

Nonprofit Fundraising is Changing. Are You Ready?

Working for a nonprofit is weird, right? You want to make the world a better place, but it always seems that money gets in the way. Your bottom line is mission, but to make that happen you have to focus on funds. That means, you're constantly walking the line between your mission to serve and your need to raise money.

These seemingly paradoxical aspects of the nonprofit world drive the industry in new directions every year, as organizations look for new methods to fulfill their mission. Nonprofit fundraising trends are always changing, but Kindful is here to help you navigate through them. By starting to understand and apply practices for the modern nonprofit, you can continue to grow and sustain the success of your work.

Savvy Donors are the Rule, Not the Exception

Whether individual supporters, charitable foundations, or recurring givers, donors are becoming more sophisticated in the way they think about giving. It used to be assumed that older donors didn't know how to use the internet. To reach

these individuals, you'd have to send out literature by snail mail, or call their landline phone. Though these people still exist, older donors are getting in step with the digital world in new ways everyday.

Older donors are just as likely to donate digitally as any younger group. This means that as an organization, you are now able to consolidate your marketing efforts, putting ever more emphasis on your **website**, mobile apps, and **social media spaces**. Of course, for those donors who remain committed to pen and paper, it's important to cultivate compassionate and personalized communication methods with them as well. Often times, these donors will be some of your best, central to your fundraising goals. If this is the case, don't overlook them by only spending time on digital marketing. On the other hand, if you don't have a lot of this sort of donor, maybe it's time to stop spending so much money on printing and mailing services.

Another way donors are getting savvier is that they are more informed about nonprofits today than ever before. Supporters may have been burned by huge fundraising campaigns that couldn't deliver on their promise, making it harder for nonprofits to prove their work than in years past. It's not that donors don't want to give - they just want to make sure their money is making a real difference in the world. People are much more likely to shop around for nonprofits that share their personal feelings about how to make the world a better place. They are also likely to do careful research on your organization before giving.

For today's potential donors, crafting a compelling brand narrative is essential. Once a donor is convinced that your nonprofit is doing good work and that their contribution can help you do more of it, they can be inspired to be involved with your nonprofit for years to come. To win today's donors, you've got to do great work *and* know how to show donors you're doing it, whether through email and social media marketing or in-person meetings.

Casual Record Keeping Won't Cut It Anymore

Paper records and sprawling spreadsheets are for the birds, y'all. You may be wavering in your commitment to a nonprofit CRM, but the truth is that **data management software is here to stay...and these products are making nonprofits work more efficiently and effectively.** With a great CRM, you can automate everything from data collection to donor acknowledgement and receipting. You can track the success of your email marketing campaigns and take notes on individual donors for personalized follow up. You can monitor the success of your yearly fundraising and compare it to past years in a matter of minutes. Even if you fancy yourself a master of old school record-keeping methods, and have walls of beige metal filing cabinets to prove it, falling behind digital trends now will only result in a major headache later. Here's why:

- 1 Paper documents have be digitized...if you ever want to see them again.** Do you ever have to send

documents to a bank, an accountant, or a board member? People almost always want digital copies these days, and even if they accept your paper copy, they're likely to scan it on their own anyway. Be a pal. Save a tree. Go digital.

2 No one is a pro at record-keeping...not even you.

Integrated CRM systems are the best because they automatically record data from a wide variety of sources, while minimizing the risk of human error. (Just admit it, no one is perfect!) Even the most attentive clipboard-scribbler among your staff can't keep up. If you don't have the data, you can't draw insights from it. It's only after nonprofits gain access to new data pools, that they realize what they've been missing for years!

3 Automation will make your life better...in more ways than you think.

It's true that setting up a nonprofit CRM takes time and effort (not to mention money), but it **will all be well with it when you start reaping the rewards**. CRM platforms like Kindful help people communicate with their donors better, yielding better relationships and better fundraising across the board. They make sending and tracking email marketing initiatives a breeze through automated scheduling and in-app tracking. And they provide everyday insight of your donors so you're always building relationships with them.

There are many other trends in nonprofit work, and we'll cover them in future posts. For now, just remember that your donors, current and future, are a bright and sophisticated bunch. Getting them to contribute their time and dollars takes

hard work on your part, and helpful tools like CRM. Jump into 2016 and see your nonprofit grow in important ways.

Ready to convince your team that it's time for a donor database instead of paper records and excel spreadsheets? This handy infographic will help.