

# A Guide to Fundraising in the New Normal

Strategies, Templates, and Tools for Fundraising  
Success in a Post-COVID World



# Intro

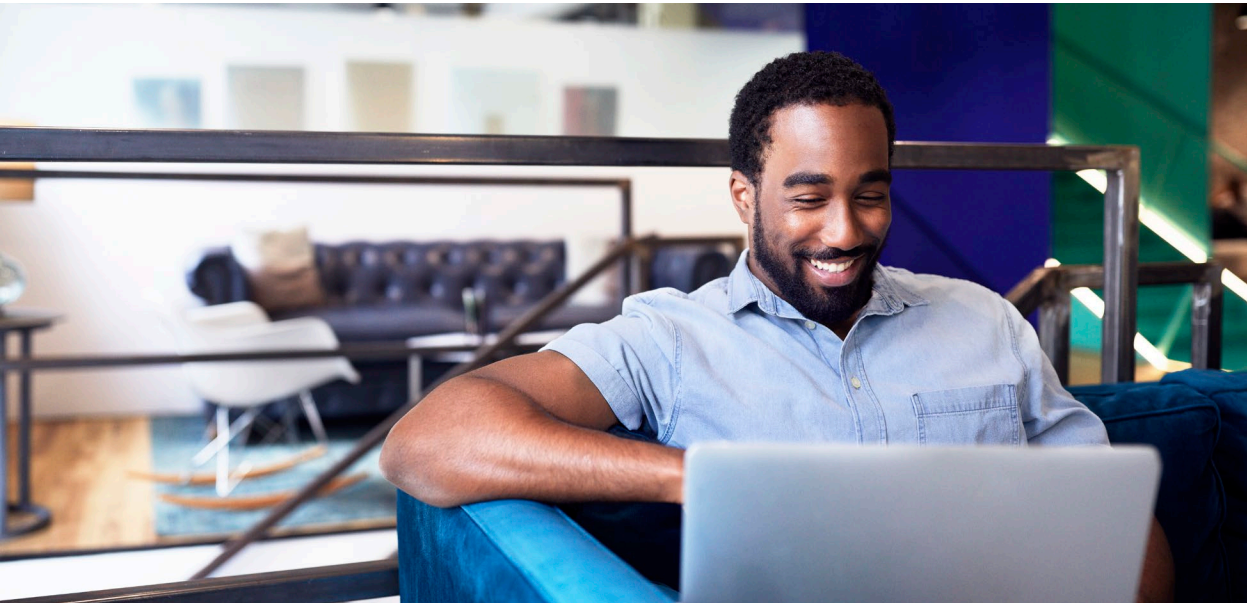
Although the way we come together, communicate, and do - well, just about everything we used to do - is quite different these days, one thing hasn't changed: your donor community cares about your mission and they're here to see you through.

Even before COVID-19, your organization was no stranger to the ever-evolving landscape of fundraising. So as you learn new strategies, tailor your communication templates, and take on new tools, do so with the confidence that success will follow.

Remember, it's organizations like yours that showed us the way before COVID-19 and taught us how to give, help, and support those in need during this crisis. Now it's time for you to lead us into a "forward" that helps us create a more equitable future for everyone, because just like always, we're following your example.

Sending our very best to you, your staff, and your incredible mission,

The DonorPerfect Team



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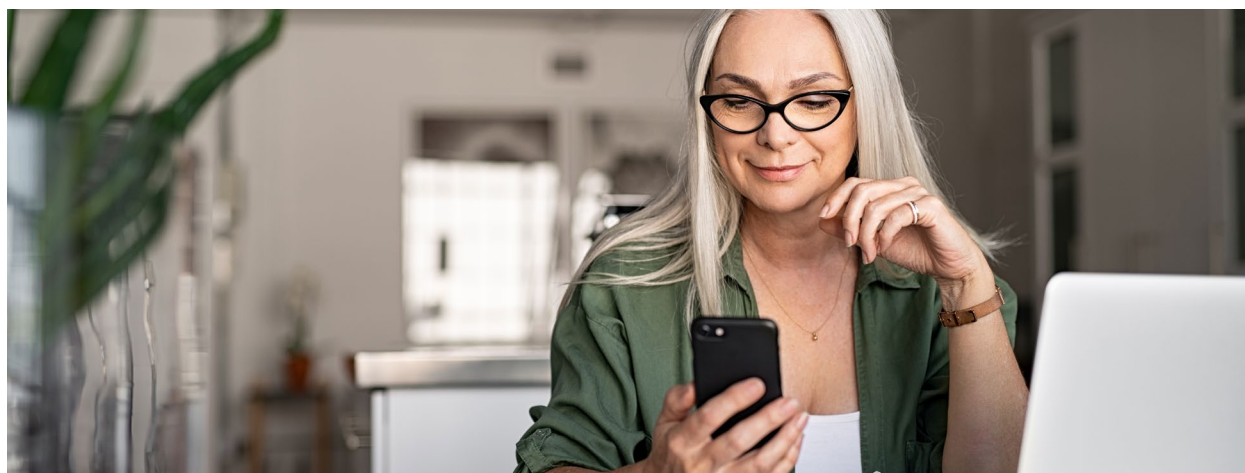


# We're All in This Together

On the fence about fundraising? Read on for practical tips from fellow fundraisers that will help you get your bearings in the new normal.







## How Have Donor Relationships Changed?

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In the last few weeks and months, our relationships with donors have changed dramatically. Your nonprofit along with your fundraising activities could be impacted in a variety of ways:

### Major Gift Fundraising

Face-to-face meetings drive the solicitation process for nonprofit organizations that rely on major gifts, such as colleges or hospitals. After restrictions are lifted, will these donors still take an appointment with you?

### Corporate and Foundation Appeals

In-person meetings are also essential for nonprofits who like to meet with corporations and foundations before submitting their appeals. How will you connect with funders to build your appeals in the new normal?

### Fundraising Events

Fundraising events provide an excellent opportunity to meet with supporters in person to strengthen your relationships, bring new people into your organization, and to find volunteers. As restrictions are lifted, will supporters want to give up social distancing measures to attend your events?

