easier than you think!

No matter what type of fundraising event you’re organizing, this section of the guide will provide key cross-channel marketing strategies that will help you maximize attendance and participation to set your organization up for event fundraising success.

This guide can help you organize and market any type of fundraising event—everything from runs, walks, and rides, to galas, golf tournaments, and more.

Sell Tickets Online with Just a Few Clicks

Mobile and online event fundraising software allows participants of all ages to sign up for any type of event in seconds from the convenience of their smartphone, tablet, or desktop computer.

Getting the word out about ticket sales is one of the first things you should do to market your fundraising event. And mobile and online solutions make it easier than ever to set up.

In addition the standard date, time, and location information, you’ll want to include a brief explanation as to what your event is and who or what it’s supporting, as well as a keyword and shortcode that gives supporters a simple way to buy tickets by simply sending a text message on their mobile device.

Be sure to feature your organization’s name or logo on the payment form for those who may not be familiar with your cause. The more people who attend, the better!
Only Selling a Limited Amount of Tickets?

Be sure to include how many tickets are left or if the event is sold out in email, text message, and social media communications about your event. This will create a sense of urgency to motivate your supporters to buy their tickets sooner rather than later.

**Event Fundraising Tip:** Once the event is sold out you can direct supporters to a waitlist form or a page for upcoming events.

Nearly 20% of event registrations come from mobile devices. Keep this in mind as part of your event fundraising strategy so you don’t miss out on potential RSVPs and donations by ignoring your mobile audience!
4 Simple Steps to Maximize Attendance

Mobile and online invitations, registrations, and reminders

Step 1: Fundraising Event Invitations

Invitations are the first step in your fundraising event marketing plan. They create the excitement and buzz around your event. Include date, time, and location, as well as an explanation as to what your event is supporting. Your keyword and shortcode should also be present along with brief instructions that tell supporters how they can RSVP from their phones. Be sure to include your organization’s name on the invite for those who may not be familiar with your cause.

To get the most out of marketing your fundraising event, invites should be promoted on all channels including email, social media, direct mail, and text message. For marketing channels that support images it’s best to include the event information in both the image and message text to make it shareable.

Event Fundraising Tip: Create a public event on Facebook with instructions on how to RSVP, buy tickets, and donate. This gives you the ability to invite those who “like” your page. Invitees can then invite people in their networks, increasing both awareness and attendance.

How to increase RSVPs for event fundraising success:

- Upload phone numbers to send text message reminders
- Have supporters text your keyword to subscribe for updates
- Ask for registrations and out-of-towner gifts
- Tell supporters who do not prefer texts to reply STOP to opt out
Make sure your invitation emails are mobile-friendly and include a clear call-to-action button to RSVP, as well as an explanation as to what the event donations will be used for. You can even include a donate link for those who can’t attend.

Bright images and bold colors increase shareability and engagement regardless of channel or media type. Include event information on the image itself so supporters can share with their social network.

There is still a place for traditional invites sent by mail, especially for black tie events like dinner galas. However, you can still incorporate mobile and online capabilities by including a QR codes and a keyword/shortcode that links to your online event sign-up page.
Step 2: Event Registrations

Here’s the most important part for a successful event fundraising strategy: turning your invitees into attendees!

RSVP forms need to be easy to fill out, but should capture all the information needed by your organization to stay in touch with supporters both before and after the event. Your RSVP form must also work on any device—PC, tablet or smartphone—or else you may miss out on valuable attendee support and donations.

To guarantee the most form submissions, stick to the bare necessities: name, email, mobile number, and donation/ticket information.

If your organization needs extra information, such as a mailing address to send direct response mail to, or shirt size for a run/walk, this is the place to include it. Just remember to keep it simple!

Event Fundraising Tip: Include your event branding and benefit statement on the RSVP form to keep invitees reminded of the good they will be supporting by attending your event.
Send automatic email donation receipts to thank donors for their ticket purchase and for supporting your organization.

Send automatic donation confirmation text messages as an instant reply when donors submit a form. Don’t forget to thank them here too!
Step 3: Fundraising Event Reminders

Your supporters are busy people. Perhaps they see your email and forget to respond, or accidentally toss out your direct mail invite.

Fear not! Text messages are a great way to boost the success of your fundraising event registrations, as well as remind those who have already RSVP’d about your event in the weeks leading up to the big day. This can be accomplished easily by dividing invitees and attendees into two separate lists.

Event Fundraising Tip: It is best to couple event reminders with compelling storytelling about your event or cause. Tell recipients why the event is important, how they are helping propel your mission, and who or what will benefit from their attendance. This is your chance to tug on those heartstrings and inspire your supporters!
Using text messages to market your fundraising event makes it easy to send links to compelling videos, benefactor stories, and recaps from previous events in order to help build excitement prior to the big day.

Text message reminders also help dramatically increase event participation by giving you the option to send friendly reminders and communicate any last-minute changes or information leading up to the event.
4 Simple Steps to Mobile Pledging Success

Increase giving using text message integration for your best event yet.

**Step 1: Set Up A Donation Keyword for your Event**

In your event fundraising strategy, your donation keyword will likely be the main way attendees make donations during your event so be sure to select an available keyword that is branded to your organization.

Your keyword or acronym should be one word to avoid any AutoCorrect errors. When participants text your keyword to the shortcode, a 5-digit phone number like 41444 or 91999, they will receive a text message reply with a link to fulfill their gift with a credit or debit card.

