

# Engaging Tomorrow's Donors Today: A Toolkit for Success



**CommunityShares**

Your Check. Your Charity. Your Colorado.

# table of contents

Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	3
Generational Differences and Nonprofit Giving Survey Results	4
Implications for Nonprofit Organizations	9
Organizational Assessment	9
Organizational Assessment Tool	10
Recommendations	13
#1: Identify your Donors and Ask Them What They Think	13
#2: Adapt fundraising Messages	14
#3: Give Young Donors a Way to Become Involved	14
#4: Integrate Communications and Leverage Technology	15
Tracking Success	17
Conclusions	18
<b>Social Media Guide</b>	
Leveraging Technology, e-Commerce, and Social Media to Reach Young Donors	19
A to Z Glossary	23
e-Fundraising Resources	27
Nonprofit Technology Resources	28
User-Generated Content Sites	28

# acknowledgements

## About the Authors

**Sarah Fischler** is the Director of Consulting for the Community Resource Center, a statewide organization providing training, community development, and consulting services to nonprofit organizations. Previously, Sarah served as the Director of Grantmaking and Mission Initiatives for the Denver Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure. During her time with the Denver Affiliate, Sarah led the development of a nationally recognized, best practices grantmaking model that has been implemented in other Komen Affiliates across the country. Sarah has also trained on grantmaking best practices on the national level and is serving as the Chair of the Colorado Common Grant Application Revision Drafting Committee. Sarah has served as a member of Regis University's Masters of Nonprofit Management Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, is serving as a member of the Colorado Nonprofit Association's Programming Committee, and is a board member of the Denver Young Nonprofit Professionals Network. Sarah graduated from the University of Colorado with a bachelor of arts in history and a bachelor of science in business administration, and is working on her master's degree in public administration.

**Alyssa Kopf** is the Interim CEO of Community Shares of Colorado, a cooperative giving fund focused on inspiring community-based philanthropy. Since joining the staff of Community Shares in 2002, Alyssa has led the annual Community Giving Campaign and is the Program Director of the My Colorado Project. Alyssa leads numerous workshops each year including, "How to Build a Perfect Workplace Giving Pitch," "Engaging Tomorrow's Donors Today," "Made to Stick: Making Good Ideas Great," and "Discussing Return On Investment (ROI) Fundraising." She is the former chair of the National Alliance for Choice in Giving's Technology Committee and graduated from the inaugural class of Impact Denver, a program for young civic leaders offered through the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Currently, Alyssa is a fellow with the Center for Progressive Leadership's Colorado Progressive Leaders program. Alyssa is on the board of directors of the Denver Young Nonprofit Professionals Network (YNPN) and is co-chair of the fundraising committee. Before joining Community Shares, Alyssa worked in the Family Reunification Program for the Denver Department of Human Service. Alyssa has also served as a teacher, coach and community organizer in Denver and Seattle. She graduated from the University of Washington with a bachelor of arts in history.

### For more information, contact:

Alyssa Kopf ([alyssa@cshares.org](mailto:alyssa@cshares.org)) or Sarah Fischler ([sarahfischler@gmail.com](mailto:sarahfischler@gmail.com))

Report written by Sarah Fischler and Alyssa Kopf • Research conducted by Sarah Fischler  
© 2007, Community Shares of Colorado . All Rights Reserved .

## mission

Community Shares of Colorado connects Coloradans to the charities and causes they care about most.

# introduction

Because of coming population shifts, it is essential for nonprofit organizations, especially those that rely heavily on individual donations, to begin attracting and cultivating younger donors to enhance organizational sustainability. According to the results of the donor survey described in this report and existing research, younger donors have different motivations, expectations and preferences than older donors. Thus, nonprofit organizations need to develop fundraising strategies to attract, cultivate, and retain younger donors - starting today.

Currently, most philanthropic activities focused on younger donors fall in three areas: 1) programs engaging the young and the wealthy, 2) philanthropic engagement programs focusing on very young people (school-aged children), and 3) individual nonprofit organizations' activities, including "young professionals" groups or guilds. Reaching out to younger donors beyond those falling into these small pockets needs to become a sector-wide focus, **as today's younger donors will be tomorrow's major donors.**

Nonprofit organizations must adjust their fundraising strategies to attract, engage, and retain younger donors. Investing in cost-efficient technology, e-commerce options, and social media, along with modifying basic fundraising techniques, is essential to successfully connect with younger donors.

## Your organization can use this toolkit to:

- Understand why this topic is important
- Learn more about the giving habits of younger donors
- Assess your organization's readiness to develop and implement a young donor program
- Make the case for developing or expanding a young donor program within your organization
- Expand your knowledge around the role of technology in attracting and engaging younger donors and learn how to leverage this technology within your organization
- Decide how to start developing a young donor program
- Start developing methods for assessing your organization's success

Whether your organization decides to devote significant resources to a young donor program or decides to take a few small steps, this toolkit will help you get started in developing, implementing, and assessing a young donor program that will help engage tomorrow's donors today.

# survey:

## generational differences and nonprofit donors

To help inform the dialogue around engaging younger donors, Community Shares conducted a survey on generational differences and nonprofit donors. Almost 700 people who had given to a charitable organization in the last three years responded to the survey during April and May, 2007. The respondents represented a well-distributed range of ages, professions, and geographic locations. Full survey results are available from Community Shares of Colorado upon request.

### Focus Areas

The survey focused on determining whether or not generational differences exist in three areas related to charitable giving: motivations for giving, expectations for nonprofit organizations, and preferred methods of giving.

### Areas of General Agreement

While clear distinctions existed in many areas of the survey, donors of all ages agreed in some key areas:

- Across all ages, 93.9 to 97.3 percent of donors agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I expect the charity to use my contribution efficiently."
- Similarly, 87.2 to 97.0 percent of donors of all ages strongly agreed, "I trust that the charity will use my contribution well."
- Donors of all ages also agreed that charities should be transparent about their operations and expect the charity receiving their donations to have a measurable impact in their community.

Given the agreement in these areas, nonprofit organizations should highlight their successes or practices in each of these areas in fundraising messages.

### Donation Amounts

For survey respondents, the median donation increases substantially as the donor ages, from a median total gift of \$200 per year for donors under 30 to a median total gift of \$1,200 per year for respondents over the age of 60. This demonstrates why nonprofits typically do not focus their efforts on younger donors. Generally, older donors give more to nonprofit organizations and thus the time and effort spent soliciting a gift is more likely to have a higher return. However, because small gifts are meaningful for many organizations, focusing on younger donors can be an effective use of resources. By leveraging technology to make the communication and processing of the gifts cost-efficient, these smaller gifts become a more viable and important source of income.

*Investing in technology can help make fundraising more efficient, thus making a focus on younger donors more cost-efficient.*

# survey results, continued...

## REASONS FOR GIVING

Survey results indicate that people of different age groups give to charitable organizations for slightly different reasons. For example, a slightly larger number of older respondents reported that their main reason for donating to nonprofit organizations is because organizations need donors' support. This finding is in line with other studies on young donors that have found that younger donors are more driven by belief in a cause than by a belief in philanthropy itself.

More significantly, the main reasons of wanting to help improve society and believing in an organization's mission interact interestingly when considering age. Around 26 percent of donors under 30 and over 60 reported that their main reason for supporting nonprofit organizations is their desire to help improve society. When looking at the responses of those between 40 and 49, only about 16 percent of respondents reported that this is their main reason for donating to nonprofit organizations.