## Individual Gifts, Sponsorships and Auction Item Donation

Many financially strapped donors may find that their giving capacity is reduced or that they need to stop giving altogether. Local businesses may not be able to sponsor your events, provide auction items, and buy tables. Should you still solicit them?

While COVID-19 has changed how we relate to donors, it hasn't changed what your constituents want out of a relationship with your nonprofit. To succeed in fundraising, you need to find new ways to draw donors in and make them feel connected.

## Watch + Learn: Overcoming the Fear of Fundraising

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Is it insensitive to fundraise now? Fundraising experts say now is the time to double down on fundraising and not run from it. How can you overcome fear to embrace fundraising again confidently? Watch this on-demand webinar and learn how to connect with donors and gain the confidence to successfully fundraise in today's new normal.



[WATCH VIDEO >>](#)

# 5 Things Nonprofits Wish They Knew 3 Months Ago

If you had a time machine and could go back to before coronavirus (COVID-19) impacted the world, how would you prepare? What would you do differently? We surveyed over 700 nonprofits to find out what advice they'd give themselves and others about fundraising in the new normal. Here's what they told us:

## 1. Set Up Better Data Collection Standards and Regularly Audit Them

Many nonprofits have made the transition to working remotely due to COVID-19 and depend on the quality of the data in their donor management system now more than ever before.

Like you, many of your constituents are also working from home, using their personal cell phones and email addresses. If you can't reach your donors, you can't solicit them.

Be sure to update your procedures to collect contact methods and donor information that will facilitate virtual fundraising.

To make life even easier, choose a donor CRM that flexes to your organization's needs. Need a recommendation? DonorPerfect allows you to easily customize your system to [collect and organize your data](#) in the way that works best for you and your team.

### SURVEY SAYS:

Here's how NPOs told us they are making the most of the data in their DonorPerfect system to fundraise during COVID-19:

*"Our strategy is to build a strong relationship with individual donors through our DonorPerfect database, learn about their giving patterns, and establish appeals related to those patterns."*

*"Make a plan to segment your constituent base and decide who from your organization will make personal contact with your constituents."*

### ASK YOURSELF:

What data collection improvements can your nonprofit make to improve virtual fundraising?

## 2. Take a Balanced Approach with Your Revenue Streams and Include Digital Fundraising

Many nonprofits rely heavily on in-person fundraising. The organizations we surveyed said they're now focusing on a more balanced approach that includes a mix of in-person, virtual and digital fundraising components.

### Virtual Fundraising and In-Person Events Can Co-Exist

Instead of waiting for social distancing rules and gathering limits to change, provide avenues for anyone who wants to participate in your events by offering a virtual component. For example, future events may include in-person opportunities like a 5K run, but for now, consider a virtual 5K where participants run on their own between specific dates.

The key is to find ways to engage with off-site participants so that they feel like they are part of the event. This might include sending t-shirts and other event goodies to participants as well as "virtual-only" type Zoom kickoffs or online challenges.

### Work with Existing Partners in New Ways

Don't be afraid to reach out to event sponsors, grant funders and major donors to see if they'd be willing to work with you on how unspent funds are allocated, such as event table sponsorships. Many of the nonprofits we surveyed did that with great success. They were surprised that these partners still wanted to help and were okay with re-allocating those funds to other program needs, such as moving event table fees to sponsor online auctions.

### Build a Multichannel Donor Strategy

A balanced fundraising strategy also includes a plan for [multichannel donor engagement](#). Your supporters give online through your website and emails. They like and share your social media posts. They attend your fundraising events and sign up for volunteer opportunities. That's why it's best to pair your website, emails, and social media campaigns with a variety of ways for donors to support your cause that is quick and easy, not only for your donors to engage but also for you to manage.

### SURVEY SAYS:

Here's how NPOs told us that they are adapting their fundraising efforts to be more balanced during and after COVID-19:

*"Get digital! Although this has been a big hit to our traditional operations, it has granted us the opportunity to strengthen our communications work! Look for ways to grow in the meantime!"*

*"We're establishing a strong social media following and developing a reliable digital marketing plan that ties donors to online giving platforms like our website."*

*“Changing your narrative. If fundraising via events, instead find creative ways to continue to raise funds virtually.”*

*“We have been successful with pleas explaining our loss of revenue due to canceled fundraising and adoption events. We solicited sponsors for our biggest event and were able to raise almost as much as we netted in the past.”*

*“We looked at all of our current grant and major donors, and, if there were funds unspent from each of their gifts, we asked if we could redirect it to our COVID-19 response. Everyone has agreed.”*

#### **ASK YOURSELF:**

How balanced are your revenue streams? Could your organization have a better mix of in-person, virtual, and digital fundraising components?

### 3. Don’t Underestimate the Power of a Good Technical Support Team

Your donor management software is a lifeline to maintain good donor relationships. If it’s not working or you’re struggling with how to do something within the software, you want an [experienced support team](#) that’s there for you.

#### **SURVEY SAYS:**

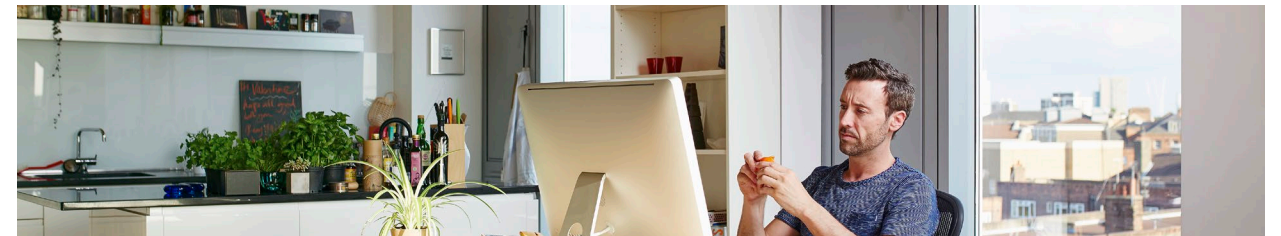
The NPO’s we surveyed told us that reliable IT support was crucial to getting their nonprofits up and running as the coronavirus pandemic began.