After the event, donors with unfulfilled pledges will receive up to 3 automatic text message reminders and can receive a follow up voice call from a member of your team.

**Did you know?** All participants that make a pledge via keyword are automatically subscribed to receive ongoing text message alerts from your organization.
Step 2: Set Up Your Fundraising Event Donation Page

The donation page is where your attendees will go to fulfill their pledge, making it a vital component of your event fundraising strategy. Customize your page with your organization’s branding and custom fields to capture the donor data you need, but be sure to keep it simple.

Mobile pledges can be easily fulfilled through the secure reply link from the convenience of a smartphone or tablet, meaning your attendees will be able to donate right from their seats.

Tips: Include images, custom messages, and custom fields on your donation page to reinforce the intention of the gift and collect maximum amounts. Embed your donation form on your website for easy pre- and post-event giving.

Essential components of an event donation page:

- Custom donation page branding (organization or event logo)
- Recurring gift options and suggested donation amount
- Credit card fields (Apple and Android AutoFill compatible)
- Donor data fields
- Custom fields for any other data collection
- Customized donate button text
Step 3: Set Up Your Fundraising Event Thermometer

Go to mcause.us/unity to see thermometer example and how to make a pledge

Here comes the best part: creating an exciting moment of giving live at your event! Customize your fundraising event thermometer with your event colors and imagery and have it ready to be displayed during the most compelling part of your event—then instruct attendees to make a pledge and watch the donations roll in.

Mobile pledges and donor names will appear in real time as they are texted in by participants. Donors also have the option to remain anonymous and include a message instead of their name.

Donations that display dynamically on-screen create an exciting moment of giving that **increases how much people give by 25%**.

As donations come in, the thermometer rises, donations are totaled, and donors are counted, creating a shared experience—and maybe even a little friendly competition—as donors contribute and watch the thermometer climb to collectively help you reach your event goal.
Step 4: Set Up Automatic Tax Receipts

Tax receipts are not only helpful to your donors, but they also reinforce your branding and give you an instant opportunity to thank donors for their gifts.

**Tip:** Send automatic text message thank yous in addition to donation receipt emails to reduce admin time and save money on postage. This gives you the opportunity to show donors how grateful you are for their generous donation, and allows you to tell them what their donation is helping your organization accomplish.

Plus, first-time donors who get a personal thank you within 48 hours of making a gift are **4x more likely to give a second gift**. Never underestimate the importance of saying thanks!

After making a donation, donors should receive an on-screen confirmation with social share links. In just one tap or click they can then share your donation page with their social networks to increase awareness and giving.

Donors will also receive a text message confirmation of their donation for their records.
Gain New Donors With Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is the best way to gain more new donors for your cause. Volunteers, advocates, celebrities, and corporations can raise donations from friends and family using their own peer-to-peer fundraising pages shared across social media, text message, and email. The average crowdfunding campaign sees 5 out of 8 donors being new to their organization, and the average individual collecting $612.

These tips can be applied to virtually any crowdfunding campaign, giving you the info you need, and giving your campaign the potential to go viral across social media.

Empower Your Network of Supporters to Raise Donations

Conveniently raise donations via mobile, social, and online networks.

Crowdfunding and peer-to-peer fundraising often go hand in hand, but knowing the difference is key for both you and your donors. Above all, donor education is paramount when it comes to the success of your crowdfunding campaign. In order to accomplish this, you should:

What is crowdfunding for nonprofits?

Marketing directly to your existing donor base and new donors to help you raise donations for a specific campaign.

- Create a library of assets and communication for educating donors
- Create emails, templates, images and more
- Make it as easy as possible for donors to give
- Plan a series of training events (in-person or virtual)
- Set clear goals and make the value of the campaign clear
What is peer-to-peer fundraising:

Peer-to-peer fundraising works similarly to crowdfunding, but the main difference is that you are educating your donors to empower them to market to and raise money from their personal networks on their own. To do this you should:

- Decide if you are rallying existing donors or attracting new ones
- Use success stories and compelling videos to attract new donors
- Make it as easy as possible for donors to give
- Give value 3 times before asking something of people
- Keep building your email list—it’s still a great way to spread the word!

Did you know? 1/3rd of all online donations are a result of peer-to-peer fundraising and nearly 90% of donations come from Millennials and Gen Xers!

How to Reach Millennial and Gen X Donors

They avoid phone calls, rarely respond to emails, and tend to throw out any direct mail they receive. So how do you get them involved with your cause? Target them on the one piece of technology they have on them at all times: their smartphone.

Both Millennials and Gen Xers are generous and want to give, but tend not to carry cash or checks. Therefore, it is imperative that everything your organization does is accessible from a mobile device. Mobile and online fundraising solutions are the #1 way to do this successfully for your cause.
Reaching Millennial Donors
Age 18-35

Millennials have recently surpassed Boomers as the largest generation in America, and by 2025 will make up 75% of the workforce. They are active on their phones and respond best to text messages and social media, but rarely respond to personal email or voice calls. They tend to watch videos online before making a gift, and prefer to donate online right from their phones.
Reach Gen X Donors
Age 36-50

Combined with Millennials, Gen Xers make up over 2/3 of the workforce today. These donors are most likely to fundraise on behalf of a cause, make a pledge, and volunteer their time to an organization. Gen X donors check email regularly, stay up-to-date on social media feeds, and prefer to receive communication by text message, making mobile and online fundraising solutions vital in targeting them.