For those between 40 and 49, the most common reason for donating to charity is support of a specific organization's mission. The percentage of those 40 to 49 reporting this as their main reason for giving (approximately 67 percent) is more than ten percent higher than for those 30 to 39. On significantly lower levels, respondents reported that their religious beliefs and sense of civic responsibility serve as their main reason for making charitable donations, with very few respondents citing feeling good or encouragement from others as their main reasons.

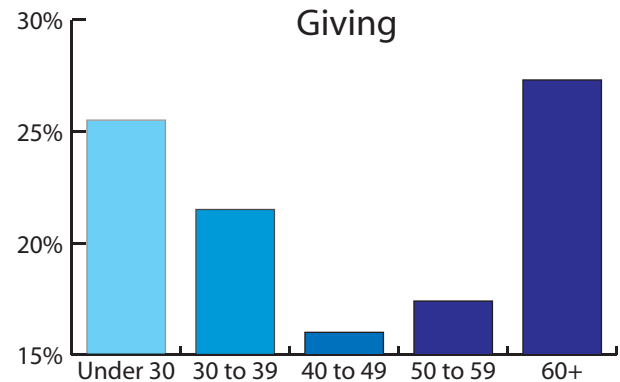
## EXPECTATIONS FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The second phase of the survey focused on donors' expectations for nonprofit organizations and their charitable giving practices, with the following results.

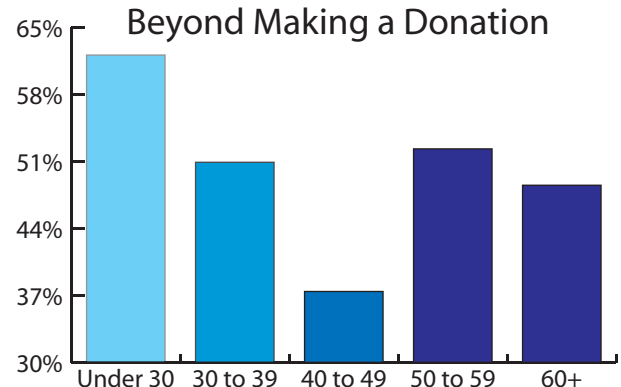
### Expectations for Involvement

Generational differences exist around the amount of involvement different donors at different stages of their lives want with the nonprofit organizations to which they donate. As seen in the table to the right, these results correlate strongly with people's life stages. Younger and older donors most likely have more time to be more involved with charitable organizations, whereas middle-aged donors are more likely to have children at home and more demanding jobs. For those over the age of 60, many may have the time to be more involved but the donor's capacity to be involved decreases as the individual ages.

Graph 1: Donors Citing "Improving Society" as Their Main Motivation for Giving



Graph 2: Donors Expecting to Be Involved with an Organization Beyond Making a Donation



# survey results, continued...

## The Importance of Fun for Younger Donors

According to the survey results, a majority of younger donors agree or strongly agree that donating to charity should be fun. As seen in the graph to the left, almost 55 percent of donors under 30 agreed or strongly agreed that donating to charity should be fun, whereas only 28 percent of those ages 50 to 59 agreed.

This finding supports the trend of nonprofit organizations trying to appeal to younger donors by attracting them to fun events or developing programming specifically for younger donors. One approach to this is lowering the ticket price for younger donors for a fun fundraising event.

Interestingly, however, younger donors also reported a lower interest in attending events as a means of donating to charitable organizations, with 26 percent of donors under 30 stating that formal fundraising events were preferable or most preferable, compared to a high of 36 percent of donors aged 40 to 49 reporting that formal events were preferable or most preferable. Older donors also reported a higher interest in donating through informal fundraising events. A likely conclusion is that younger donors do not consider many nonprofit events to be fun according to their standards of fun and therefore are not interested in donating in this manner. Nonprofits should consider how much their fundraising events will appeal to younger donors when trying to engage younger donors in this way.

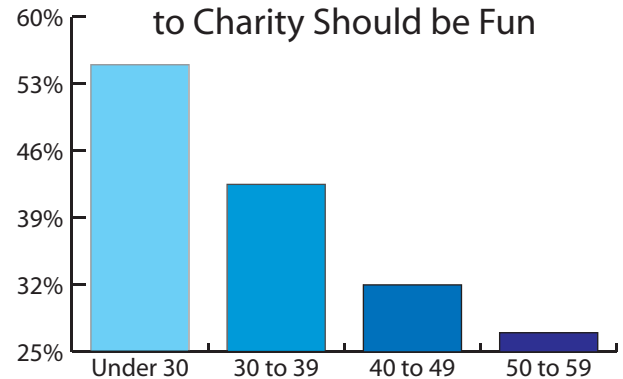
## Supporting Organizations that Helped the Donor or Someone Close to the Donor

Middle-aged donors are less likely to agree or strongly agree with the following statement, "I donate to give back to a nonprofit that helped me or someone close to me." Whereas 60 percent of donors under the age of 30 agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, only 45 percent of donors between the ages of 40 and 59 agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

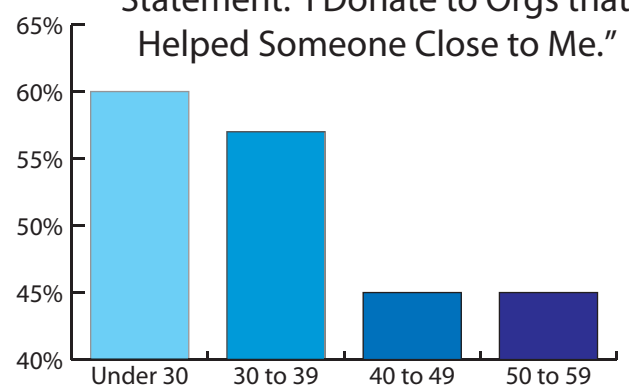
## METHODS OF GIVING

Overall, generational differences exist in the methods preferred by donors of different ages and the survey results in this area will be most helpful for nonprofits in deciding how to proceed in developing a young donors program. Specifically, these differences were found in areas related to fundraising mailings and the use of technology in giving. This information will be relevant and informative for organizations developing younger donor programs.

Graph 3: Donors Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing that Donating to Charity Should be Fun



Graph 4: Donors Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing with the Statement: "I Donate to Orgs that Helped Someone Close to Me."



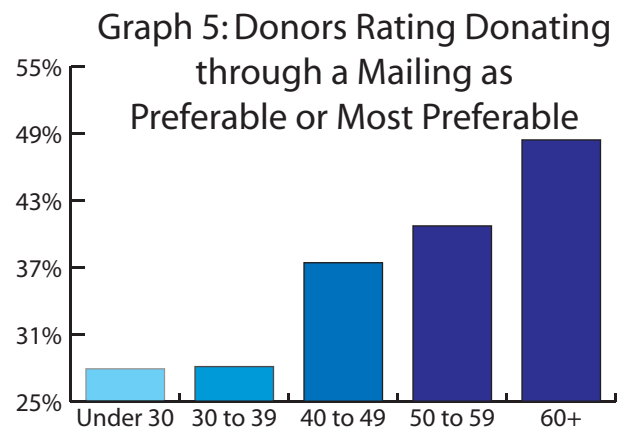
# survey results, continued...