*“Have up-to-date IT infrastructure to enable secure remote work for employees. As long as they can continue doing their jobs, it gives the organization the best chance to get their message out and, hopefully, continue to raise funds.”*

*“I have never had a better tech support experience in the CRM industry. Every chat, call, or email is responded to almost immediately, with courtesy, professionalism, and best of all, knowledgeable solutions.”*

#### **ASK YOURSELF:**

Are you having challenges transitioning to remote work and virtual fundraising? Get the support you need from this [list of resources](#) to help nonprofits during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.



### 4. Have a Solid Donor Stewardship Plan in Place

How do you engage with supporters so that they become more invested in your organization’s work? If you don’t have a plan in place for thanking, communicating, and interacting with donors regularly, it will be more challenging to get them to respond during a crisis. Many organizations we surveyed saw the value of having a solid donor stewardship plan in place and are concentrating their efforts to pay more attention to this in the future. Here are two areas in your donor stewardship plan to focus on in the next few months:

#### **Communications**

Plan specific touchpoints to communicate with donors regularly, and not just once a year when you send tax letters. This will engage your donors and involve them in your organization’s work. Focus on creating personalized (segmented) communications that update donors on the impact of the campaign they’ve supported.

#### **Engagement**

Brainstorm ways to get donors actively involved with your organization through events, surveys, and volunteer opportunities.

#### **SURVEY SAYS:**

Here’s what NPOs told us about their renewed focus on a strong donor stewardship plan:

*“Be flexible on everything except the value of stewardship; it’s important to provide stewardship more than ever.”*

*“Much comes down to the relationship groundwork laid in the years before events like this. Even so, continue to meet the needs of your donors first. Reach out to them, check on them regularly. Let them know what you are doing to face the financial difficulties, and thank them for their efforts in getting you this far. Be honest about your needs. Be transparent.”*

*“Focus first on non-fundraising messages – we are here and doing ok, how are you? What can we do to help you? Then build upon those good messages before asking for money”*

*“Find creative ways to thank your donors. We had yard signs made and delivered them to donors. We also called and thanked every donor.”*



**ASK YOURSELF:**

Does your organization have a plan to thank, communicate, and interact with donors on a regular basis? What touch points will you put in place to engage donors? Follow these [tips to connect with donors](#) and gain the confidence to fundraise in today’s environment.

## 5. Investing in Yourself Pays Big Dividends Down the Road

When you’re busy working towards fulfilling your nonprofit’s mission, it can be easy to forgo the time needed to invest in “auxiliary” tasks that build your skills and fuel your mission. Many of the nonprofits we surveyed regretted not taking time to pursue training, practice using tech tools, or sharpen other skills that help them be more productive. These were skills that would have made the transition after COVID-19 began much smoother. Moving forward, they plan to refocus those efforts and commit to the importance of investing in yourself.

**PRO TIP:**

Using DonorPerfect? Our Foundational Series is a collection of [15 free live webinars](#) that takes you through basic and intermediate functions in DonorPerfect.

**SURVEY SAYS:**

Here’s how the organizations that we surveyed are adjusting their strategies in ways they didn’t before:

- “Use this time to build a strong foundation and to do research. To prep for anything you might have in the future (events, or transitions).”
- “Turn your worries into fueling your creativity. Now is the time to try new things, and if it doesn’t work, at least you tried. Listen to ALL members of your team and overall organization. Again, get creative and just GO! I think donors will appreciate at least the effort, even if they can’t give.”
- “Appeal to your supporters. Remember, you are TRYING to work from home in a crisis. Cut yourself some slack. Now’s the time to be creative and remember your mission.”
- “You have to re-create your fundraising plan and adjust it to our new reality and environment. Participate in webinars for education and support from other fundraisers.”
- “Learn what your niche is and how you can continue to provide services and programs within the restraints. don’t wait for the crisis to be over.”

“Never waste a good crisis; figure out what you can do that will help in the future. How can you get an ROI in the digital literacy skills we are all developing?”

**ASK YOURSELF:**

What new skills have you learned through your experiences in the last three months? What new skills do you want to cultivate?

**BONUS:**

The Brighter Side of the COVID-19 Crisis

One surprising thing that came out of the COVID-19 crisis for many nonprofits was how much their donor community loves them and wants to support their efforts. Constituents facing substantial economic challenges are coming forward to rally behind the missions of the organizations they love and admire. Not only are they providing financial support, but they are stepping up with creative and resourceful ways to volunteer and collect in-kind donations for program areas. People want to know how to make a difference right now. Make it clear how they can help and demonstrate the critical impact it has.

