

Charitable Giving Report

How Nonprofit Fundraising Performed in 2014

Presented by
Steve MacLaughlin, Director, Analytics

**FEATURING *NONPROFITS AIM TO CONNECT WITH DONORS*
BY TODD COHEN, FOUNDER, PHILANTHROPY NORTH CAROLINA**

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The Charitable Giving Report leverages findings from The Blackbaud Index to provide the largest analysis of overall and online giving data in the nonprofit sector. The aim of the Report is to provide a benchmark for giving and help inform nonprofits' fundraising strategies in 2015.

The Charitable Giving Report includes overall giving data from 4,798 nonprofit organizations representing \$16.2 billion in total fundraising from 2014. The Report also includes online giving data from 3,724 nonprofits representing \$2 billion in online fundraising from 2014.

Significant work has gone into building the analysis model and making sure the data meets strict requirements. This includes collecting giving data on a monthly basis over a period of 24 months, checking and rechecking for anomalies, classifying each organization by sector using

the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) code, matching and retrieving reported total revenue information, and applying statistical expertise to the data.

In addition to this year-in-review Report, The Blackbaud Index is updated on a monthly basis to showcase the latest charitable giving trends. Visit www.blackbaud.com/blackbaudindex for additional insight, to chart your organization's performance against the Index, and to sign up for free monthly fundraising alerts.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

In 2014, overall charitable giving in the United States increased 2.1% on a year-over-year basis. Large organizations grew by 1.3%, medium organizations grew 1.3%, and small organizations grew 5.8% compared to the same time period in 2013.

Online giving grew 8.9% in 2014 compared to 2013. Large organizations grew by 8.0%, medium organizations grew 9.7%, and small organizations grew 10.6% on a year-over-year basis.

Overall giving to Public and Society Benefit organizations grew the most in 2014 compared to 2013. Higher Education institutions had the largest increase in online giving of any sector in the analysis. International Affairs organizations were the only sector to have both a decrease in overall giving and online donations in 2014.

There was an increase in the percentage of total fundraising that came from online donations. In 2014, approximately 6.7% of overall fundraising

revenue, excluding grants, was raised online. Donors continue to shift online even though they are engaged through both traditional and digital channels.

Small organizations, those with annual total fundraising less than \$1 million, grew both overall giving and online donations more than large or medium organizations. Small organizations also had a higher percentage of their giving coming from online donations.

These agile organizations are embracing new approaches and modern technologies to fuel their growth. They may have more limited resources,

but their sustained growth rates over several years are a promising sign.

2014 may represent the new normal in giving. Unlike 2013 and 2012, there was a noted absence of the high profile episodic events that previously drove an increase in giving. An accelerating economy fueled the stock market to new highs in 2014, and fears of changes to the charitable deduction never materialized. Nonprofits must continue to focus on both donor acquisition and retention to drive sustainable growth in fundraising.

OVERALL 2014 GIVING TRENDS

Overall Giving Trends by Organization Size	
Size	YOY % Change
Small (Less than \$1M)	5.8%
Medium (\$1M-\$10M)	1.3%
Large (\$10M+)	1.3%
Total	2.1%

Overall giving in 2014 grew 2.1% on a year-over-year basis for the 4,798 nonprofit organizations in the analysis. This is the third consecutive year where the Charitable Giving Report has found an increase in giving.

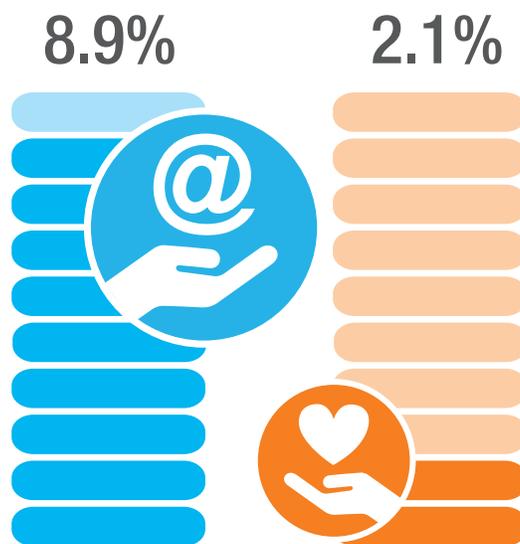
Fundraising by large organizations, with annual total fundraising more than \$10 million, was up by 1.3%. Medium organizations, with annual total fundraising between \$1 million and \$10 million, also grew by 1.3% on a year-over-year basis. Small organizations, with annual total fundraising less than \$1 million, grew their fundraising 5.8% compared to 2013. Since 2012, small organizations have had significantly better fundraising growth rates than both large and medium organizations.