## Fundraising Mailings

A staple of many fundraising programs, the fundraising mailing, seems to be less appealing to younger donors. Around 28 percent of respondents under the age of 40 considered responding to a fundraising mailing to be preferable or most preferable compared to around 49 percent of respondents over the age of 60.

Because so many organizations depend on fundraising through mailings, development professionals should consider this finding when planning for the future, as mailings may be less successful as younger donors age and are able to increase their charitable donations. As online newsletters and fundraising solicitations become more commonplace, nonprofits may find that a traditional direct mailing campaign needs to be targeted to older donors or donors who prefer to communicate with the organization through the traditional mail system and new electronic solicitations need to be developed to appeal to younger donors and donors more comfortable with electronic communication. One benefit of this trend will be the reduced cost, as the costs associated with designing, printing, and mailing communications can be expected to decline significantly with increased electronic communication.

**Question to Consider:** Is your organization asking donors HOW they would like to receive information? Sending a mailed solicitation to someone who prefers email is a waste of resources.

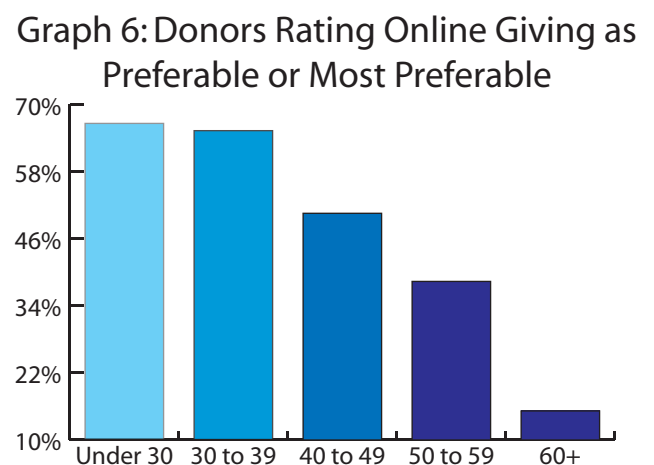


## Giving through an Organization's Website

Many development directors and organizational leaders complain that either their current online donation program has not been successful or state that they do not want to dedicate the resources necessary to develop a strong online fundraising program because of other priorities. Considering the success of online political fundraising and the continually increasing use of the internet in people's daily lives, nonprofits should strongly consider dedicating resources to strengthen their web presence.

The results of this survey support this recommendation. Almost 67 percent of donors under 30 and around 65 percent of donors between the ages of 30 and 39 reported that donating through an organization's website is most preferable. Only 15 percent of donors over the age of 60 agreed that donating through an organization's website is preferable or most preferable.

By looking at this graph, the trend toward a preference for online giving is clear and should be noted by nonprofit leaders and development directors. As discussed below, many organizations do not have a strong web presence and do not actively drive potential and current donors to their website. Because of these two factors, many nonprofits do not have successful online giving programs. If nonprofit organizations do not develop online giving options, they may be missing important opportunities to increase donations from individual donors, especially in the future.



# survey results, continued...

## Gifts in Exchange for Donations

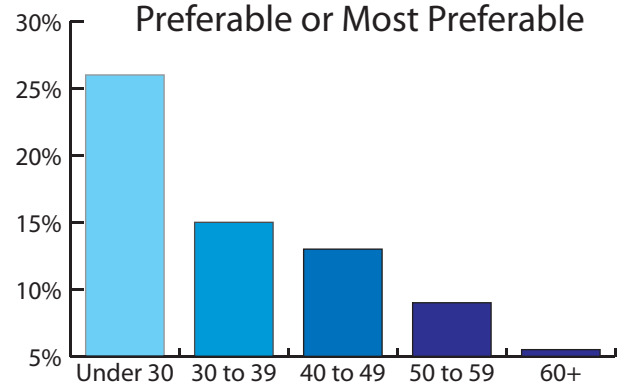
Nonprofit organizations often struggle over whether or not to provide gifts or incentives in exchange for making a gift to the organization. Those organizations that do offer incentives and find them to increase donations argue that the incentives provide the initial motivation for people to make a gift, thus allowing the organization to begin a relationship with the donor. Other nonprofit organizations prefer to focus all of their fundraising revenues on program and operating expenses and do not want to want to pay the extra costs associated with a gift or incentive.

Others believe that sending unsolicited gifts, like mailing labels, or offering gifts in exchange for a donation diminishes the value of the charitable transactions. Of the open-ended comments to this survey, a good number were in reference to this particular issue, with some respondents making the point that they do not appreciate charities sending unsolicited gifts and often feel guilty into sending a donation.

Others said that gifts are unnecessary and would like to see charities stop offering them in return for a donation.

These comments slightly contradicted the responses with 26 percent of donors under the age of 30 stating that they believe it is preferable or most preferable to make a donation "in exchange for a gift, like mailing labels, a canvas bag, or a t-shirt." The response significantly declined by age, as seen in the graph to the right. Charities considering offering a gift in exchange for a donation as a new program to appeal to younger donors should thoroughly consider the costs associated with doing so, the message it sends to donors, and the expectations that are established for further donations (for example, will donors continue to give without the incentive?).

Graph 7: Donors Rating The Receipt of a Gift in Return for a Donation as Preferable or Most Preferable



# implications & assessment

## IMPLICATIONS FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Nonprofits can expect to attract some younger donors without doing anything. Organizations interested in diversifying revenues by attracting younger donors and thus enhancing organizational sustainability should seriously and deliberately consider assessing their organization's development programs to see if the organization is missing opportunities in this area. If a nonprofit organization decides to actively focus on attracting, engaging, and retaining young donors, a long-term approach is likely to be most successful.

Many fundraising experts and fund development professionals seem to agree that organizations need to focus their young donor efforts on the young and wealthy because these activities will likely result in a higher return on the investment of time and effort through a larger gift. Based upon the fact that many nonprofit organizations receive many small and mid-sized gifts and these gifts are essential to sustain the organization from year to year, Community Shares strongly believe that donors of less means also deserve nonprofits' attention.

Although donors are mobile and may not support an organization for ten or fifteen years, investing in a donor who is willing to give an organization a reasonable level of support for three to five years, and possibly bring in their friends and colleagues as many younger people do, could result in significant revenues for the organization over time. Therefore, this group of donors deserves more attention from fundraisers.

## ASSESSMENT: Is your organization ready?

Clearly, nonprofit organizations need to weigh the costs and benefits of developing programs focused on younger donors. One organization might find their particular mission to be especially appealing to younger donors or another organization might have a strong enough database to conclude that 20 percent of their donors are under the age of 40. In these cases, moving forward to determine the feasibility of developing fundraising programs focused on younger donors could be an attractive investment of resources. On the other hand, an organization might have a very strapped development office or disorganized fundraising programs. In these cases, focusing limited resources in other areas would most likely be a better course of action.