**SURVEY SAYS:**

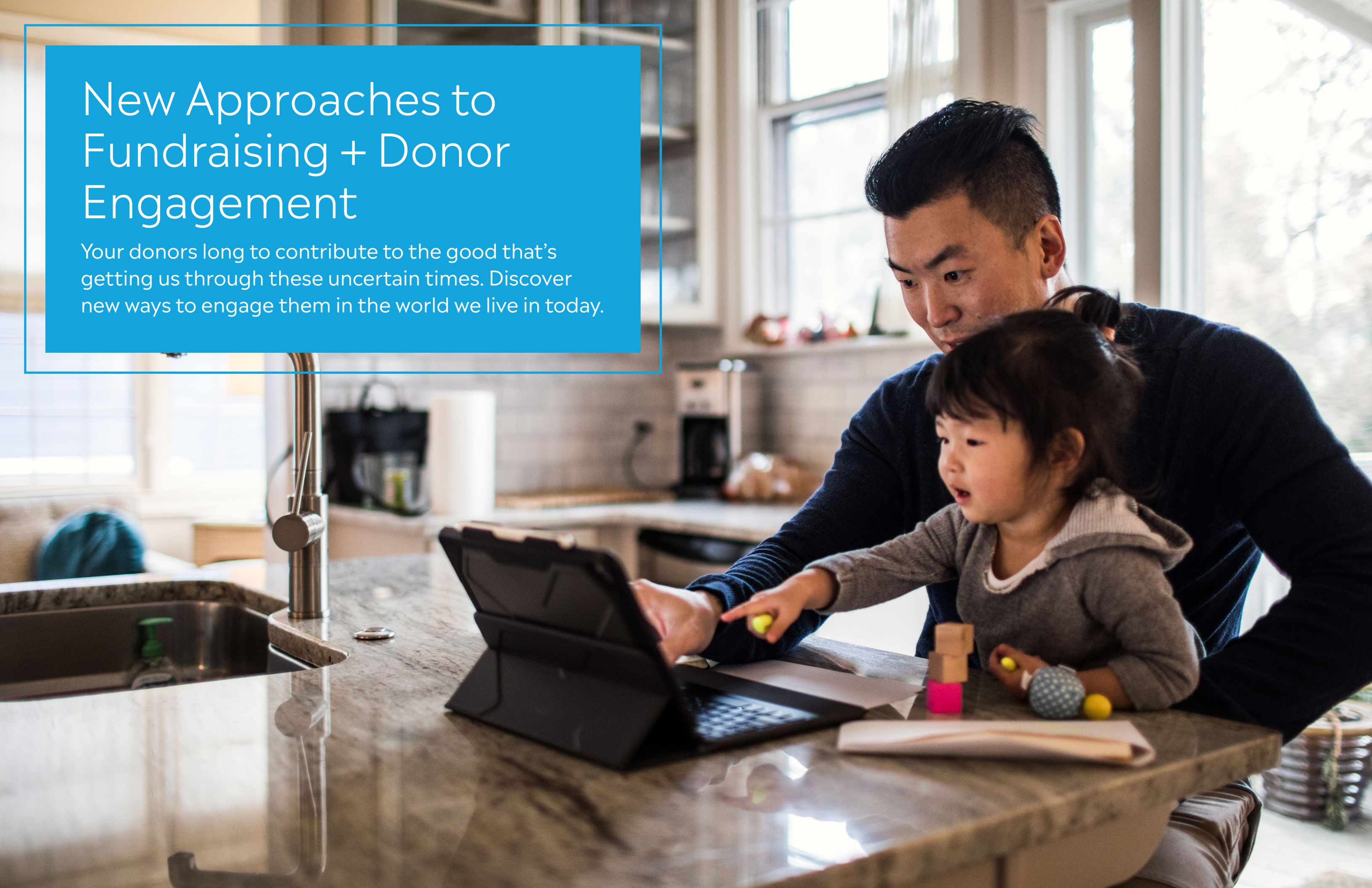
NPOs repeatedly shared with us how their constituents were generously supporting their missions above and beyond what they anticipated:

- “Remain calm. Some people will think fundraising for anything other than pandemic relief is crass. They are wrong, and your mission-aligned donors will understand.”
- “People will still give! They are sitting at home wondering how they can help from afar, and donating is still an option! Use your social media and email campaigns wisely. Everyone is glued to a screen right now, so give them the opportunity to use it for good and donate.”
- “Donors want to give; they just need to know WHAT for and HOW. Keep your communications open with your community.”
- “Continue to ask for donor support. They are engaged and looking for ways to help. They want to hear from you to know your needs and how they can help meet them. Be thoughtful in your messaging, but be transparent and honest.”
- “Don’t beat yourself up over whether or not to ask – let the donor decide. However, be authentic about what your need is. Don’t overstate it, or you’ll lose credibility. All your targets will be off – that’s okay. We’ll all feel the impact next year too. It will take time to get back to where you were – take time to celebrate the little wins along the way.”



# New Approaches to Fundraising + Donor Engagement

Your donors long to contribute to the good that's getting us through these uncertain times. Discover new ways to engage them in the world we live in today.





# The COVID-19 Fundraising Template Kit for Nonprofits

Even as the world slows down, your mission continues. The templates in *The COVID-19 Fundraising Template Kit for Nonprofits* are meant to save your staff members time while helping you effectively engage your donors today.

All you need to do is copy them, paste them into a doc, and fill in the blanks Mad-Lib style to tailor them to your organization. It's really that simple!



[WATCH VIDEO >>](#)

Inside the kit, you'll find Mad Libs-style templates for promoting your:

- COVID-19 relief fund
- Crowdfunding campaign
- Monthly giving program
- Fundraising event alternatives
- Remote volunteer listings

**Reach out to your donor community today.**

[Get Your Kit Now >>](#)

# 5 Ways to Check-In with Your Donors

Being sensitive to the changing circumstances of many members of your donor community is a good thing. You're in the business of caring, after all. And even though the COVID-19 pandemic affects everyone, many donors are searching for ways to give back and be part of the good that's getting us through – you can offer that by providing them with all kinds of opportunities, from volunteering and crowdfunding to engaging on social media and, yes, even giving.

You know better than anyone that there are many ways to connect with donors besides asking for money, so be sure to mix in opportunities for your donors to give with check-ins that show how much you care about them.

Think about how your donors join conversations with friends, family, and colleagues each day on social media. Why not leverage social media the same way their loved ones do? Now is the time to flood your feeds with donor-centric posts that ask important questions, invite them to share their experiences, and provide them with the chance to pitch in whether or not they have the budget to donate right now.

## Donor Communication Tip #1

### Ask Them How They're Doing

How are you? While it seems like a simple question, it means the world to your donors. It lets them know that you're thinking of them and you genuinely care about them. This is the perfect move for social media. Consider using a custom graphic creator as recommended in the [12 social media best practices](#) post above or shoot a video from home to make sure your donors don't miss your post. Once you publish it, appoint a staff member to check back throughout the day so your organization can engage and reply in a timely manner.

## Donor Communication Tip #2

### Offer Your Services If Applicable

Unfortunately, many of your donors may now need the services they've so graciously funded for others in the past. And believe it or not, just because someone gives doesn't mean they know how to go about applying for or obtaining your services.

Spread the word on social media and via email specifically offering your services to donors if they find themselves in need during this challenging time. Be sure to pair your offer with the appropriate program information, links, and contact instructions so their first experience as a receiver of your services is a positive one.