Online giving in 2014 grew 8.9% year-over-year for the 3,724 nonprofit organizations in the analysis. Donors are shifting online and this continues to be a growth opportunity for nonprofits, especially considering that this growth is on top of 13.5% year-over-year online giving growth in 2013.

Nonprofit organizations of all sizes grew their online giving in 2014 compared to 2013. Small organizations, with annual total fundraising less than \$1 million, grew their online fundraising 10.6% compared to 2013. Medium organizations, with annual total fundraising between \$1 million and \$10 million, had a year-over-year increase of 9.7% in their

Online Giving Trends by Organization Size	
Size	YOY % Change
Small (Less than \$1M)	10.6%
Medium (\$1M-\$10M)	9.7%
Large (\$10M+)	8.0%
Total	8.9%

online fundraising. Large organizations, with annual total fundraising more than \$10 million, grew their online fundraising by 8.0% in 2014 compared to 2013.



Online giving was up 8.9% in 2014, compared to the overall giving increase of 2.1%.

GIVING TRENDS BY NONPROFIT SECTOR

Each organization in The Blackbaud Index is categorized by one of ten sectors using its NTEE code as reported on its 990 tax return. These sectors are Arts and Culture, Environment and Animal Welfare, Faith-based, Healthcare, Higher Education, Human Services, International Affairs, K-12 Education, Medical Research, and Public and Society Benefit. Each sector is weighted based on Giving USA data to ensure that no individual organization or sector is overrepresented in the analysis.

Public and Society Benefit organizations had the largest increase in year-over-year fundraising with 9.3% growth. This was followed by Higher Education institutions with a 3.3% growth rate. Arts and Culture organizations grew 3% compared to 2013. Faith-based and Human Services organizations both had a 2.1% increase in fundraising during 2014.

International Affairs and Healthcare organizations experienced a year-over-year decrease in overall giving. The decrease was expected in the International Affairs sector, which had 13.2% growth during 2014 compared to 2013. An absence of significant disaster relief and episodic fundraising events in 2014 compared to 2013 is behind this change.

In an effort to provide the most useful data for organizations in the education field, Blackbaud has split the Education sector into two groups. The Higher Education sector now tracks fundraising revenue for universities, undergraduate colleges, two-year colleges, and other educational institutions, while the K-12 Education sector tracks fundraising revenue for independent schools that provide a formal education for children and adolescents in kindergarten or first grade through grade twelve.

2014 OVERALL GIVING TRENDS BY SECTOR



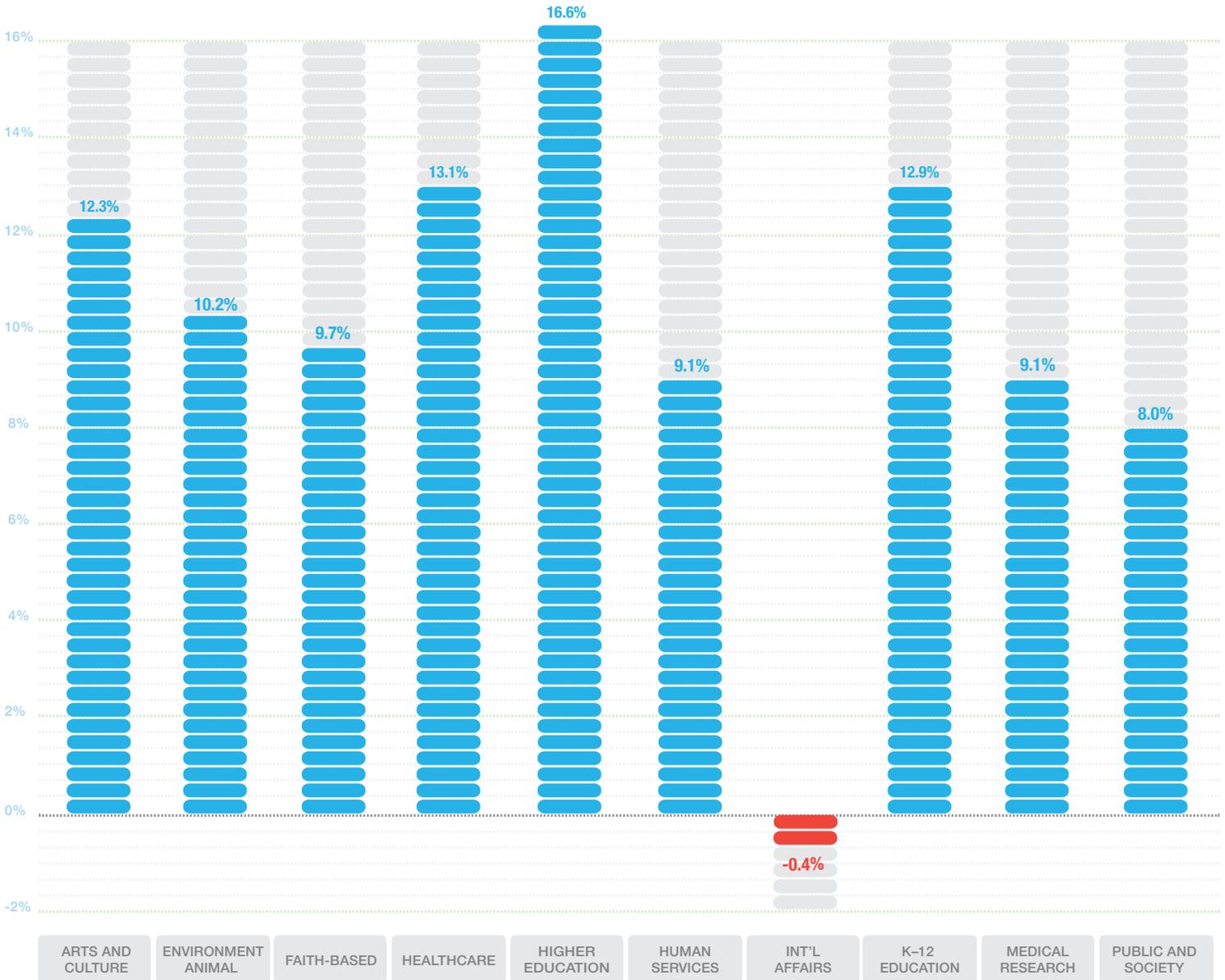
Online giving to Higher Education institutions grew the most in 2014 with a 16.6% year-over-year increase. K-12 Education institutions had a 12.9% increase in online giving during 2014. Healthcare, Arts and Culture, and Environment and Animal Welfare organizations also had double-digit growth in online giving compared to 2013.