The following elements are key considerations for any organization interested in focusing on younger donors:

- Resources and capacity, specifically in the areas of development and communications
- A place to start, like a mission that appeals to younger people, a small group of engaged younger donors, or a natural expansion of an existing fundraising program
- An organizational culture that is willing to offer younger donors a way to be meaningfully involved in the organization and accept the implications of such increased involvement
- Someone in the organization who is willing to champion the program over time
- Infrastructure and resources to track involvement and donations over time
- Commitment to analyzing results and make adjustments as necessary

**Community Shares has developed an assessment tool that nonprofit organizations can use to assess their readiness for this type of effort, as follows.**

# assessment tool

## Is your organization ready to develop a program for attracting, engaging, and cultivating younger donors?

### Generally, how appealing is your mission to younger donors? (select one)

- Our message is specifically targeted to an older audience because they make up the majority of our constituents. 1 point
- Our message is universal and our language is not targeted to any specific age groups. 3 points
- Our message has specific elements that may appeal to younger donors. 5 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

### Does your organization have the resources and capacity necessary to develop fundraising programs focused on younger donors? (select one)

- We do not have the funding or resources to reach out beyond our core donors at this time. 1 point
- We have the capacity to expand our overall donor program but would need a solid financial return 5 points
- We have the capacity and resources to expand or create a young donor program with reasonable success measures. 10 points
- Pursuing young donors is a necessary step to realize our mission and we have the capacity and resources to set measures of success other than financial. 15 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

### Does your organization have ways for younger donors to become meaningfully involved? (select one)

- Young donors would be welcome to participate in our existing programs but they are not specifically designed for a younger audience. 1 point
- Young donors would enjoy our existing programs because they are built to appeal to all ages. 3 points
- We have events and volunteer programs specifically targeted to appeal to young donors. 5 points
- Add 1 bonus point for each of the following:
  - We have at least one board member under the age of 35
  - We have employees under 35 in key (executive or management) staff positions

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

### Does your organization have the ability to track a donor's giving and involvement over time? (select one)

- We don't have a formal donor database. 1 point
- We track donor gifts but not volunteering. 3 points
- We track volunteering but not donor gifts. 3 points
- We track donor gifts and volunteering but in separate databases. 3 points
- Our database tracks all contact with constituents. 5 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

### Does your organization have the ability and resources necessary to modify your communications to appeal to younger donors? (select all that apply)

- Our database can be coded to sort donors into groups. 2 points
- We have staff capacity to create copy for different communication pieces. 3 points
- We have an electronic newsletter. 2 points
- We have an interactive electronic newsletter that readers can forward easily to others. 3 points
- We segment contacts/communications and send different messages to different audiences. 5 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

Points for this page: \_\_\_\_\_

# assessment tool, continued...

## **Does your organization have a culture that will be accepting of younger donors and will welcome their active involvement? (select one)**

- Everyone is welcome but younger donors are not our target audience. 1 point
- Our culture is not specific to any age group; younger donors would feel as comfortable as everyone else. 3 points
- We have a culture that intentionally invites younger donors to become actively involved. 5 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Does your organization have a strong web presence? (select all that apply)**

- We have an informational website. 2 points
- We have an interactive website. 3 points
- We have an electronic newsletter. 2 points
- We have an interactive electronic newsletter. 3 points
- We use key words and search engine optimization to amplify our web presence. 3 points
- We track our website traffic and wusage rates. 2 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Is someone in your organization willing to serve as a champion for a campaign to increase the number of and revenue from younger donors? (select all that apply)**

- We have the knowledge and expertise to manage and increase our online presence. 2 points
- We have young staff people or volunteers who can inform our marketing and outreach pieces to young donors. 3 points
- We have a key staff person who can dedicate significant time to attract young donors. 3 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Does your organization have an obvious or relatively easy place to start on a campaign to engage more younger donors? (select all that apply)**

- We have online communication pieces we could ask donors to send to friends. 3 points
- We have events appealing to young donors. 2 points
- We have a volunteer program that is appealing to young donors. 3 points
- Our organization is appealing overall to young people, we just need to adjust our marketing to a new audience. 2 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Does your organization already have some engaged younger donors? (select one)**

- We do not track donors by age but we likely have young donors. 2 points
- We have some young donors who generally became aware of us through their parents. 4 points
- We have a young donor group that fits into our traditional fundraising program. We hope to "graduate" these donors into our existing donor programs. 6 points
- We have a growing group of young donors interested in uniquely engaging with our organization. These donors seem to be looking for new ways to interact with our organization. 8 points
- We have many young donors and many were organically referred by other young donors. We set up our programs to make it easy for our donors to share information with others and invite others to give. 10 points

Points for this question: \_\_\_\_\_

**Points for this page:** \_\_\_\_\_

# assessment tool, continued...

## Interpreting the Results

Points from page 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Points from page 11: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

### Using your organization's score as a guide, you can assess your readiness to move forward:

- 75 to 100 It is probably worth moving forward on a campaign to attract, engage, and retain younger donors. Working on a measurable plan or starting on a small pilot project might be a good first step.
- 50 to 74 It may be worth your organization's time to conduct a more detailed assessment and feasibility study for a campaign to attract, engage, and retain younger donors. Alternately, your organization could start with a small pilot project in an area that makes sense to see if it is worth devoting more resources and time to the project.
- Under 50 Your organization's resource may best be used in another area. If resources or capacity increase or organizational barriers are diminished, reconsider moving forward.

Obviously, other considerations, like support from the board or other organizational priorities, will factor into the decision to move forward with developing a young donors program. This assessment, along with the results, will help your organization see where opportunities exist or where your organization needs to focus its efforts.

# recommendations

After completing the organizational assessment, organizations can start with the following recommendations to help in integrating actual fundraising programs according to the specific needs and areas of fundraising expertise within an organization. Many of the items discussed below are basic best practices in nonprofit management and apply to fundraising in general, with some specific modifications meant to appeal more strongly to younger donors. These efforts, while focused on younger donors, are important elements of nonprofit management and some of them will likely have positive impacts in other areas when thoughtfully implemented.

For organizations that are ready to develop, improve, or start a program focused on attracting, engaging, and retaining young donors in the near future, the following four recommendations can help the organization focus its efforts and resources.

## **Recommendation 1: Figure out if your organization has younger donors and ask them what they think**

Almost all nonprofit organizations will have some younger donors, and as shown above, they probably want to be involved beyond just giving money. One good way to get younger donors, and donors in general, involved and invested in the organization's work is to ask them what they think about your organization. Additionally, these donors are a good place to start in terms of developing or improving your organization's activities focusing on younger donors. Gathering information can take place in a variety of ways, including web-based surveys, focus groups, and individual meetings.

In gathering information, an organization should ask the following questions:

- Why do you give to this organization?
- Do you like our communication pieces? Is the information interesting and relevant?
- What other communications would motivate you to make a gift?
- Would you like to be able to donate in other ways?
- What could we do better? (Think about events, programs, communications, fundraising, etc).

In asking these types of questions, an organization needs to be prepared to receive difficult but valuable feedback. If an organization is choosing to devote resources to improving or developing a young donor program, this research stage is critical unless the organization has already conducted a similar assessment or has specific expertise available, like a development professional or consultant with expertise in this area.

Gathering continual feedback and monitoring efforts and return on investment will help an organization determine if it is on the correct path or if it needs to reassess its activities in this area. This is especially important because of the limited resources available within nonprofit organizations; continuing ineffective programs is counterproductive and wastes resources. Consider using the participants in these initial activities to create a formal or informal advisory council. In the future, new ideas can be bounced off this group or they could help provide content and stories for communication pieces, or participate in developing fundraising events.

**Tools for smaller organizations:** If your organization does not have the resources to have a professional facilitate a focus group or administer a survey to younger donors, these kinds of activities may seem daunting and expensive. For a low cost, ranging from free to \$20 per month, an organization can use a tool like [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) to administer an online survey. Using the questions outlined above, with questions added or modified as necessary, an organization could administer a quick and easy online survey to current younger donors. Although focus groups are often facilitated by professionals, your organization could host a less formal discussion focused on the questions outlined above. The key to hosting this type of event is to stay focused on gathering information and listening; getting defensive or monopolizing the conversation will reduce the quality of information gathered.