## Donor Communication Tip #3

### Call for Pre-COVID Pics + Stories to Share on #ThrowbackThursday

From hit spring events to tear-inducing impact updates, the memories you and your team create are just as fond to your donors. Invite them to join in on #ThrowbackThursday by asking them to share their favorite moments and photos related to your organization.

To make this an ongoing event, consider asking for specific throwbacks. Not sure what to say? Adapt these Mad-Libs style social media post captions to reflect your organization's name and details:

- Join us for #ThrowbackThursday! Share your favorite photos from last year's [EVENT NAME].
- It's #ThrowbackThursday! What was your favorite [NONPROFIT NAME] impact story? Share yours in the comments!
- Check out this #ThrowbackThursday from our volunteer day dedicated to [WHAT YOU ACCOMPLISHED WITH VOLUNTEERS]. Were you there? If so, share your photos with us!

This #ThrowbackThursday, we'd love for you to share about your favorite memory with us. Here's one of our fond memories to get this started!

## Donor Communication Tip #4

### Implement "Tell Us" Tuesday

The news on TV offers little comfort these days, but that doesn't mean your community doesn't have some good news to share. Give your donors a moment to reflect on something positive by asking them to tell all the members of your community about their silver lining to staying in these past several weeks. (And of course, welcome photos!) You can ask them to tell you about all kinds of things, like their:

- Favorite online recipes
- Quarantine home hacks
- Time-passing projects for kids
- Homeschooling tips
- Go-to #WFH looks
- Four-legged coworkers

Be creative and have fun. Rally your staff members and start your list of ideas for Tell Us Tuesdays together as a team-building exercise that's centered around making your donors smile.

## Donor Communication Tip #5

### Give Them Opportunities to Help If They're Able

Although times are tough, your mission won't stop and you need critical funds to ensure your services can continue. Many of your donors would consider donating if you ask. They may not give as much and they may not give the same way, but don't ever doubt that they want to pitch in right now.

In addition to making a monetary ask, offer your donors opportunities to pitch in without spending a cent, like:

- Sharing your [nonprofit's social media](#) posts
- Creating a [crowdfunding fundraiser page](#) for your nonprofit
- [Volunteering](#) from home

For those who want to give but are working with a tight budget, suggest budget-savvy options to support your mission in a big way, such as:

- Joining your [Monthly Giving Program](#) at \$5 a month
- Shopping your online auction
- Submitting a matching gift request to their employer

The most important element of your donor communications right now is empathy. It's not so much as about whether or not to reach out. Of course, you should! Your focus should be on how to reach out, which is why we gave you the examples above as well as The COVID-19 Fundraising Templates Kit for Nonprofits on [page 13](#).





# 7 Tips to Create Your Successful DIY Fundraising Video

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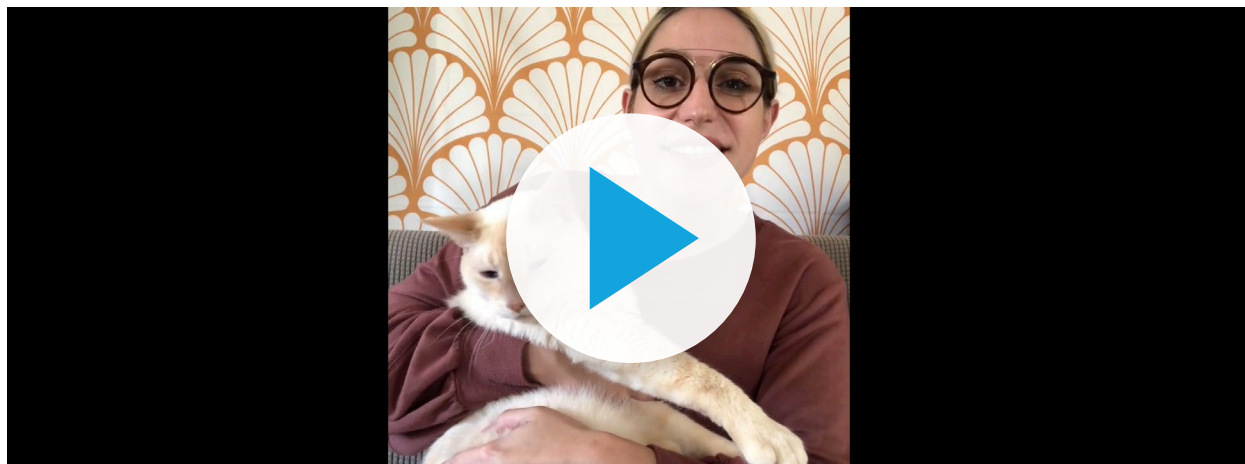
Nonprofits are facing new challenges due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. Understandably, creating a fundraising video may be the last thing on your mind because it can be time consuming and - let's face it - you have enough to do!

But consider this: [A Google study](#) has found that a whopping 57% of people who watch fundraising videos will go on to donate to that cause.

And of all Facebook posts, the [M+R Benchmarks Report](#) concludes that videos have the highest level of engagement!

With stats like that, it's safe to say that using what little time you have to broadcast your organization's needs through this crisis is worth the community of support you'll gain. Perhaps the most relieving part about making a video is that you don't even have to leave your couch.

## Watch How to Create Yours in This Quick Video!



[WATCH VIDEO](#) »

## Fundraising Video Tip #1. Use the Resources You Have

You don't need to be a producer to create quality video content that will resonate with your nonprofit's supporters and their social networks. Whether you're still able to work on-site or you're making it work from home, all you need to create your fundraising video is a smartphone. In fact, the not-so-highly-produced video you create may even come across as more authentic and relatable.

## Fundraising Video Tip #2. Keep It Short

Thanks to ever-evolving tech, human attention spans aren't what they used to be. Even many of us are at home more often and without our regular daily routines, it still holds true that you've got about 30-60 seconds to get your message across.

## Fundraising Video Tip #3. Download a Video Editing App

Short attention spans not only require short video lengths, but a fast-paced, constantly moving picture. So that your video is not entirely focused on one subject, you can break it up with some fairly simple editing tools that you can use for free for a limited amount of time. Of course, with a new tool comes the need to learn how to use it; however, this took my not-so-tech-savvy self about 20 minutes to discover and learn the features I needed. The above video I've created was with the help of a free app I found, called [Splice](#) (for Apple devices).