International Affairs organizations were the only sector to have a drop in online giving during 2014. This is primarily due to the large spike in online giving following the 2013 Philippines typhoon disaster. These nonprofits

had a 12.9% increase in online fundraising during 2013.

Online giving continues to be very susceptible to spikes and drops due to episodic events. Certain unfortunate domestic and overseas events in 2013 led to a jump in online giving that year. This is because online giving is the first-response channel of choice for donors. There was not a repeat of these types of events in 2014, and this certainly had an impact on the growth of online giving.

2014 ONLINE GIVING TRENDS BY SECTOR



2014 Overall Giving Distribution by Month by Sector

Sector	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Arts and Culture	7.8%	6.8%	8.5%	7.0%	6.3%	10.4%	6.6%	8.2%	7.3%	8.0%	5.8%	17.4%
Environment, Animals	7.1%	6.4%	7.8%	7.1%	7.2%	8.2%	8.1%	8.4%	7.5%	8.0%	6.5%	17.8%
Faith-based	5.9%	6.7%	8.0%	7.8%	8.6%	9.2%	7.8%	6.8%	6.9%	7.3%	7.8%	17.0%
Healthcare	8.1%	8.0%	6.4%	6.5%	6.8%	8.3%	10.3%	6.3%	7.3%	7.7%	7.5%	16.7%
Higher Education	6.2%	6.1%	6.2%	7.2%	9.1%	10.9%	8.6%	6.0%	7.1%	8.5%	6.3%	17.7%
Human Services	7.6%	8.0%	8.2%	7.2%	8.2%	8.2%	6.8%	6.4%	7.4%	7.7%	7.7%	16.8%
International Affairs	4.4%	13.0%	9.4%	6.9%	6.3%	8.1%	8.3%	6.9%	5.2%	8.6%	6.9%	16.0%
K-12 Education	6.7%	6.7%	6.5%	7.7%	8.1%	10.7%	5.2%	5.0%	6.8%	7.6%	8.1%	20.9%
Medical Research	9.2%	7.1%	5.2%	6.8%	5.3%	9.2%	7.6%	5.1%	11.0%	8.2%	4.4%	20.8%
Public/Society Benefit	7.8%	6.6%	8.2%	7.8%	8.8%	7.7%	7.8%	7.0%	7.1%	8.8%	7.5%	15.1%
All Sectors	7.0%	7.8%	7.5%	7.2%	7.6%	9.0%	7.9%	6.5%	7.2%	8.0%	7.1%	17.4%

GIVING TRENDS BY MONTH

The analysis looked at the distribution of giving across all of 2014. While a considerable amount of giving happens in the last three months of the year, the data continues to show shifting trends. For the third consecutive year, the percentage of giving that happened in December decreased.