# recommendations

## **Recommendation 2: Adapt fundraising messages and programs to appeal to younger donors**

In developing programs targeting young donors, nonprofit organizations should experiment with messaging. For example, do donors find the name for your organization's young professionals group to be patronizing? Does the name of the program send the message that the young professionals are sitting at the "kids' table" or that they are being taken seriously and are considered important in achieving the organization's mission?

Your organization could also consider "test marketing" fundraising appeals to see which message results in the most donations. If your organization is conducting a direct mailing campaign and can segment the database by age, consider sending two different letters with different messages to see which is the most effective. If you have an online newsletter, consider tailoring one version to younger donors by adding a profile of a younger donor and including a story tailored to the interests of younger donors.

Additionally, by modifying existing fundraising programs, such as offering a "young professionals" ticket price for events, nonprofit organizations can take small steps to engage younger donors in existing fundraising programs. Nonprofit organizations should also consider young donors' desire to participate in fundraising programs that are fun, as this is a significant motivator for many younger donors. When planning an event, ask yourself, or better yet your younger donors, if an event will be appealing and fun to younger donors or people at similar life stages. Be sure to track the number of responses or ticket purchases to events or programs for any "young professionals" program. This will help your organization track its success over time.

### **What if we only have a few younger donors?**

If your organization only has a handful of younger donors, choosing one or two activities to focus upon will probably be the most successful strategy, given your organization's limited capacity or limited donor base. For example, your organization could agree to establish a "young professionals" rate for your annual fundraiser and highlight a young donor in two of your organization's four yearly newsletters.

## **Recommendation 3: Give young donors ways to become involved in the organization**

Based upon the survey results discussed above, many young donors want to be involved with an organization beyond making a donation. For some donors, this can mean preparing mailings or sorting mail at a homeless shelter, but for others it can include an opportunity to serve on an advisory board, an event committee, or eventually the board of directors.

One nonprofit fundraiser said in regard to cultivating younger donors, "People fund people, not ideas," adding, "Nonprofits must also include more young people on their boards and in other positions of power. A nonprofit with a mostly white or male staff and board will have trouble cultivating black or female donors, age is no different." If your organizational culture is not open to allowing younger people to participate at all levels, a younger donor program is unlikely to be successful.

### **Resources:**

The strategies to make your organization more inclusive in other areas often work when talking about age. The Denver Foundation offers an 18-module toolkit on inclusiveness that could be useful in making your organization more inclusive of younger people. For more information, visit [www.denverfoundation.org](http://www.denverfoundation.org).

# recommendations

## Recommendation 4: Integrate your organization's communications

Integrating communications should include three key steps:

- Improving your organization's online presence
- Utilizing and leveraging technology
- Developing communication pieces that appeal to younger donors

Does this sound like something one of your donors might say?

"One of the organizations I support is in the middle of a capital campaign and recently held their annual fundraising dinner. They have my email address, but they do not use it to their advantage. I have not received a single email reminding me about the event, updating me on the capital campaign, or alerting me to a news story about the organization that appeared in a major newspaper. Because I care a great deal about the organization, I would appreciate more frequent communication. If I knew how they would use my donation, I might give more." - 27 year-old donor

If so, your organization needs to include younger donors as a component of your organization's communications plan and as part of specific communication strategies.

### Utilizing Email Addresses

For organizations interested in attracting younger donors, not using email addresses is simply a missed communication and fundraising opportunity. Many of the survey respondents stated that it is frustrating to only hear from an organization when being asked for money, but many nonprofits are only able to communicate through fundraising solicitations because other means of ongoing communication has been traditionally expensive. With improving technology, someone with basic computer skills can develop an e-newsletter for less than \$0.03 per email address through a service like Constant Contact ([www.constantcontact.com](http://www.constantcontact.com)). Today, there is almost no excuse for organizations not to use these types of technological solutions to their advantage.

### Online Presence

A strong online presence is essential for organizations interested in attracting, engaging, and retaining younger donors. As discussed above, a large majority of younger donors find donating online to be preferable or most preferable and a strong website with compelling information could help encourage and/or increase the size of a donation. Ease of use is also very important, as someone is not going to spend a significant amount of time looking for the way to donate online. Please see the Social Media Guide in this toolkit for online giving resources.

Once a good website is in place and a user-friendly online donation solution has been integrated, a website will help to establish an organization's online credibility. To be effective, an organization must drive traffic to the website and create reasons for donors and supporters to keep coming back, which means keeping the site up-to-date and filled with interesting, accurate information. According to Groundspring, an organization offering technology services to nonprofit organizations, online donations are steadily increasing each year. Their findings after Hurricane Katrina indicate that people giving online gave 50 percent more than those giving by a different mechanism and 65 percent of their survey respondents indicated that the organization's website influenced their gift.

# recommendations

## Other Online Communication Tools

In addition to a strong website, nonprofit organizations should consider other online communication vehicles to communicate efficiently with their supporters. Many nonprofit leaders would probably not think to develop a blog for their organization unless they have a young staff person or a technologically-minded person in a leadership position. The political community should serve as a model for the power of this communication mechanism, especially given the power of blogs during the last presidential election.

Nonprofit organizations have also found success in engaging people in their mission by establishing a blog, which can be set up with little investment beyond staff time. The Women's Foundation of Washington, DC, has recently established a blog and it is their website's most popular feature. Staff members blog about the organization's fundraising efforts and women's issues. Todd Ziegler of the Bivings Group, a communications consulting company, states, "Nonprofits are small and their budgets are strapped. The technology is accessible ... (for nonprofits) trying to raise money or build awareness around their issues. Using blogs is a way to really connect with people." Sharing your organization's work and activities in this way is a means of getting people to come back to your site, thus keeping them engaged over time.

E-newsletters, as mentioned above, are another easy and cost-effective way for a nonprofit to communicate more regularly with donors and are particularly appealing to younger, technology-savvy donors. Because they are simple to roll out, e-newsletters would be a good first step for smaller or resource-strapped organizations.

**Tip:** People change email addresses often. Give donors and constituents an easy way to update their contact information, like a form on your website or through a link in your electronic communication pieces. Spending the time to be sure email addresses are kept up-to-date will help increase the success and return-on-investment of such fundraising and communications programs.

## Final Thoughts on Recommendation 4

A blog and other electronic communication vehicles may not be right for some organizations or might not be an appropriate place to allocate resources. In these cases, it is still important for the organization to be sure its other communication pieces have at least some appeal to younger donors and are communicating the right messages about the organization. Some simple initial steps for integrating messages for younger donors into traditional communication pieces could include profiling a younger donor in a newsletter or discussing the organization's efforts in trying to develop a stronger base of young donors, along with a solicitation for input (not dollars). Finally, communication pieces should be easily accessible through an organization's website, even if they were not originally distributed electronically. Nonprofits should strive for this level of integration and sophistication, even if it is not immediately realistic because of limited resources. Please see the social media guide for more information on this topic.