### PRO TIP:

[92% of viewers](#) watch videos with the sound off. Consider using an app that [adds closed captioning](#) for you.

## Fundraising Video Tip #4. Tell Your Story

People don't typically seek careers in nonprofit organizations without feeling some sort of attachment to its mission. What drives you to create the positive impact you make every day? Your audience wants to know what your mission means to you personally. And, according to cognitive scientist, [Jerome Bruner](#), telling them in a story format will make your overall message 22 times more memorable. Now especially, people crave human connection and what you share may be the feelgood content they need to get through another minute of quarantine.

## Fundraising Video Tip #5. Show Your Impact

Remember that your video will be shared and seen by many who are unfamiliar with the good work your nonprofit does, so be sure to give a short introduction to what your mission is and what makes it unique. Brief the audience about your programs and the specific progress you've made – down to the dollar amount – toward [reaching and surpassing your goals](#). Witnessing your successes and well-structured programs will build trust in those engaging with your organization for the first time.

### Repurpose Videos and Pictures.

You'll notice in my video that there are transitions to multiple forms of media, such as photos and videos, clearly shot at another time. In an app like Splice, you can add anything from your phone's library to your video with slick transitions and uniform audio throughout. Dig up some compelling



media from your website or even some footage you'd taken on the job that clearly illustrates (1.) the issue that your organization is actively working to resolve and (2.) the action you take to resolve it. Perhaps include footage of your facility or, if appropriate, powerful images of the population you serve.

#### PRO TIP:

If you're unsure how to obtain a video file from your organization but know how to view it online, then that's all you need. You can record your screen on either an [Apple](#) device or [Android](#) for a quick way to save a video to your Photo Library to be quickly accessed and used in your video editing tool. (Note: Be sure that you or your organization are the owners of the video you record to avoid copyright infringement!)



## Fundraising Video Tip #6. Make Your Call to Action Clear

What action do you want your audience to take? Though you may have several needs, you should keep the number of calls to action to one or two per video. Any more, and your request may get lost.

Tell your audience how the coronavirus pandemic is affecting your mission and how they can help by showing them just how easy it is for them to participate in your campaign. Providing scalable, tangible goals will help them to visualize how their donation or time will be spent and will prompt a more specific action.

For example: "Your donation of \$36 will provide food for a homeless dog for 2 months, or, "One hour of your time will help us to create 100 more care packages for children being homeschooled in our community."

Make this the last segment of your video so your audience knows just what to do after being inspired by your message.

## Fundraising Video Tip #7. Share Your Video Far and Wide

What's nice about videos made on your phone is that they're just as easy to post to your social media platforms as anything else you'd post. And with millions at home seeking entertainment from their phones, you can guarantee that yours will at the very least get a passing glance!

Consider uploading your video to [YouTube](#) or [Vimeo](#) and including it in your emails, as well as a crowdfunding campaign. If you use an email marketing tool like [Constant Contact](#), you can include a link to your video in the call to action button of your email and track your recipients' engagement.

Want to make a lasting impact with your donors? Cultivate your new donor relationships with a [thank you video](#).

So you may not be Steven Spielberg, but the authenticity of your homemade, heartfelt video will speak to the passion you have for your mission. This format will equip your supporters with short, but impactful material that they can easily share with friends and family and will highlight how important it is that we all work together to see it through the COVID-19 crisis.



# How to Create an Online Version of Your In-Person Fundraiser

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Cancelled your in-person event due to COVID-19? Transform your face-to-face gathering into a digital event that's set apart by creative ways to engage donors and earn support for your mission. It's not impossible! Nonprofits just like yours are making the move to online events and achieving great success.

The Akron Symphony Orchestra (ASO) knew that even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the show must go on. Stay-at-home orders caused them to cancel their April 17th gala, their top-earning fundraising event of the year. Instead, Development Manager Kimia Ghaderi and the ASO team decided to host their event entirely online as a virtual auction using [ReadySetAuction](#) software.

Leaning on an incredibly diligent team, transparent and frequent communication, and the right tools, the Akron Symphony surpassed their goal. Now, with the success of their event, they can continue providing vital relief to their community.

Follow the lead of ASO. Here are some simple steps you can take to ensure that your opportunity to engage guests isn't lost with your in-person event.

## Work with Event Sponsors to Keep Them Onboard

ASO had already secured their sponsors for their gala, but the perks they had previously offered drastically changed due to social distancing guidelines. Instead of free admission, drink tickets, and advertising in program books and on signs, sponsors could enjoy virtual perks, such as:

- Digital ads on ASO's social media accounts
- Mentions in email communications about the gala
- Free admission and drink tickets for future ASO concerts

By moving the sponsorship perks online and into the future, ASO was able to retain all of their sponsors.

## Ask Registrants If They'll Donate Their Tickets

Don't resort to refunding tickets as your first option. The ASO team retained nearly all of their ticket purchase revenue by making personal phone calls. They called each registrant to ask them if they'd be willing to donate their admission ticket to the virtual gala as a gift and reminded them

about the importance of their mission, especially in this time of crisis. The vast majority of ticket buyers chose to donate the full price of their ticket – a reminder that it never hurts to just ask.

## Move What You Can Online

Whether you planned to host a raffle or a full-blown auction at your fundraising event, you can list and auction off your items virtually on your own event website with ReadySetAuction. Kimia shares, "We did have to contact some donors of items like gift cards to get the dates of redemption extended a little bit, but everybody was really flexible and willing to work with us."

ASO accommodated every type of donor. For major donors especially, raise-the-paddle auctions are a popular and fun way to make a monetary donation live at an event. But without having an auctioneer to facilitate, ASO needed to get creative.

Kimia added virtual raise-the-paddle packages to ReadySetAuction using its ranged price package feature. She then segmented packages by giving levels that aligned with the names of the giving levels on the ASO donation forms. Kimia explains, "Even if they didn't want to bid on a specific item, they could use the ranged price packages to make a donation and have it feel a little bit more like what they would have done with a live raise-the-paddle."