There continues to be an increase in giving during June that happens because of a focus by some nonprofit organizations on end-of-fiscal-year giving. This trend continues to support the reality that increased focus on engaging donors can diversify giving across the rest of the calendar year.

2014 Online Giving Distribution by Month by Sector

Sector	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Arts and Culture	6.4%	7.0%	10.2%	8.4%	6.6%	7.5%	5.4%	6.3%	6.3%	7.4%	7.6%	21.0%
Environment, Animals	5.7%	6.1%	7.6%	8.5%	7.3%	6.3%	5.9%	6.4%	6.1%	6.1%	7.2%	26.6%
Faith-based	6.2%	6.5%	7.8%	7.8%	7.4%	6.4%	6.7%	7.1%	6.7%	7.2%	7.6%	22.5%
Healthcare	7.7%	8.8%	6.5%	6.8%	5.8%	5.0%	5.0%	5.9%	9.2%	9.1%	6.8%	23.4%
Higher Education	6.3%	7.2%	7.5%	8.5%	7.0%	8.9%	4.4%	5.2%	6.3%	6.8%	6.8%	25.1%
Human Services	5.7%	6.4%	6.6%	6.8%	6.5%	5.5%	5.0%	5.5%	6.9%	7.1%	9.6%	28.4%
International Affairs	4.2%	4.3%	8.0%	6.5%	11.1%	4.7%	9.5%	5.3%	5.7%	8.8%	7.0%	25.0%
K-12 Education	7.1%	17.2%	8.5%	7.7%	8.9%	9.3%	3.4%	3.3%	5.4%	6.5%	5.6%	17.0%
Medical Research	2.7%	4.7%	8.8%	11.2%	9.2%	6.0%	4.6%	21.4%	12.9%	9.7%	3.3%	5.5%
Public/Society Benefit	5.4%	4.8%	7.3%	6.5%	6.6%	6.6%	5.9%	6.8%	7.3%	7.6%	7.2%	28.1%
All Sectors	4.8%	6.4%	8.0%	8.7%	8.3%	6.3%	5.5%	11.2%	8.8%	8.3%	5.9%	17.8%

Online giving is also shifting away from the high percentage of December donations. In 2014, 17.8% of all online giving happened during December. That is down from 22.4% in 2013. This shift is happening even though #GivingTuesday continues to grow on a year-over-year basis. The worldwide movement has taken place in December during both 2013 and 2014.

The significant increase in online giving during August 2014 for Medical Research organizations shows the influence of the Ice Bucket Challenge. The Blackbaud Index calculates the median percent change so that any one fundraising program or organization cannot skew the overall results. The tremendous success of the Ice Bucket Challenge in such a short period of time certainly had an influence on giving in August.

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

The third annual #GivingTuesday was held on December 2, 2014, and the results continue to be extremely positive.

- Blackbaud processed more than \$26.1 million in online donations on #GivingTuesday 2014
- Online donations on #GivingTuesday 2014 were up 36% compared to 2013
- There was a 15% increase in the number of nonprofits that received an online donation on #GivingTuesday 2014

TRENDS BY PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FUNDRAISING FROM ONLINE GIVING

Blackbaud has been measuring the percentage of total fundraising that comes from online giving for many years now. This metric can be used by nonprofit organizations to benchmark their online giving performance against peer organizations within each sector or of a similar size.

Blackbaud used data over the past year to examine the percentage of total fundraising that came from online giving. In 2014, 6.7% of total fundraising came from online giving. This was an increase from 2013 based on an analysis of data from 4,484 organizations with \$21.3 billion in total fundraising in 2014.

Small organizations continue to lead the way with 7.4% of total fundraising coming from online giving, followed by large organizations with 7.2%, and medium organizations with 5.6%.

Medical Research organizations raised 18.5% of their total fundraising from online giving. Contrast that with Healthcare organizations that raised only 3.6%. This highlights a key difference between organizations raising a significant amount of funds from peer-to-peer events and the more traditional major gift focus of Healthcare organizations.

Public and Society Benefit organizations saw 7.6% of their total fundraising coming from online giving. International Affairs organizations dropped from 9.3% to 7.0% in 2014. As with other giving trends in 2014, this is closely linked to the decrease in giving toward episodic events and disaster relief.