Appeal to the Donor Psyche to Motivate People to Give

**Empathy:** use compelling video, images, and stories with clear calls to action

**Storytelling:** stories connect people, and people connect to the stories being told

**Impact:** appeal to the ego—people want to feel like they are making a difference for your cause

**Social pressure:** people are more likely to give after seeing others do the same

**Scarcity:** create a sense of urgency to get people to participate

**Small first step:** a small initial commitment is more likely to lead to a bigger commitment later on
Crowdfunding Tips for Success

Conveniently raise donations via mobile, social, and online networks.

Leveraging the power of the “crowd” and the community is what makes crowdfunding so successful, so share the impact of your cause! Be sure both your vision and your goal are clear and provide updates throughout the campaign to keep fundraisers motivated and informed about the progress being made as you move closer to your goal.

Crowdfunding Best Practices

- Upload phone numbers and send text message reminders
- Conduct organized training to orient crowdfunding volunteers
- Encourage participants to customize their page
- Attach direct impact to each dollar and explain gift benefits
- Be transparent about costs to encourage good stewardship
- Provide a fundraising guide to encourage peer-to-peer activities
- Create a journal framework for people to share their stories
- Always bring it back to your mission and goal!
Crowdfunding Tips

Treat every follower as a potential fundraiser.

Tell your nonprofit’s story across social media to help propel the momentum of your crowdfunding campaign. From micro donations to larger gifts, show your audience what every level of involvement means to your cause in order to increase participation and giving, and inspire them to share your campaign with their own networks!

Tips for success:

• Ask for participation across all social networks
• Utilize text message keywords and links for easy promotion across channels
• Use your unique voice to tell your story along with donation asks
• Include bold, bright images and compelling video and provide clear instructions within each to boost participation
• Encourage your audience to get their personal networks involved by sharing posts and asking them to fundraise with you
• Keep your audience updated as you reach milestones along the way
• Show supporters how they will be making a difference by donating or fundraising on your behalf
• Thank and recognize donors and fundraisers for participating
• Post often, across all networks—they won’t all be seen!
Deciding on the type of crowdfunding campaign is only the first step.

While you can start your campaign by simply by reaching out to a small circle of supporters, you must also understand how and where to actively promote the type of nonprofit crowdfunding campaign you choose.

Then decide what you can do to help your peer-to-peer fundraisers capitalize on every opportunity available to make the biggest impact.

**Alumni Engagement**

Those who have been involved in the past are most likely to participate.

“Alumni” isn’t limited to just schools—it’s anyone who has been involved with your organization:

This includes volunteers, donors, past beneficiaries, and anyone on your email or mailing list.

These supporters have already invested in your cause in some way, making them the best people to spread the word and raise donations on behalf of your organization.

**Runs, Walks, Swims, Rides, and More...**

Embrace the trend in order to target Millennial and Gen X donors.

Both of these generations spend much time online and on their smartphones and look for fun and meaningful ways to give back, making them ideal candidates to fundraise for your cause before and during a run/walk (or other event) using mobile solutions.

Use all your available communication tools including social media, text messages & email to spread the word about the event to get supporters signed up.
Make sure to follow up with your supporters on your progress frequently to **create excitement** leading up to the event.

Try creating teams to fuel friendly competition and boost donations to your cause.

**Disaster Relief**

Donations are the lifeblood of every organization. The faster you raise money, the faster your organization can do good.

There are 4 **essentials of effective disaster relief crowdfunding** campaigns that will drive maximum awareness, participation and donations.

**Brand your campaign:** customize every aspect with your org name, logo, colors, imagery, clear goals and dates

**Tell your story:** includes videos, photos, testimonials

**Make It Easy to Give:** include a secure, mobile-responsive donation form with clear giving instructions.

**Make It Easy to Advocate:** empower any person or business to easily share and create personal fundraising pages.
Service Projects, Missions, and Trips

When you need to raise money for a trip to further your cause's mission, crowdfunding is a great way to get it done quickly and efficiently.

There are 4 essentials of effective disaster relief crowdfunding campaigns that will drive maximum awareness, participation and donations.
Online Forms Make It Easy to Get Involved

Mobile-friendly online forms empower your organization to do everything from collecting volunteer sign-ups and membership payments to sending surveys, petitions, and more.

Sign Up Volunteers to Strengthen Your Organization

When you are creating your volunteer sign-up or application form you’ll want to decide what information you need to collect, so determine what is vital for your campaign.

Removing a single question from your volunteer application form can increase submissions over 26%, so remember to keep it to the bare minimum.

Make it even easier to sign up by having supporters text a keyword to receive a link to your volunteer application form right on their mobile device.

Every time a volunteer signs up via text keyword, they are able to be subscribed so you can send text reminders and updates before, after and during your volunteer event.

Tip: Promote volunteer application forms at fundraising events and at your office for an easy way to get supporters involved.

Did you know? Volunteers are almost twice as likely to donate to you as non-volunteers.
Online membership forms are the easiest way to turn your supporters into members.

Memberships empower your nonprofit to increase recurring contributions in the form of monthly or annual dues. Be sure to customize your form with a drop-down menu or check boxes to allow supporters to select the level of commitment they prefer.

Using software with automated payment notifications and tax receipts will make becoming a member of your nonprofit an easy and seamless experience for both you and your supporters.

**Tip:** Engage members throughout the year with exclusive video updates.
Quick and Easy Sign-ups with Digital Forms

Lose the pencil and paper—and reap the rewards.