## Acquire Auction Items

The ASO team managed to secure 60 auction items for their virtual event. From one-of-a-kind pieces by local artists to invaluable experiences like an evening of violin music with a home-cooked meal prepared by the violinist. Kimia attributes this success to the team's outreach efforts.

To acquire auction items:

### Start with Your Board

Kimia suggests, "Think about people they may know or relationships they may have with local businesses that might be amenable to donating something to [your] auction."

### Recruit Local Businesses

Each year, the ASO Gala Committee sends a solicitation letter with a donation form to local businesses to request in-kind or monetary donations to contribute to the auction.

### Follow Up with a Phone Call

ASO's board and auction committee personally reach out to businesses where they may have a connection and appeal to them for donated goods and services.

### Need Big-Ticket Auction Items in a Pinch?

Give attendees unique experiences to look forward to from [Winspire](#)'s risk-free catalog.



## Promote Your Event Alternative in All the Ways

Personally calling all registered guests, donors, and sponsors to explain that their event was moving online was no small task, but after their initial contact, ASO was able to continue communicating in more streamlined, yet personal ways through emails, letters, and [social media](#).

ASO also leveraged [video promotions](#) that included:

- A pre-recorded welcome video featuring the Music Director and gala committee Trustees
- Frequent livestreamed Zoom sessions on Facebook promoting the gala and specific auction items
- Video presentations for several featured auction items

One of the greatest challenges of a virtual fundraising event is encouraging the virtual attendance of your less tech-savvy donors who may feel intimidated by what a digital event could entail. ASO made it a point to include ReadySetAuction’s tip sheet in their communications so everyone could participate by knowing what to expect.

## Easily Manage Your Event from Home

An advantage to holding a virtual auction is that you don’t have to limit it to one day!

ASO held theirs for a whole week, coordinating from their respective homes, and according to Kimia, it went rather smoothly. “It was no problem at all to run [the auction] from home. It seems like there are a lot of platforms out there that will be great at handling your online auction, but they’re not necessarily set up to be a customizable event-planning software [like ReadySetAuction], where you can log admission tickets and patron details, and send out receipts for just about everything – cash donations, auction sales – and create an online auction website that has additional information about our organization.”

## Keep the Momentum Going Throughout Your Event

With [ReadySetAuction](#), participants can browse and bid on your items 45 days before and after the period of your auction, if you choose, giving you more opportunities to engage your audience. ASO took to Facebook to build excitement around the event all week. Kimia shares, “We had a few different Facebook live chats throughout the week, promoting different parts of the gala we wanted to draw attention to and talking about our organization’s mission – about some of our programming and telling stories about various programs in the past.”

Extending the event’s duration and constantly promoting it helped ASO to drive up bidding frequency and amounts.

## Celebrate Your Success with Your Supporters

During the weeklong event, the organizers at ASO could track bidding numbers and view reports within [ReadySetAuction](#).

After their virtual fundraising event, ASO held a virtual party on Zoom with their community to talk about the gala and share stories about past events and what they love about their organization. Kimia shares, “During our video chats [with supporters] that we streamed online, people shared some really touching memories about concerts or experiences they had had with [our organization] in the past. We all just got together to talk about our memories and why we love our organization. I would encourage everyone to do that. It brings a more human element to the discussion and it makes it all the more rewarding when contributions come in.”

## Thank Your Attendees

Although your events will inevitably come to an end, they give you the opportunity to embark on new beginnings, whether it be through [new donor relationships](#) or through an even stronger bond with your existing donors. Be sure to regularly [keep in touch](#) with your ever-expanding network, starting with a thank you, immediately following your event. Because [ReadySetAuction](#) integrates with DonorPerfect, it’s never been easier to stay connected.

Kimia explains how easy these crucial tasks are with the help of tech, “[ReadySetAuction] was going to be able to help us keep all of our event information in one place. We would be able to send the reports directly back to DonorPerfect, with the DonorPerfect exchange tool that it has. That saves a lot of time on our end.”





# Equip Your Team with Essential Tech Tools

The new normal requires new tools that can help you effectively and creatively reach your donors no matter where they are. Check out these essential, easy-to-use tools and features.





# Top-Rated Tools and Features for Digital Donor Engagement

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## DonorPerfect Fundraising Software

Offering affordable subscriptions packed with the tools and features your nonprofit needs to shine online, DonorPerfect is rated #1 for ease-of-use, customer support, and value by nonprofit professionals in the most recent Software Advice survey. That means acclimating your staff and setting up are a breeze and gaining donor-engaging, money-raising tools to bolster your online campaigns won't hurt your budget.

[SEE PACKAGES + PRICING >>](#)

## Online Forms

(included with most DonorPerfect subscriptions)

Power your emails and social media posts with online forms that process donations, volunteer registrations, monthly gifts, and more. See how easy it can be to create forms that spotlight your organization's logo, tell your story, and encourage donors to pitch in to help you brave the COVID-19 pandemic.

[VISIT THE FORM GALLERY >>](#)

## Nonprofit Crowdfunding

(included with most DonorPerfect subscriptions)

Rallying your community around your cause is easier than ever with a crowdfunding tool specifically designed for nonprofits. Set up a crowdfunding page that enables your supporters to create their own individual fundraising pages - all to benefit your incredible mission.

[EXPLORE CROWDFUNDING >>](#)

## Email Marketing

(included with most DonorPerfect subscriptions)

From email creation to campaign analysis, the right tool can transform fundraisers into email marketing gurus. See how easy designing, segmenting, and keeping tabs on your email fundraising efforts can be with Constant Contact email marketing that integrates with DonorPerfect.

[SYNC YOUR EMAILS + CRM >>](#)

## Automatic Monthly Giving

(included with most DonorPerfect subscriptions)

Did you know that your monthly giving program can be just as easy for your staff to manage as it is for donors to participate in each month? By choosing automatic monthly giving, the recurring donations collected each month from program members will automatically process for you.