Percentage of Total Fundraising from Online Giving

Size	%
Small (Less than \$1M)	7.4%
Medium (\$1M–\$10M)	5.6%
Large (\$10M+)	7.2%
Total	6.7%

2014 Percentage of Total Fundraising from Online Giving

Sector	%
Arts and Culture	6.7%
Environment and Animal Welfare	5.5%
Faith-based	8.8%
Healthcare	3.6%
Higher Education	3.5%
Human Services	5.0%
International Affairs	7.0%
K–12 Education	7.7%
Medical Research	18.5%
Public and Society Benefit	7.6%

The Faith-based, Education, Human Services, and Healthcare sectors have the biggest opportunity to drive an increase in the percentage of overall fundraising that comes from online donations. Donors are continuing to shift online even when both online and offline engagement channels are used by nonprofits.

Some are often surprised to learn that online giving is still less than 10% of total fundraising. As a point of comparison, it is helpful to look at online purchases as a percent of total retail sales. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, eCommerce sales in the third quarter of 2014 accounted for 6.6% of total sales. This suggests that consumer behavior is indeed a mirror of shifting habits in where donors give.

KEY FINDINGS

The Charitable Giving Report analyzes trends from over \$16.2 billion in fundraising revenue from 2014. Here are some key findings:

- 1 Overall giving grew approximately 2.1% in 2014.
- 2 Online giving grew 8.9% in 2014 compared to 2013.
- 3 Online donations were 6.7% of all fundraising in 2014.
- 4 Small organizations had the greatest increase in overall fundraising in 2014.
- 5 Higher Education institutions had the greatest increase in online giving during 2014.

NONPROFITS AIM TO CONNECT WITH DONORS

BY TODD COHEN, FOUNDER, PHILANTHROPY NORTH CAROLINA

Fundraising is getting personal.

Whether big, small, or mid-sized, nonprofits are looking for ways to better understand donors and focus their fundraising on creating opportunities for donors to support the particular causes and interests they care about.

Nonprofits use a broad range of strategies to focus their fundraising on donors. Those strategies can include segmenting appeals based on donor interest, giving donors the opportunity to create their own funds and websites to raise money for those funds, and listening carefully to feedback from fundraising volunteers.

Roger Williams Park Zoo

Last year, the Roger Williams Park Zoo farmed out the marketing of its annual fund to a local mail house and marketing firm. The firm analyzed the Zoo's mailing list and the results of a survey the Zoo conducted that asked donors what interested them the most at the Zoo. The analysis found that donors who cared most about conservation and research, animal care, and general zoo activities gave more than other donors.

So for last year's annual fund drive, the Rhode Island Zoo Society, which manages the Roger Williams Park Zoo for the City of Providence, targeted those three donor groups.

The appeal raised \$75,000, setting a baseline for what the Zoo expects will be significant increases in future years.

"Fundraising at the Zoo has become very, very donor-centric," says Brooke Fairman, director of development.

Personal Touch

Operating with an annual budget of \$7.5 million, the Zoo counts on memberships, events, and corporate sponsorships for a large portion of its budget.

With more than 17,000 household memberships that generate more than \$1.6 million in annual revenue, the Zoo uses a personal approach to encourage members to increase their level of membership.

With members paying \$99 on average a year, 1,500 members known as "Zookeepers" pay \$150, and another 250 known as "Zoo Guardians" pay \$250 or more.

During the annual renewal cycle, the Zoo invites Zookeepers to become Zoo Guardians.

"We are constantly looking to upgrade memberships," says Elizabeth Grover, development and member services manager.

For Zoo Guardians, the Zoo takes a more hands-on approach to stewardship with personal phone calls, handwritten notes, and invitations to visit the Zoo. Grover adds that Zoo Guardians get to go behind the scenes, feed animals, and take tours.

Events Fundraising

Events also are a big revenue producer, including an annual event known as Zoobilee that the Zoo has hosted for more than 20 years.

Last June, the adults-only, after-hours event featured live music; "animal encounters;" and more than 40 restaurants, caterers, and beverage providers attracting 1,400 guests who paid \$125 or more for tickets and sponsors that paid up to \$25,000. The event generated \$250,000.

And as the largest tourist attraction in Rhode Island, the Zoo generates a lot of support from corporations that want to reach the Zoo's visitors.

The main supporters of Zoobilee are corporate sponsors, and most of the people at the event are the sponsors' guests.

"Corporations, knowing the amount of people who go to the Zoo, tend to want to be involved," Fairman says. "We have very longstanding relationships that we continue to nurture. It's a lot of communications, touch points, and constantly checking in."

The Zoo also offers special events for potential corporate sponsors.

During the week when Rhode Island and Massachusetts public schools are on vacation break, the Zoo offers events throughout the week for families and gives its corporate partners the opportunity to distribute brochures or demonstrate their products and services.

This year, it launched "Brew at the Zoo," a new after-hours event for people age 21 and older who could sample beer from more than 50 breweries, which provided an opportunity for corporate sponsorships.