*Assuming it is up-to-date and interesting, drive people to your organization's website by including a "tickler" in each communication piece.*

*For example, your fundraising letters can include something like, "We encourage you to visit our website at [www.cshares.org](http://www.cshares.org) to learn more about our impact in the community and to read about one of our partner agencies, in their own words."*

*Additionally, every newsletter, paper-based or electronic, should also drive people to your website, whether it is to make a gift, sign up for an event, or just learn more about your programs.*

# tracking success

If your organization decides to move forward in developing fundraising programs focused on younger donors, your organization should also commit to tracking the success of such initiatives, especially if significant resources are devoted to the programs.

If your organization already tracks and analyzes the success of fundraising programs, integrating programs focused on young donors will likely be a simple task. However, if your organization is developing new programs or using new technological solutions, developing benchmarks and measurement tools ahead of time will help your organization track its success over time and assess whether or not resources are being used wisely.

## Some basic tips on tracking success:

- Analyze your current base of younger donors prior to implementing young donor programs. Gather information on the number of donors, the amounts of their gifts, and their involvement with the organization. Then, track these numbers over time to see if the number of identified younger donors has increased, if they are giving more, and if they are more engaged (more younger people are attending events, etc).
- Using technology, nonprofits can gauge how many people open their newsletter, click on links to their website, donate in response to an electronic appeal, and learn about what younger donors are thinking by reading their comments on a blog. Try to integrate this technology to help track your success from the beginning.
- Develop baseline measures for success. For example, your organization could decide that it will develop a “young professionals” rate for events, highlight a young donor in two newsletters, host two focus groups with younger donors, and develop an advisory council of five younger donors. Actual fundraising increases during the first year or phase of a program might be unrealistic for some organizations, so the initial phase could focus on establishing programs and engaging younger people, instead of raising money from them.
- If your organization has established a “young professionals” program for events, be sure to track the number of responses and tickets purchased over time to gauge success. Be sure to track returning attendees and new attendees, and sample new attendees to find out why they decided to participate in a program or event.

Books on fundraising and communications strategies typically have entire chapters devoted to measuring success and tracking results. If your organization is interested in developing a more comprehensive approach to measuring success, consulting these resources would be helpful.

# conclusions

The coming demographic shifts are inevitable and those nonprofits prepared to deal with new fundraising realities will likely be more sustainable organizations in coming years. By investing in attracting, engaging, and retaining younger donors today, nonprofits will reap the benefits tomorrow. Nonprofits that have the resources and capacity to proactively work with this population can build on the success of some of the pioneering organizations, or blaze their own way based upon the opportunities available to their organization.

Getting started now, even with some of the small steps described in this toolkit or with a more dramatic fundraising program overhaul, can help ensure that individual nonprofit organizations are engaging tomorrow's individual donors today, thus strengthening their organization and the sector as a whole.

**One important strategy for sustainability should be attracting, engaging, and retaining tomorrow's donors today.**

# leveraging technology, e-commerce, and social media to reach young donors

## **Where to begin?**

Many discussions about nonprofit organizations “leveraging technology” inadvertently sabotage the process before it begins. First, the discussion is often unnecessarily intimidating. Fundraisers do not need to know how the post office processes bulk mail to have the capacity to send a direct mail letter. Non-profit organizations do not need to build their own venue to host a special event. Just as fundraisers and organizations use 3rd party support services to manage their other fundraising programs, they can work with outside resources to efficiently manage online and technology efforts.

Second, starting with end goals – “we need a top notch website to be competitive” or “a better online giving platform will attract new donors” – can lead an organization down the road of optimizing their technology capacity rather than leveraging technology to optimize their capacity to achieve their mission. Technology alone does not make a message or mission appealing in the long term. However, thoughtfully utilized, technology allows an organization to “lift less and leverage more,” increasing the reach and resources of the organization.

When considering the introduction of new technology, start by identifying what the goal is in human and mission terms, not by making a list of technology products to purchase.

## **What are the key technology pieces a nonprofit should consider?**

The purpose of this toolkit is to discuss engaging young donors and focuses on fundraising functions including communication pieces, e-commerce and social media. This toolkit proposes small changes in use of technology and conceptual changes in how to interact with young donors.

This toolkit does not include a detailed discussion of database and constituent/contact relationship management (CRM) software options. Because we are focusing on young donors specifically, discussing an expensive database change falls outside of small changes that can be made by almost any nonprofit organization. Database changes and CRM software typically require a significant capital expenditure and should be part of a long-term capacity building plan. The options discussed here are cost-effective and easy-to-use.

Specifically, the two key online technology components to consider introducing first include effective online communication pieces and e-commerce options. Additionally, nonprofits should be aware of technological shifts, including the impact of social media (email, text messages, and social networking sites) on how young people communicate, utilizing such technology as appropriate.

# social media guide, continued...

## Simple Ways to Make Your Website and Online Communications More Effective

Many nonprofit organizations are struggling to introduce Web 1.0 capabilities as Web 2.0 is changing the marketplace. Web 1.0 is the first wave of internet use which focused on publishing information. Often-times, this meant producing an informational website that had the same information printed in brochures available on the internet. (This can affectionately be thought of as “brochureware”)

If your organization has a Web 1.0 site (a good measure is if content on the site was copied and pasted from print documents) it is essential to make some immediate and simple upgrades. First, consider what your ideal user experience and outcome is. What do you want someone to do when they come to your site? Consider the idea of “perfect circles” – the route you want a visitor to take when navigating through your website. Every page on your site should include the opportunity for the visitor to click into the “perfect circle” you’ve created. If your goal is to have someone attend an upcoming event, there should be an opportunity to enter the “perfect circle” (i.e., learning about the event, registering, and purchasing a ticket online) nearly everywhere on your site. This requires updating your site content and “entry points” as the desired outcome changes.

Also, you must make your site more effective in responding to search engines. Utilize young volunteers to make an in-kind donation of expertise to help with search engine optimization by updating key words and alt text. The two key pieces to consider are putting yourself in the mindset of the visitor/searcher and starting with the desired outcome. If someone is looking for your website, what key words will they likely use? If someone finds your site, what page do you want to serve as the entry point depending upon the search terms entered? For example, if you work for a health care organization you may want a visitor who uses key words to search for resources and services to go to a services information page as the “landing page” of their search. For the same organization, a donor typing in your name and the name of your upcoming event should land on an event page. Not every search should land on your homepage – using different key words on different pages diversifies your presence on search engines and allows you to strategically present your online information.

Be aware of how people will find information on your web pages and read your e-newsletter. Simply put, don’t bury the lead. While people are becoming more comfortable with navigating websites, until very recently the majority of users did not scroll down to see information not in view on the screen. Your website and e-newsletters should be concise and compelling and be designed with a purpose or desired outcome in mind. Your online information should probably not use the same copy as your paper newsletter and print brochures.

### ***From Chronicle of Philanthropy:***

*40 percent of people who either donate, volunteer, or advocate for a nonprofit organization report they consult an online source for charity information BEFORE making donations.*

*Of those who do all three, 55 percent go online first. Over 60 percent said they went to the organization’s website to get information.*

# social media guide, continued...

## **Make Basic e-Commerce Available Today!**

Younger donors prefer to make donations online. Period. The evidence is overwhelming and the solution is easy: Pay a third party provider to allow your organization to take online credit card and debit card gifts. If you don't have that option today, move it to the top of tomorrow's "to do" list.

E-Commerce options start simple and most organizations will not need to go beyond being able to accept an online credit card gift. Groups with a larger donor base can explore options like Electronic Funds Transfer or ACH transactions (i.e., donors authorize an automatic monthly donation from their checking account). Online event registration, auction pre-sales, peer-to-peer pledge drives, and merchandise stores can be introduced where appropriate.