[AUTOMATE MONTHLY GIVING >>](#)

## Auction Software

(included with most DonorPerfect subscriptions)

Looking for a way to recoup the funds from your cancelled event and still gain the opportunity of engaging your donors? Host an online auction with ReadySetAuction software that provides you with an easy event website builder, an expandable auction item catalog, mobile bidding capabilities for donors, and automatic outbid alerts that drive up bids.

[PLAN AN ONLINE AUCTION >>](#)

## Text To Give

Get the word out to your community via text message and mobilize support for your mission. Send timely information in a snap and share ways for your supporters to make a donation directly from their phone.

[MOBILIZE YOUR SUPPORTERS >>](#)



## E-Tickets

Schedule a virtual broadcast with e-ticket sales and raise money while offering your community a way to engage from the comfort of their home. Offer a virtual film or streaming entertainment experience to your donors, wherever they are.

[SELL TICKETS TO YOUR EVENT >>](#)

## Data Enrichment

Having complete and accurate information on your donors is critical so you can cultivate the relationships that will help your organization and further the impact you can have in your community. From address verification to wealth screening to prospect list acquisition, use data enhancement services to help you find and grow your donors.

[ENRICH YOUR DONOR DATA >>](#)

## Video Messaging

Use video in email to thank donors, solicit donations, engage your board, or reach out to volunteers with a personalized video message that integrates with DonorPerfect. Create a more personal connection with higher open and click metrics than a traditional email.

[COMMUNICATE VIA VIDEO >>](#)



# 11 Ways DonorPerfect Can Help You Work from Home

DonorPerfect users, we’ve got you! Check out these benefits and productivity boosting tips in your system.

Don’t have DonorPerfect? Here are just some of the ways we can help make your critical work a little bit easier in the new normal.

## #1. Log in from Anywhere

As long as you have an internet connection, you can log into DonorPerfect at [donorperfect.net](#) at any time, from wherever you are.

## #2. Add New Users as You Need Them

Volunteers stepping in to help? Create a user ID for everyone on your team so you can all be logged in and working at the same time. Any updates you make within your system will be updated in real time across all users, so everyone has access to the same data.

**Make It Happen:** [How to Add New Users in DonorPerfect](#)

## #3. Tailor User Permissions as You See Fit

Hey, we all make mistakes, and without the in-office collaboration to catch them, it makes sense to have measures in place to prevent them.

For example, you can restrict the ability to process payments, delete records, or make global data changes for volunteers and specific team members.

**Make It Happen:** [How to Edit Permissions](#)

## #4. Train New or Temporary Staff Quickly

Let us take care of training your staff on the fundamentals of DonorPerfect so you can address matters that may need your immediate attention. The [DonorPerfect Welcome Center](#) walks new users through tasks like basic data entry and reporting the moment they log in.



In addition to the Welcome Center, DonorPerfect newbies can register for free training webinars just for beginners.

For more advanced training or for help adapting to new best practices, as they're being defined, please call [800-220-8111](tel:800-220-8111) or email [training.services@softerware.com](mailto:training.services@softerware.com).

**Make It Happen:** [Register for New User Training Webinars](#)

## #5. Maintain Data Entry Protocols

Set data entry defaults for information that never changes from record to record and use SmartScreens to make data entry easier. SmartScreens enables users to hide unnecessary fields and sections or make certain fields required when a specific option is selected.

**Make It Happen:** How to [Set Data Entry Defaults](#) and [Design Your Screens with SmartScreens](#)

## #6. Automate Tasks (and Smiles)

SmartActions help keep your workflows in order by enabling your team to set criteria that automatically trigger a desired action.

For example, you can tell SmartActions to email your director to call the generous donor when a gift of \$500 or more is entered into your system. You can even brighten a staff member's day with SmartActions by scheduling a cute puppy video to pop up the moment they add a new record.

**Make It Happen:** [How to Use SmartActions](#)

## #7. Let Your Monthly Giving Program Run Itself

DonorPerfect's Monthly Giving can be set to automatically process on the days and frequencies your donors choose. If you prefer to manually process your recurring gifts, you'll be reminded to process those that are due, the moment you log in to DonorPerfect.

Don't have a monthly giving program? Get the free [Monthly Giving Starter Kit](#) and launch yours today or DonorPerfect users can work with our training team to help get you get started. Call [800-220-8111](tel:800-220-8111) or email [training.services@softerware.com](mailto:training.services@softerware.com) to get started.

**Make It Happen:** How to Process Monthly Gifts [Automatically](#) or [Manually](#).

## #8. Stay Aligned Around Your Metrics

Need to get data to your whole team, so you can make an informed decision together? Once you run your customized report, you can immediately email it to stakeholders or schedule it to send at a more appropriate time. No login required.

Team members with DonorPerfect logins can access quick metrics through a communal dashboard, as well as run all the same reports found in the Report Center. Any new reports you create will be added for everyone to see.

**Make It Happen:** [Schedule Your Custom Report](#)

## #9. Keep Your Communications Consistent

With the ability to store your letter and thank you email templates in DonorPerfect, you can rest assured that your team is using the right ones. For other email communications, your Constant Contact account is synced with DonorPerfect, so your team can stay in-tune with what's already been sent.

**Make It Happen:** [Pair Constant Contact with DonorPerfect](#)

## #10. Avoid Double Sending Thank-Yous

With many hands on deck, it's easy for tasks to overlap. When it comes to thank-yous, DonorPerfect keeps the record straight. Once you merge your letters or send emails through [DonorPerfect Receipting](#), gift records instantly update to reflect that they've been acknowledged and are removed from the queue. Donations coming from your online form? An automated thank you will be sent the moment a gift is made.

**Make It Happen:** [Automate Donation Acknowledgements](#)

## #11. Lean on Us for Support

No matter how long social distancing is required, we're here for you., Our top-rated Support Team is fully equipped to provide the same excellent service by phone, email, or chat from anywhere in the world.



# Position Your Mission to Flourish in the New Normal

Power your new fundraising strategy with donor management and fundraising software designed to align your team, engage your donors, and bring your community together for the good of your cause. Learn more about DonorPerfect today.

[REGISTER FOR A DEMO](#) or call [800.220.8111](tel:800.220.8111)