Social Media

Expanding beyond direct mail appeals, the Zoo is embracing multichannel marketing through email and social media.

It has found that most visitors to its website use mobile devices. It also aims to capitalize on the following it has generated on Facebook® and Twitter®.

And this year, the Zoo is producing a mobile app that visitors can download to get information about animals, programs, and their location in the Zoo.

It also is posting information every day on social media about topics like camp programs, fundraising campaigns, or appeals.

“We bring them in through events and then have to retain them using other strategies.”

— Christine Bork, Chief Development and Communications Officer, CureSearch

Making It Personal

“What matters in fundraising is understanding donors and getting them involved,” Fairman says.

“It’s really the personal touch in all areas—corporate and individual donors,” she says. “We’re constantly reaching out to them and looking for what makes them ‘tick’ and not just treat everyone the same.”

For the annual fund the Zoo drafted three appeal letters for members with an interest in conservation and research, animal care, or building a new exhibit.

“The letters focus on how the donor can help, what the donor has done so far, and what their gift means and why we still need their help,” Grover says. “We’ve really moved to a donor-centric model. It’s really about the donors’ interests and the impact they’ve had on the organization. It’s not so much about what we do but because of the donor that we’re able to do it.”

CureSearch for Children’s Cancer

With events generating roughly 48% of the \$6.1 million it raised in 2014 to support research, CureSearch for Children’s Cancer faces a big challenge in converting the 20,000 individuals who participate in its events into ongoing donors.

Among individuals who participate in a CureSearch event for the first time because they are family members, friends, neighbors, or co-workers of parents who have children with cancer and who help raise money for the event, 60% agree to participate a second year but only 20–30% agree to participate a third year.

“We’ve got a limited amount of time to capture them,” says Christine Bork, Chicago-based chief development and communications officer for CureSearch, which is based in Bethesda, Maryland.

CureSearch developed a strategy to convert event participants to annual fund donors over 18 to 24 months. The strategy includes five to seven outreaches that do not ask for money but instead provide educational materials and other information as well as six to eight separate requests to give.

“The events are a portal to our individual giving strategy,” Bork says. “We bring them in through events and then have to retain them using other strategies.”

Events Strategy

In 2014, CureSearch raised money through 50 community walks and four 28-mile hikes. For the community walks, the nonprofit provides staff liaisons that help guide local volunteer committees that plan and raise money for the events.

The number of volunteers can range from 15 to 20 for an event that will attract 200 to 300 participants in a community like the Lehigh Valley region of Pennsylvania, to 30 to 40 volunteers for an event in a community like Chicago that will attract 2,000 participants.

CureSearch handles all the planning and logistics for its 4 hikes, each of which typically attracts 25 participants who each must contribute at least \$2,500 and sometimes give as much as \$5,000 to \$6,000 mainly through fundraising.

Annual Fund and Major Gifts

CureSearch generates \$700,000 a year through its annual fund and \$600,000 from major donors, or those who give \$10,000 or more.

Fundraising for the annual fund consists of 8 electronic appeals with the average gift totaling \$160. Its major gifts strategy focuses on personal visits to donors or prospects by one of the nonprofit’s two major gift officers, its CEO, or Bork.

In 2014, CureSearch launched two events—one at the Huntsman Cancer Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah, and the other at the University of California at San Francisco, California—at which scientists presented the results of their research and donors toured the research labs. It also held a research symposium that attracted mainly scientists but also a few parents.

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“What’s working for us right now is the customization of fundraising for different audiences.”

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*— Christine Bork,
 Chief Development and Communications Officer, CureSearch*

Customized Fundraising

The biggest success for CureSearch has been an initiative that identifies event participants with the capacity to give at least \$25,000.

Using a template that carries the CureSearch brand and can be co-branded with the name of the donor family, CureSearch lets parents of children who have died from cancer or who still have it create funds to support research along with a website to raise money.

In the past two years, the number of funds has grown from two to eight, including two that raise six-figure totals annually. Collectively, the eight funds gave roughly \$600,000 for research in 2014.

“What’s working for us right now is the customization of fundraising for different audiences, giving a very small but very important group of people exactly what they’re looking for,” Bork says. “We give them their own website, and we’re maintaining and supporting that and giving them the resources to help them fundraise.”

Using the same template, CureSearch offers similar opportunities for families that might raise much less, such as \$500.

“We’re allowing people to do whatever they want to do to raise money for this cause whenever they want to do it,” she says.

Cultivating Donors and Showing Impact

Using simple tools, CureSearch is working to better inform and engage donors.

It offers simple language donors can use to provide for CureSearch in their will, and as a result received bequests totaling \$250,000 in 2013 and \$20,000 in 2014.