## **Social Media**

Web 2.0 and Social Media focus on the ability of individuals to share information and engage in online conversations. From having user generated profiles on sites to including a "response" option on news articles, Web 2.0 applications are inviting everyone to become a part of the discussion. Web 2.0 and Social Media can be scary for nonprofit organizations for a lot of reasons. First, new technology is always intimidating. Second, allowing users to become a part of the discussion requires letting go of control of the message. Third, inviting constituents to give feedback requires having the capacity to respond.

The impact of Social Media on the nonprofit sector is new and speculative but it is agreed that the influence of people talking and connecting to each other more than ever before offers great opportunities for advocacy and fundraising. Rather than go into the specific applications of Web 2.0 and Social Media (e.g, text message grassroots organizing, blogs, online networks such as My Space and Facebook, increased peer-to-peer communication, etc.) it is simply important to begin considering these options conceptually. With Social Media, it has never been easier, more efficient, and more likely for donors to independently fundraise for your organization.

You do not need to spend thousands of dollars building custom social media platforms (unless it directly serves your mission to allow people to connect and discuss your work). Start by making small changes in how your current information allows people to introduce your organization into their social media discussions. Be sure your website and e-newsletters make it easy for others to share your message with someone else. Online donors are 200 percent more likely to send messages and calls to action to others. Give people the ability to share "bite-size" pieces of information. If you do not have the capacity to invest in software that allows others to "invite a friend" to receive your e-newsletter or a video from your website, consider adding web pages designed for the specific purpose of peer-to-peer information sharing. Consider the "look at this" factor – is your information something a young donor might send to a friend and say, "Look at this!"

# social media guide, continued...

There are no answers yet on how charities will best use Web 2.0 technology, but many organizations are starting to implement innovative solutions to attracting and cultivating donors on the web, many of them younger donors. Already, sites exist that allow individuals to run their own giving campaigns on behalf of organizations. The fundraising model of house parties is being replaced by online, peer-to-peer networking and fundraising sites. From [www.firstgiving.com](http://www.firstgiving.com) which allows anyone to become an online major gifts officer for specific causes and organizations to sites like [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) that let individuals ask for pledges for runs and walks with nonprofit beneficiaries, Web 2.0 offers organizations the ability to outsource fundraising to constituents.

Many Web 2.0 solutions can be easily implemented and add value to your organization's online presence. Getting started with some of the small steps discussed in this toolkit can help your organization engage constituents and potentially increase your capacity to raise money for your organization in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

**Imagine a world where your donors were willing to invite ten of their friends to give. Your younger donors are living in that world. How is your organization going to make the most of it?**

# social media guide

## a to z glossary

Understanding, utilizing, and leveraging technology is key to attracting and engaging younger donors. Use this guide to help you understand today's technology and how you can use it in your organization's fundraising programs.

This guide is adapted from NCVO ICT Foresight as produced by David Wilcox  
Creative Common Attribution Share-Alike 2.5 License  
This document adheres to CC Attribution Share-Alike 2.5 License

**Aggregation** is the process of gathering and remixing content from blogs and other websites that provide RSS feeds. The results may be displayed in an aggregator website like Bloglines, or directly on your desktop using software often also called a newsreader.

**Blogs** are websites with dated items of content in reverse chronological order, self-published by bloggers. Items – sometimes called posts - may have keyword tags associated with them, are usually available as feeds, and often allow commenting.

**Bookmarking** is saving the address of a website or item of content, either in your browser, or on a social bookmarking site like del.icio.us. If you add tags, others can easily use your research, too.

A **browser** is the tool used to view websites, and access all the content available there onscreen or by downloading. Browsers may also be used to upload or otherwise contribute content to a blog or other website.

**Bulletin boards** were the early vehicles for online collaboration, where users connected with a central computer to post and read email-like messages. They were the electronic equivalent of public notice boards. The term is still used for forums.

**Chat** is interaction on a web site, with a number of people adding text items one after the other into the same space at (almost) the same time. A place for chat – chat room – differs from a forum because conversations happen in “real time”, rather as they do face to face.

Online **communities** are groups of people communicating mainly through the Internet. They may simply have a shared interest to talk about or more formally learn from each other and find solutions as a Community of Practice. Online communities may use email lists or forums, where content is centralized. Communities may also emerge from conversations around or between bloggers.

**Content** is used here to describe text, pictures, video and any other meaningful material that is on the Internet.

**Control:** Social networking is difficult to control because if people can't say something in one place they can blog or comment elsewhere. That can be challenging for hierarchical organizations used to centrally-managed websites.

**Conversation** through blogging, commenting or contributing to forums is the currency of social networking.

**Copyright:** Sharing through social media is enhanced by attaching a Creative Commons license specifying, for example, that content may be re-used with attribution, provided that a similar license is then attached by the new author.

# social media guide, continued...

**Crowdsourcing** refers to harnessing the skills and enthusiasm of those outside an organization who are prepared to volunteer their time contributing content and solving problems.

**Culture:** Social media only works well in a culture of openness, where people are prepared to share. For that reason, commitment and attitude are as important as tools.

To **download** is to retrieve a file or other content from an Internet site to your computer or other device. See Upload.

**Email lists**, or groups, are important networking tools offering the facility to “starburst” a message from a central postbox to any number of subscribers, and for them to respond. Lists usually also offer a facility for reading and replying through a web page - so they can also operate like forums.

**Face-to-face (f2)** is used to describe people meeting offline. While social media may reduce the need to meet, direct contact gives far more clues, quickly, about a person than you can get online. Online interaction is likely to be richer after f2f meetings.

**Feeds** are the means by which you can read, view or listen to items from blogs and other RSS-enabled sites without visiting the site, by subscribing and using an aggregator or newsreader. Feeds contain the content of an item and any associated tags without the design or structure of a web page.

**Forums** are discussion areas on websites, where people can post messages or comment on existing messages asynchronously – that is, independently of time or place time. Chat is the synchronous equivalent.

Groups are collections of individuals with some sense of unity through their activities, interests or values. They are bounded: you are in a group, or not. They differ in this from networks, which are dispersed, and defined by nodes and connections.

**Instant messaging (IM)** is chat with one other person.

**Links** are the highlighted text or images that, when clicked, jump you from one web page or item of content to another. Bloggers use links a lot when writing, to reference their own or other content.

**Lurkers** are people who read but don't contribute or add comments to forums. The “one percent rule” suggests about one percent of people contribute new content to an online community, another nine percent comment, and the rest “lurk”. However, this may not be a passive role because content read on forums may interact elsewhere.

**Membership** involves belonging to a group. Networking can offer some of the benefits of group membership, without the need for as much central co-ordination. A rise in networking may present challenges for organizations who depend on membership for funds or to demonstrate their credibility.

**Networks** are structures defined by nodes and the connections between them. In social networks the nodes are people, and the connections are the relationships that they have. Networking is the process by which you develop and strengthen those relationships.

**Newsreader:** see Aggregation.

**Online** means being connected to the Internet, and also being there in the sense of reading or producing content.

**Offline** means not online, that is, not connected to the Internet. It may refer to an unconnected computer, or activities taking place without the benefit (or perhaps distraction) of a connection.

# social media guide, continued...

**Openness** is being prepared to share and collaborate – something aided by social media. Open source software - developed collaboratively with few constraints on its use - is a technical example. In order to be open online you may offer share-alike copyright licenses, and you may tag content and link generously to other people's content. This demonstrates open source thinking.