If you are still using paper forms for sign-ups you are creating more work for your organization and a hassle for your supporters. Putting your forms online makes it so they can be accessed from any device to streamline the process.

Save time and money on both staff and resources with mobile-friendly online forms.

Customize your nonprofit’s online forms to capture any information you need, everything from phone number and address to interest level and any special skills your supporters may be able to volunteer for your nonprofit.

Learn More About Your Supporters With Donor Surveys

Get insights about your donors like never before. Nonprofit surveys are a great way to find out who your donors are, why they give, and what interests them.
This allows your organization to run more effective fundraising campaigns by developing donor personas—identifying the main groups of people who give to your cause.

Be sure to follow up with your donor survey takers to keep your organization top of mind and in the loop.

**Tip:** Create fundraising campaigns based on donor passions. Appeal to their heart with compelling storytelling and the donations will come naturally.

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**The Easiest Way to Collect Payments**

Save thousands in administrative costs using online payment forms.

Non-donation revenue provides you with extra help for everything from the day-to-day expenses, to payroll, to the rent for your office. Using **mobile and online payment forms** makes it easy to collect these revenues from anywhere and on any device.

Making your forms mobile responsive will help increase submissions by 34%.

**Tip:** Customize photos, fields and button to reinforce the intention of the payment and show how much it means to your organization.
Use petitions to increase awareness and drive social change for the matters your cause cares most about. Mobile and online petition forms can be easily customized and allow you to conveniently collect signatures from any device, both in-person and remotely.

Add compelling photos or video to your online petition forms to tell your cause’s story and motivate your supporters to take action. This is your chance to show them how vital their support is to making your mission a reality!

Include fields to collect petitioner information like phone number and email to add them to your list of on-going communications. This allows you to keep them updated about the petition status, as well as invite them to events, ask for donations, and keep them in the loop with updates about your organization year after year.

**Tip:** Set a goal to convert a percentage of petitioners into each donors each year.
Chapter 5: Social Media Strategy

A Huge Opportunity Awaits on Social Media

Social media poses both the biggest challenge and biggest opportunity for nonprofit organizations. Everyone from Millennials to Gen Xers to Baby Boomers uses it. Though it may seem daunting at first, social networks are arguably the best place to fuel your follower base with both new and existing supporters.

Reach your supporters with a well-thought-out social media strategy to create a culture of continuous donor engagement.

The ability to engage your organization’s followers through compelling, shareable content, storytelling updates, and calls to action are just some of the many great reasons why your nonprofit should use social media.

Social Media by the Numbers

- 65% of people use a social network
- 67% use social media to stay in touch with current friends—64% current family and 50% old friends
- There are 500 million tweets sent per day, and 78% of users tweet from mobile devices
- 44% of Twitter users don’t tweet, but watch other people tweet
- 500 hours of video is uploaded to YouTube every minute
- Facebook reaches 81% of the U.S. digital population, Twitter 36%, Instagram 34%
- The average Facebook visit is 18 minutes
- The average Facebook user has 130 friends
- 1 million links are shared every 20 minutes on Facebook
- Instagram posts generate 58 times more engagement per follower than on Facebook and 120 times than on Twitter every minute

Statistics compiled from Statistic Brain, MarketingSherpa and Forrester Research
Step #1 Make a Plan

Set your goals and go after them
Create a clear-cut plan of who and what you’re trying to target and craft content for those goals. In addition to internal goals, set weekly and monthly goals as part of your social media strategy around follower count and engagement, volunteer sign-ups, and donations.

Step #2 Customize Your Message

Tailor your content to each platform
A one-size-fits-all approach doesn’t work for social media. A great tip you should keep in mind is that every channel is unique, and your posts should reflect that. Facebook is a great place for slightly longer, engaging posts. Twitter’s 140 character limit means you have to be short and to the point. And for Instagram and YouTube, you’ll need to create graphic and video content for your cause.

Step #3 Inspire Participation

Get followers involved in your cause
A best practice is to put effort into growing your social following by telling your story. All of your hard work will pay off, transforming social media into a powerful tool where you can get people involved, start conversations with followers, promote your fundraising events and campaigns, ask followers to donate and fundraise on your behalf, and more!
How Nonprofits Should Use Social Media

A solid action plan is imperative for long-term fundraising success.

Technology is not a miracle cure, it is an amplifier—and it amplifies both good and bad. A social media page alone is not enough! While many nonprofits do well with general awareness, organizations need a sound fundraising strategy to put behind their social media efforts to achieve ongoing success.

Did you know? “Social Media Gives you an equal playing field or near equal playing field with many large brands and organizations.”

– Ritu Sharma, Co-founder and CEO, Social Media for Nonprofits

How to build an effective social media strategy:

• Think about social as part of a long-term strategy for bringing in new supporters.

• Design a social media strategy that builds on your nonprofit’s fundraising efforts.

• Create mobile-friendly donation pages with corresponding text message keywords and shortlinks

• Have a clear vision of what you wish to accomplish and how you’ll analyze the data.

• Involve different departments and get your board engaged

Social Media Best Practices

Create a network of support with compelling content and campaign integration.

As a general rule, it is a social media best practice to focus your efforts in to the 1-2 channels you are already use. Put a dedicated team member (who can write well!) in charge of posting updates across channels—their passion for your cause and the community will shine through.
How integrate social media

• Identify the most compelling stories in your organization.
• Test your mobile-friendly donation page and create shortlinks—this is vital!
• Identify influencers (people with a lot of followers) and reach out to ask them to help share your campaign.
• Provide staff and volunteers with talking points to use in posts and in person

Why Nonprofits Should Use Social Media

Fundraising campaigns are undoubtedly huge in the nonprofit space, but it is imperative to have fundraising solutions that integrate with social media to make it easy for participants to support your cause throughout the year, including at events.