It distributes an electronic newsletter four times a year that focuses on the results of the research it funds and sometimes a story about a donor who has raised money.

CureSearch also publishes an annual report and twice a year an “Impact Report” that features information graphics, optimized for a mobile device, on the research it has supported, such as the number of cancer cell line studies it has funded or the number of genes investigated with its support.

“You would think in cancer research it’s hard to demonstrate results because it might take years to show impact, but the Impact Reports are generating great feedback for us,” Bork says.

“A key lesson is to meet your donors where they are,” she says. “Give them 24/7 access and help them understand the results and feel like they’re part of the results and that what they’re doing is truly meaningful.”

Darlington School

In its recent comprehensive campaign that raised \$97 million, exceeding its goal by \$7 million, Darlington School in Rome, Georgia, learned about the value of listening to its volunteers and adapting to changing circumstances.

On September 17, 2008, just before an event at the Capital City Club in Atlanta that attracted 300 guests for the campaign’s public kickoff, the school’s development staff met with the 40 members of its local campaign cabinet to talk about their assignments over the next 18 months to ask for gifts from the school’s top 200 prospects in the region.

That day, however, the Dow plunged nearly 500 points, triggering a collapse in the capital markets.

In the following weeks, Joe Montgomery, chief advancement officer, recalled how campaign volunteers were reluctant to call on prospects and ask for a contribution.

So in early October, the School reconvened its Atlanta cabinet and advised volunteers not to waste good prospects on a bad economy.

“Cultivate those relationships. They’re your friends. If you’re having reservations about asking and they’re uncertain, then take them to lunch. Don’t avoid them. Cultivate them,” Montgomery said.

Darlington also modified its campaign plan, focusing on markets west of Mississippi and north of Virginia.

After exceeding its \$90 million goal by its deadline on May 31, 2012, the campaign added a “Go the Extra Mile” segment that ended Dec. 31, 2013 and raised an additional \$7 million.

Peer-to-Peer Fundraising

Volunteers were key to the success of the campaign and to overall fundraising at Darlington, a coeducational day and boarding school that was founded in 1905 and has 800 students from 25 states and 30 countries in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade.

“Nothing works more effectively than peer-to-peer fundraising, and there’s no substitute for the personal visit,” Montgomery says.

After raising \$35 million during a year-long feasibility phase, and then securing approval from the school’s board of trustees to raise another \$30 million during a one-year quiet phase that began in September 2007, Darlington kicked off the \$90 million campaign with the Atlanta event after raising a total of \$65 million.

It held similar events throughout the United States in communities ranging from Miami and New York to San Francisco and Seattle. It screened a campaign video in each market and assigned local volunteers to ask for contributions from peers.

“The video presented the case and the needs for the strategic plan and set the stage for volunteers asking for gifts in those markets,” Montgomery says.

Early in the campaign, most donors were giving cash and appreciated securities. But as the markets sank, most major donors—those giving \$25,000 or more—made planned gifts.

“In 2009, 2010, and 2011, donors became more tentative in making multi-year commitments because of the uncertainty of the economy,” Montgomery says. “But in order to achieve the level of commitment they desired, they finally got around to making that estate gift.”

Of the total raised in the campaign, planned gifts accounted for nearly \$40 million while cash and appreciated securities accounted for the remaining balance.

Darlington, which has nearly 10,000 alumni and an endowment of \$35 million, also sustained the level of giving to its annual fund during the campaign. The annual fund now has generated more than \$1 million a year for 17 straight years.

Campaigns within Campaigns

During the campaign, two donors each agreed to give \$500,000 to support endowments—for faculty professional development and for financial assistance for minority students, respectively—if Darlington could match those gifts with contributions from other donors.

“In a bad economy, if you can double your money, you might dig a little deeper,” Montgomery says. “That was a tactic that resonated well and attracted donors of all sizes ranging from \$25 to \$200,000.”

The “campaigns within the campaign” also gave the school an opportunity to talk about two important needs.

Each endowment challenge exceeded its goal.

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— Joe Montgomery,
Chief Advancement Officer, Darlington School
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Trustees and Leadership

Of the total raised in the campaign, \$50 million—or over half the total raised—was committed by trustees, former trustees, and life trustees of the school. And every current member of the board of trustees made his or her largest gift ever to the school.

That trustee support also was important in securing grants from foundations, particularly in Atlanta, which claims Darlington as its boarding school.

“When you’re sitting in a foundation board room and delivering a proposal and you can say all members of the board have made their largest gifts, that’s strong,” Montgomery says.

Overall, foundations contributed \$20 million to the campaign.

Equally critical to the success of the campaign was its top leadership.