**Peer to peer** refers to direct interaction between two people in a network. In that network, each peer will be connected to other peers, opening the opportunity for further sharing and learning.

A **platform** is the framework or system within which tools work. That platform may be as broad as mobile telephony, or as narrow as a piece of software that has different modules like blogs, forums, and wikis in a suite of tools. As more and more tools operate "out there" on the web, rather than on your desktop, people refer to "the Internet" as the platform.

A **podcast** is audio or video content that can be downloaded automatically through a subscription to a website so you can view or listen offline.

**Profiles** are the information that you provide about yourself when signing up for a social networking site. As well as a picture and basic information, this may include your personal and business interests, a "blurb" about yourself, and tags to help people search for like-minded people.

**Remixing:** Social media offers the possibility of taking different items of content, identified by tags and published through feeds, and combining them in different ways. You can do this with other people's content if they add an appropriate copyright license.

**RSS** is short for Really Simple Syndication. This allows you to subscribe to content on blogs and other social media and have it delivered to you through a feed.

**Searching** for information on the Net is done using a search engine, of which Google is the best known. Specialist search engines like Technorati concentrate on blogs. As well as searching by word or phrase you can search on tags, and so find content others have keyworded.

**Sharing** is offering other people the use of your text, images, video, bookmarks or other content by adding tags, and applying copyright licenses that encourage use of content.

**Social media** is a terms for the tools and platforms people use to publish, converse and share content online. The tools include blogs, wikis, podcasts, and sites to share photos and bookmarks.

**Social networking** sites are online places where users can create a profile for themselves, and then socialize with others using a range of social media tools including blogs, video, images, tagging, lists of friends, forums and messaging.

**Subscribing** is the process of adding an RSS feed to your aggregator or newsreader. It's the online equivalent of signing up for a magazine, but usually free.

**Tags** are keywords attached to a blog post, bookmark, photo or other item of content so you and others can find them easily through searches and aggregation.

**Threads** are strands of conversation. On an email list or web forum they will be defined by messages that use the same subject. On blogs they are less clearly defined, but emerge through comments and trackbacks.

**Tool** is used here as shorthand for a software applications on your computer, and also for applications that are Web-based.

# social media guide, continued...

**Trackback:** some blogs provide a facility for other bloggers to leave a calling card automatically, instead of commenting. Blogger A may write on blog A about an item on blogger B's site, and through the trackback facility leave a link on B's site back to A. The collection of comments and trackbacks on a site facilitates conversations.

To **upload** is to transfer a file or other content from your computer to an Internet site.

**User generated content** is text, photos and other material produced by people who previously just consumed.

**Virtual worlds** are online places like Second Life, where you can create a representation of yourself (an avatar) and socialize with other residents. Basic activity is free, but you can buy currency (using real money) in order to purchase land and trade with other residents. Second Life is being used by some voluntary organizations to run discussions, virtual events and fundraising.

**Web 2.0** is a term coined by O'Reilly Media in 2004 to describe blogs, wikis, social networking sites and other Internet-based services that emphasize collaboration and sharing, rather than less interactive publishing (Web 1.0). It is associated with the idea of the Internet as platform.

A **wiki** is a web page - or set of pages - that can be edited collaboratively. The best known example is wikipedia, an encyclopedia created by thousands of contributors across the world. Once people have appropriate permissions - set by the wiki owner - they can create pages and/or add to and alter existing pages.

# additional technology resources

## e-fundraising resources and examples

**www.acceptiva.com** — Secure, customized, online donation tool for nonprofits. Allows NPOs to accept online credit card and debit card donations.

**www.active.com** — ActiveGiving feature allows teams and clubs to create a fundraising website and secondary, individual fundraising sites to raise money related to a specific activity.

**www.blacktie-colorado.com** — Clearinghouse of events and planning services for Colorado NPOs. Purchasing a membership expands resources to include online ticket sales, one-time credit card gift acceptance tool, and various event planning resources.

**www.blogger.com** — Free Google product that allows NPOs to create a blog, post messages, receive comments, post photos, etc.

**www.constantcontact.com** — CRM service with tools to create and send emails and e-newsletters, fundraising appeals, renewals, event updates, and surveys.

**www.convio.com** — Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) service with email and web publishing tools for membership drives, fundraising, advocacy and events.

**www.ephilanthropy.org** — Provides training to charities for the ethical and efficient use of the Internet for philanthropic purposes through education and advocacy. Quality free e-newsletter.

**www.firstgiving.com** — Online, person to person fundraising resource.

**www.givingfirst.org** — LMC Foundation's new online giving tool.

**www.kintera.com** — A "software as a service" company using technology and services to manage emarketing, communications, programs, services and online fundraising.

**www.kiva.org** — Online, person to recipient lending site. Links lenders directly to microbusiness entrepreneurs.

**www.mycoloradoproject.org** — Community Shares' upcoming young donor online community. Will launch in 2008 and is open to all 501(c)(3) organizations.

**www.networkforgood.org** — Founded by AOL, Cisco Systems and Yahoo!, Network for Good is a 501(c)(3) site bringing donors, volunteers and charities online to donate and search for volunteer opportunities. NPOs can access tools for fundraising, volunteer recruitment and donor communication.

**www.sixdegrees.org** — Users support favorite charities by donating or creating fundraising badges which are posted on social networking sites. "Social networking with a social conscience."

**www.yourmembership.com** --- Online tool for managing membership organizations, communicating with members, and accepting online donations.

# additional technology resources

## nonprofit technology resources

**www.charitynavigator.org** — Independent charity evaluator, works to advance a more efficient and responsive philanthropic marketplace by evaluating the financial health of America's largest charities.

**www.civicore.com** — Provides affordable, high-quality tech solutions to NPOs and public sector. Contact management specialists.

**www.crcamerica.org/NPower** — Community Resource Center is Colorado's provider of the NPower Network. Offers consulting and organization-based solutions to technology challenges.

**www.etapestry.com** --- Provides web-based donor/member management software, website design, and online ecommerce pages for NPOs.

**www.fuelteam.com** — Produces on-demand software for the business and nonprofit sector. Has a suite of web-based applications specifically priced for NPOs including website content management, event management, and communication.

**www.guidestar.com** — Gather and publicize information about NPOs to advance transparency.

**www.netsquared.org** — Project of TechSoup.org. Spurs responsible adoption of social web tools by social benefit organizations.

**www.nten.org** — Nonprofit Technology Network is a membership organization of NPO tech professionals. Free monthly e-newsletter.

**www.techsoup.org** — One-stop resource for technology needs providing free information, resources, and support. Powered by CompuMentor. Also offers TechSoup Stock, access to donated and discounted technology products. Quality free e-newsletter.

## user-generated content sites

### social networking sites:

www.myspace.com (192,000,000 users), www.Linkedin.com, www.Facebook.com, www.Friendster.com, www.MeetUp.com, www.spaces.live.com

### information sharing sites:

www.wikipedia.com, www.YouTube.com, www.Flickr.com, www.craigslist.com



# Community**Shares**

Your Check. Your Charity. Your Colorado.

1536 Wynkoop St., Suite 202, Denver, Colorado 80202

303.861.7507 (ph) • 303.861.8354 (fax)

800.808.4038 (toll-free)

[www.cshares.org](http://www.cshares.org)