One example of social media success is the Cartersville Dances with the Stars event. The event featured local celebrities competing to see who could raise the most money by getting the community involved. Supporters could fundraise on their own individual donation pages and altogether they ended up raising over $124k!

Proven strategies:

• Create a separate social network/ Facebook page for the event
• Encourage “celebrity” participation and repost from their pages
• Produce content, images, and assets for use by participants
• Create individual donation pages to track, share, and promote
• Update social pages during live event with photos, videos, etc
• Create posts to follow up with and thank donors and participants
Social Media Tips for Nonprofits

Each social media marketing channel needs to have different messages and imagery. For example, posting to Facebook requires a different message than posting to Instagram—even if you are using photos in both places.

People use different social media channels for different reasons and your nonprofit organization needs to customize communications to your audience's level of expectation.

Text-to-give keywords collect pledges

Hashtags create a community of support

Map Out Your Entire Donor Experience and Track Everything

From the first time an individual likes one of your posts to a lifetime of recurring online donations, each donor touchpoint presents an opportunity for your nonprofit organization to grow its mission and fuel your cause. Once you have properly set up your fundraising campaign, you will be able to measure and gauge donor behavior every step of the way.

Essential social media fundraising components:

- Keywords and shortlinks for easy promotion
- Mobile-friendly forms
- Embed logos, photos, and videos
- Custom fields for donor data collection
- Secure donation pages

- Suggested donation amounts and recurring gift options
- Peer-to-peer fundraising integration
- Automatic email receipts and SMS notifications
Step 1: Sign Up Experience

From start to finish, your donation experience should be branded with your organization’s logo, colors, imagery, and even videos. Customize your donation confirmation page with donation, crowdfunding, and social share instructions.

Mobile-friendly sign-up form with campaign branding, video, and custom fields.

Step 2: Donation Experience

From start to finish, your donation experience should be branded with your organization's logo, colors, imagery, and even videos. Customize your donation confirmation page with donation, crowdfunding, and social share instructions.
Include suggested donation amounts and recurring gift options on your secure, mobile-friendly donation form.

**Step 3: Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Experience**

Supporters can set up their own peer-to-peer fundraising page with photo, message, and goal.

These individual fundraising pages empower supporters to raise donations from friends and family on behalf of your organization.
Smartphones Are the Easiest Way to Create Professional Looking Fundraising Videos

In terms of likes, shares, downloads and donations, video consistently outperforms all other forms of digital communication. Every campaign should include a series of inspirational fundraising videos with a simple call-to-action.

A nonprofit fundraising video that lasts 60-seconds may be equal to 1.8 million words or 3600 pages of text, but the raw emotion captured is what matters most! Compelling video storytelling is the best way for nonprofit organizations to strengthen donor engagement and community outreach across mobile, social, and online channels. This is the key to success!

**Important Video Stats Straight From Nonprofits:**

- **57% of online donors** make a gift after watching an inspirational fundraising video
- Crowdfunding pages promoted by video **raise 4 times** as many donations
- **More than 1/2 of video views** happen on a mobile device
- **80%** of respondents said video is important to their nonprofits
- 91% believe video will become more important in the next three years
- **92%** value the investment they made in video

See3, YouTube and communications strategy consultancy Edelman
Tips for Creating Inspirational Fundraising Videos

Tip #1: Use the iMovie App to Produce Videos and Upload to YouTube and Vimeo

In just a few hours a member of your team can master iMovie. Your nonprofit will be able to easily create, edit, and publish professional looking fundraising videos that include:

- Video clips and photos
- Music and testimonials
- Transitions and effects

Purchase the $4.99 iMovie app on your smartphone and Google search “How to use iMovie on an iPhone” to find free training videos.

Tip #2: Encourage Your Staff and Volunteers to Share Videos on Facebook

Organic videos, recorded on individuals’ smartphones, are often the most effective way to capture and showcase the essence of your mission and the good your organization is accomplishing.

Ask staff and volunteers to share their videos on your nonprofit’s page as well as their own personal pages to help spread the word.

Use this content to create fresh 15-, 30-, and 60-second PSA videos with a call to action for donations.
Tip #3: Use Airdrop to Easily Share Content Between Devices

Connect devices (smartphones, tablets, PCs) to a WiFi connection and use Apple's Airdrop app to share content. In seconds you can collect existing content from volunteers and supporters by having them easily send their videos, photos and recordings.

AirDrop is the easiest way to gather up content from multiple devices before creating a video

How to Make Nonprofit Fundraising Videos

Smartphones give everyone the ability to make nonprofit videos, but remember that your message is more important than a Hollywood-quality production. Keep that camera on to capture inspiring, feel-good moments, and use each of these guidelines to help effectively share your story and compel donors to keep giving.

4 Key Principles of Effective Video Production for Nonprofits:

Tell your story by showing viewers the issues that matter most to your cause. Remember, getting your message out there is more important than stellar production quality!

Speak to donors and show them how your organization makes a difference. Raw videos with real moments uniquely capture authentic emotion and passion.

Show the good you are doing with inspiring behind-the-scenes footage and interviews with program beneficiaries. It's all about showcasing the difference you're making!