The two campaign co-chairs were a former CEO of a Fortune 500 company and a self-made businessman in the Atlanta real estate market.

“There was never a place too far for them to travel get the job done,” Montgomery says.

Social Media

Although peer-to-peer fundraising powered the campaign, Darlington used social media to promote big gifts and help fuel the work of its fundraising volunteers who were asking their friends and peers for donations.

“One of the key elements for success in our campaign, which was uniquely challenged by the downturn in the economy and the headwind that created, was sustaining positive momentum by using social media and keying in on big wins on a regular basis so our volunteers didn’t get discouraged and kept their enthusiasm for working for us,” Montgomery said.

And for younger donors, the school held text-a-thons with small groups of alumni convening at “hotspots” and then texting classmates, raising money, and enjoying a social event.

Broader Lessons

“Securing and promoting big gifts should be a fundamental strategy for fundraising at any nonprofit. Be thoughtful about engineering big wins and early victories to create positive momentum for the effort,” Montgomery says.

Equally important is valuing the work of volunteers and their feedback.

“Listen to your volunteers,” he says, “and don’t be hesitant to modify your campaign plan or even recalibrate expectations.”

In the end, meeting an organization’s fundraising goal depends on effectively cultivating the people critical to meeting that goal.

“Actively steward the relationships that will ultimately define your success,” he says, “whether they are trustees, campaign volunteers, or major donors.”

ABOUT THE 2014 CHARITABLE GIVING REPORT

The findings in this Report are based on giving data from 4,798 nonprofit organizations and more than \$16.2 billion in fundraising revenue. The online fundraising findings are based on data from 3,724 nonprofit organizations and more than \$2 billion in online fundraising revenue.

To be included in the analysis, these organizations needed to have 24 months of complete giving data with no gaps or missing information. Each organization was then classified by sector using its NTEE code as reported on its 990 tax return. (If you are not sure what sector your organization is classified as, you may refer to your 990 to find your NTEE code. Visit <http://nccs.urban.org/classification/NTEE.cfm> for a complete listing of sectors.)

Organizations were then grouped into three size categories: total annual fundraising less than \$1 million (small), total annual fundraising between \$1 million and \$10 million (medium), and total annual fundraising exceeding \$10 million (large). This is based on recorded giving in their

fundraising systems, reported fundraising in IRS Form 990 data, and matching done through the National Center for Charitable Statistics.

Organizations without all the research criteria were not included in this analysis. Organizations based outside the United States were excluded from this analysis. We do not include the unfulfilled portion of pledge gifts or recurring gifts that are processed offline. Giving USA data is used to weight the data to ensure that no individual organization or sector is overrepresented in the analysis.

The percentage of total fundraising trends research is based on 4,484 nonprofits in The Blackbaud Index. These organizations represent \$21.3 billion in total fundraising in 2014.

This report would not be possible without Jim O’Shaughnessy and his dedicated diligence in delivering the data. Special thanks to Blackbaud’s Chief Scientist Chuck Longfield for creating The Blackbaud Index and being a champion for this Report.

ABOUT THE BLACKBAUD INDEX

Economic conditions, natural disasters, and market fluctuations have made it extremely difficult for nonprofits to make fundraising decisions informed by the latest donor behavior. That is why we created The Blackbaud Index of Charitable Giving in 2010—to provide insight into what happened in the prior few weeks and valuable analysis by leaders in the sector into what fundraisers can learn from it.

The Blackbaud Index brings you the most up-to-date information on charitable giving today. Tracking approximately \$16.2 billion in US-based charitable giving, the Index is updated on the first of each month and is based on year-over-year percent changes. Featuring overall and online giving, the Index can be viewed by size and sub-sectors of the nonprofit industry.

About Blackbaud

Serving the nonprofit, charitable giving and education communities for more than 30 years, Blackbaud (NASDAQ:BLKB) combines technology solutions and expertise to help organizations achieve their missions. Blackbaud works in over 60 countries to support more than 30,000 customers, including nonprofits, K12 private and higher education institutions, healthcare organizations, foundations and other charitable giving entities, and corporations. The company offers a full spectrum of cloud and on-premise solutions, and related services for organizations of all sizes, including nonprofit [fundraising and relationship management](#), [eMarketing](#), [advocacy](#), [accounting](#), [payment](#) and [analytics](#), as well as [grant management](#), [corporate social responsibility](#), [education](#) and other solutions. Using Blackbaud technology, these organizations raise, invest, manage and award more than \$100 billion each year. [Recognized as a top company](#), Blackbaud is headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina and has operations in the United States, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Ireland and the United Kingdom. For more information, visit www.blackbaud.com.

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