Be passionate and show donors how and why they can help contribute.

Say thank you by continuously recognizing donor generosity and support.
Best Practices for Getting Started with Video:

Ensure you always have a clear call-to-action at the end of your video. Don’t just leave your audience hanging, ask them to make a difference. Include a call-to-action slide that tells supporters how they can easily give to your cause.

Video best practices

- Always remember is that video is all about the human connection
- Compile a library of footage taken by volunteers and staff
- Keep your donors’ interest piqued with raw and real, behind-the-scenes footage that shows the good you are accomplishing
- Post videos separately to YouTube & Facebook and cross promote with email and SMS as often you have something compelling to share
- Keep your call-to-action for donations coherent and consistent

Start Using Facebook Live!

Facebook Live is the easiest way for nonprofits to create video content and instantly broadcast it to a worldwide community of engaged supporters.

Here’s how it works:

- Open the Facebook app on your smartphone
- On your personal page: Select News Feed > Status > Live Video
- Your followers will receive a message that you are broadcasting and your live feed will display on your wall
- Followers can chat with you in real time and your broadcast can also be found publicly by a worldwide audience. It’s that easy!
- Keep your broadcast focused: use it to promote an upcoming event, provide an urgent update, make a donation
Video Fundraising Production Essentials from a Hollywood Pro

It’s not just for galas and events. Video is the fastest and most effective way to highlight your nonprofit’s core messaging in the eyes of your audience and tell your story to viewers across channels.

Video relays your message clearly and effectively, creating emotion that inspires viewers to take action for your organization and shows them what they can do to help, be it through volunteering time and resources or making a monetary donation to your cause.

When you highlight your organization’s core messaging in a real, authentic way, you give viewers the opportunity—and inspiration—to get involved with your nonprofit on an emotional level and encourage them to volunteer time and resources to your cause.

Key Components of the Best Fundraising Videos:

- **Evoke the senses** when telling your story with images and stories that viewers a reason to believe in your cause
- **Relatability is key**, so tap into what resonates by creating a familiar persona that incorporates your organization’s message and aspirations
- **Cast powerful characters**, passionate people from your org or benefiting from your mission create empathy to help viewers relate to and get them behind your cause
- **Know your audience.** Target your story for a direct and specific purpose—if you don’t know who you’re talking to, the right people won’t be listening
- **Passion is paramount**, so keep your purpose in mind and add in some depth to match the tone and feel of your organization
- **Humility helps everyone**—connect your audience to your org in a sincere way to create trust in your mission and get people involved
Video Fundraising Means Fundraising Success

Video as part of fundraising is essential, as people want to see and connect to the story you are telling. Being true to your mission is the best way to inspire people to get excited and help inspire giving.

Best ways to guarantee success through video fundraising:

- Use social media: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram
- Create a following in the community by reaching out to influencers
- Give it time—even the best campaigns don’t succeed overnight
- Immediacy is essential, so be sure your images reflect timely stories that are important to your organization and to your viewers
- Create a visual narrative to encourage liking and sharing
- Start small—you don’t need a big budget to have big impact
- Reach out to the community to find those willing to dedicate time to help you create a great video for your cause
Email Marketing Will Increase Your Reach

Despite the rise in social media and text message communications, many supporters still check their email. Mobile devices make it easy for donors to connect with your cause and mobile-friendly emails are a great way to reach supporters who may be checking their inboxes on a mobile device.

In fact, according to a recent Litmus study, **more than half of all emails are opened via mobile devices** so you want to be sure your organization is ready easily collect donations from email.

Email Marketing Best Practices

People are much more likely to improve your online giving, read your content, click your links, and follow through on your calls-to-action if your email is mobile friendly.

Mobile-friendly emails contain text, headers, buttons and images that automatically resize when an individual views the email on a mobile device.

Many email marketing services like MailChimp & Constant Contact provide easy drag and drop editors that enable you to create both online and mobile-friendly versions of your emails.

**Email design best practice:**
Keep in mind that people tend to look at images, skim the first few sentences, and click a link if your call-to-action is compelling, so keep your content short and to the point!
Send Emails That Drive an Emotional Response

If you want to emotionally connect with supporters through their inboxes, you’ll need to do more than make your messages mobile-friendly. Donors tend to be more interested in feeling than in facts or figures, and emotions drive supporters to act.

Why does this matter?

Emails are more personal than website copy and scalable to audiences of all sizes.

**Important Email Marketing Stats:**

- 63% of smartphone users delete emails immediately after opening if they are not mobile friendly
- 53% of all emails are opened on a mobile device
- 33% of recipients open email based on subject line alone
- 15-20 seconds is the average time an email is open

Use Emails to Tell Your Story

Capturing readership for your cause means delivering compelling content, and the best way to do that is to replace your “newsletters” with personal, meaningful stories. Firsthand narratives and pictures provide concrete representations of the charitable work your cause is doing to make a difference in the world, and will help inspire action.

**The most immediate—and authentic—type of story is that of a person who has been helped by your organization.**

These are narratives you should collect straight from the source, as nothing is more impactful than firsthand experience. Ask beneficiaries of your cause to write their experience in their own words or, if you deal with non-human beneficiaries, compile photographs or videos that show what was done and how it helped. Don’t be afraid to appeal to the heart!
Use Email to Showcase Your Donors

Be prepared to do a little searching before you find stories so you can send emails that resonate. Don’t force the narrative—if you do this, the writing will appear disingenuous and is more likely to disconnect the readers from your cause.

It’s not imperative that you focus only on those who received help from your organization. Volunteer and donor profiles also count as compelling stories. The latter can help your donor retention efforts, according to Network for Good. Using a stellar example of a how a benefactor helped make a good cause possible can inspire others to follow suit.

Furthermore, recognition can motivate first-time philanthropists to give online to your cause, so don’t shy away from thanking donors immediately and thoroughly—you can even tag them in your social media posts thanking them for their generosity.

Emails Must Be Simple or They Won’t Be Read

One of most important email marketing best practices is to keep your message simple. One call-to-action is best!

Readers can’t connect to muddled words and long paragraphs, no matter how compelling the shared story is.
If you **stick to short sentences and keep your paragraphs tidy**, you’ll keep your audience scrolling down the page.

You can also break up sections of text with an image or two. Visuals are intuitive and create a shared connection with the reader. Visuals also help anchor your story so you don’t stray from the main point.

Speaking of anchors, emails are a great way to drive supporters to your website to read more or online donation page. Instead of including a whole narrative in the body of an email, tell just the beginning before providing an external link to the rest of the tale.

**And don’t forget:**
33% of email recipients open emails based on subject line alone. An effective non-profit email marketing best practice is to spend as much time working on your subject line as you do designing your entire email.

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**Quick Email Marketing Tips:**

- Make sure that you always have at least one image near the top of the email so that you can engage readers before they have to scroll
- For highest click-through rates be sure to link a line of text (top), your image (middle) and a button (bottom) to the URL you want people to visit. If you are asking for a donation be sure that your link, button or image goes to a mobile-friendly online donation page
- A/B test email subject lines to 10% of your list and use the top performer for the remaining 90%. Most email marketing providers make this step easy

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Email marketing is a great way for nonprofits to affordably reach a wider audience. It’s quicker than direct mail and can enable faster responses and lead to recipients taking more action for your cause.

Be sure to follow this email marketing guide and test your emails and see what is working and what isn’t—that way you don’t waste precious time on something that isn’t effective.

**Tell your story and make the read worthwhile, and never spam your lists.**
The Gold Standard for Donor Communication

Mobile marketing & text messaging are the gold standard for donor communication ensuring your supporters receive every update you send.

Text messaging will strengthen your nonprofit’s fundraising and communications throughout the year by giving you an immediate, effective way to reach your supporter base.

Texts Are The Best Way To Connect With Your Supporters

Smartphones are the most personal type of device. Everywhere you look, people are constantly on their mobile phone for work and play. Understanding best practices, statistics and how mobile communication can strengthen fundraising is essential for nonprofit organizations.

A person’s mobile number is the communication anchor that keeps nonprofit organizations connected to individuals from decade to decade.
Every year more donors and supporters:

- Move from place to place which negatively effects your direct mail campaigns
- Cancel their home phone service which reduces your phonathon effectiveness
- Change email addresses which hampers your email reach

**Bottom line:**

If you want to ensure your content is seen by supporters, you need to text them. Videos, pictures and stories that are cross promoted over mass text messages, email and social media yield the highest response rates because they reach across a wide rage of demographics.

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**Know the Numbers**

Over the last 15 years, mobile has become an increasingly essential component of fundraising. The statistics below show how mass text messages from nonprofits are the gold standard for connecting donors to the causes they care about.

- **90% of people read text messages** within the first 3 minutes
- The average American checks their phone over **85 times per day**
- **90% of Americans own a cellphone**, 68% own a smartphone
- **41% of U.S households are cell phone only** without a traditional landline
- **99% of text messages** are read (compared to only 14% of emails)
- **70% of donors** report that texts are a good way for nonprofits to get their attention
- **62% of donors** report they would like to use text to communicate with organizations
The Text Messaging Phenomenon

Text message keywords and communications help increase response rates for everything in your nonprofit organization.

The first text message was sent in 1992 and read “Merry Christmas.” In 2016 more than 8 trillion texts were sent.

On average, Americans send and receive 32 texts per day (950/month or 11,520/year).

In the last 20 years text messaging has become the most popular form of communication in the world. Unlike voicemails, emails, and social media posts, text messages guarantee that your message is seen.

81% of Americans text regularly and text twice as much as they call.

Anyone who texts your text message keyword to a shortcode is automatically subscribed to receive ongoing text message reminders and updates from your organization.

76% of supporters appreciate text message reminders and updates from nonprofit organizations. Those that choose not to receive future messages can unsubscribe instantly by conveniently replying STOP. If they want to resubscribe they can simply text any of your keywords to be automatically resubscribed to your list.

There is a special provision of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act that allows nonprofits to upload lists of supporter phone numbers and send them text message updates, making it easy for you to get started in sending text messages to your constituents!
How To Build Your Mobile Subscription List

In order to send out text messages, first you need to set up a text messaging service to enable your organization to send text messages to your supporters.

Once you have this set up you’ll want to collect mobile numbers any time you can. Without cell phone numbers your mobile marketing campaign will not work because you will have no one to send to, so be sure to ask at every point of contact.

**Upload a list:** Upload all phone numbers from your existing database for **mobile number validation** and send a subscription notification text message.

**Update your forms:** Add a “Mobile Phone Number” field to all **digital and paper forms** for future collection and upload.

**Send a text:** The first text message you send should contain a link to a **short personal video** telling subscribers about your mission and thanking them for their support.

- **Promote subscriptions at live events** by giving verbal instructions to text your subscription keyword.

- Incentivize new subscriptions. Examples: **text to win, text to enter a raffle or drawing, text to see videos, text to get exclusive downloads.**

- **Promote subscriptions** via email blasts, print newsletters, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, other social media, print materials, paid media and signage.

- **Promote your subscription keyword** in a graphic on Instagram, Facebook and other social media channels.

- Promote **mobile subscriptions** in videos by inserting text instructions to subscribe.
Tip:

Put yourself in the constituents’ shoes and offer a compelling reason to get text messages that will appeal to that group of people. You may want to segment donors by age, income level, and any other segmented data you may have.

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<th>Top 18 Ways Nonprofits Can Use Keywords for Mobile Marketing</th>
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<td>1. Text to <strong>Make Credit Card Donations</strong></td>
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<td>2. Text to <strong>Setup Recurring Gifts</strong></td>
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<td>3. Text to <strong>Make Event Pledges</strong></td>
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<td>7. Text to <strong>Buy Tickets</strong></td>
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<td>8. Text to <strong>RSVP</strong></td>
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<td>18. Text to <strong>Take Surveys</strong></td>
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**Text Messaging Best Practices**

Because it is nearly impossible to ignore a text, be sure you’re being thoughtful as to when you send them. Don’t send messages when people are sleeping or eating dinner. It is best to send messages during the daytime when people are active on their phones. Be aware of time zones!

**Send Videos:** Send regular text messages with links to short videos and photos that show the impact of your organization and how donations help you do more good.
Don’t Spam: Only send text messages to people who are familiar with your organization.

Be Strategic: Be strategic about asking for donations. Never ask for money before sending a series of compelling communications that indirectly showcase WHY people should give.

Important Reminder: The biggest mistake organizations make is asking for donations in the first text message they send. Inspire your supporters first, then watch the donations roll in.

Volunteers are almost twice as likely to donate to you as non-volunteers.

Text Messaging Best Practices

Fundraising is changing. The way you communicate with your supporters is more paramount than ever, and Millennial and Gen X donors are the new status quo in the American workforce. Here’s how your nonprofit can target this new generation of giving:

Did you know?

Millennials (age 18-34) and Generation X (age 35-50) now make up more than two-thirds of the US workforce.

In just 4 years, Millennial and Gen X donors will make up over 70% of the workforce in the U.S.

With Baby Boomers (age 51-69) retiring, their disposable income for donations is becoming lesser and lesser. In fact, over half of people age 55+ currently have insufficient retirement savings.
How Nonprofits Can Engage Donors In The Workforce

87% of Millennials donated to charity last year. Gen Xers give $465 annually. Both are motivated to give by passion. Here’s how to make them care about your cause.

**Millennials (Age 18-35)**

Millennials respond to text messages and are active daily on social media. These donors check personal email infrequently and are generally unresponsive to voice calls.
The Millennials generation donates an annual average of $481 to 3.3 nonprofits. Millennials are most likely to donate via mobile, give in response to videos, and prefer to give via crowdfunding campaigns.

Generation X (Age 36-50) Generation X responds to email, voice calls and text messages. These donors tend to stay up to date on social media feeds.

59% give each year, donating an annual average of $732 to 3.9 nonprofits. Gen X are most likely to fundraise on behalf of an organization, make a pledge, and volunteer their time.

Top Mobile Alerts That Your Donors Will Love

Text message communications must be entertaining or essential or they will be you risk donors unsubscribing from alerts, causing you to have to rebuild your list.

Never ask for donations over text message before sending a series of engaging content. This is the most important tip to remember when planning your text message communication strategy!
Best Ways to Text Message Donors

1. Impact videos and photos that showcase your cause
2. Real-time campaign updates
3. Reminders and directions for events
4. Social media links
5. Volunteer and staff encouragements
6. Thank yous and campaign results
7. Newsletter links
8. Tax receipts
9. Pledge fulfillment and expired recurring gift notifications
10. Donation opportunities

Tips for Creating Inspirational Fundraising Videos

Email

Send text messages with links in parallel with email blasts. When a person receives both a text and an email they are twice as likely to click on your content.

Social

Send text messages with links to social media posts encouraging people to follow, like and share your cause with their personal networks.
Direct Mail

Send text messages in parallel with direct mail campaigns. A donor is **3 to 4 times more likely respond** to direct mail when they receive multi-channel communication in conjunction.

Use Texts For Fundraising Success

Integrate a mobile communication strategy in your nonprofit marketing plan to boost your existing fundraising efforts and improve the return on investment for every one of your organization’s campaigns.

So What Does All This Mean?

In order for your nonprofit to have success with online fundraising, you must use a platform that supports all of the solutions you need! That includes online giving, event fundraising, crowdfunding, mobile messaging, social media, and even data collection!

Luckily for you, **MobileCause** provides all of that and more. No matter how big your organization is or what stage of the planning process your in, our mobile and online solutions can help you fundraise and communicate faster, easier, and better than ever before.
REQUEST A FREE CONSULTATION WITH A FUNDRAISING EXPERT

MobileCause offers the fundraising and communication solutions you need to maximize campaign donations and participation.

Want to get started? Call (888) 661-8804 or visit mobilecause.com/free-consultation today!
Call (888) 661-8804 or visit mobilecause.com/free-consultation

End-to-end digital fundraising software built exclusively for nonprofits. Fast, easy, flexible, and secure, MobileCause is trusted by 28 of the top 100 U.S. nonprofits.