

Gain New Supporters with Online Forms

Here's one of the best ways to capture new supporters through your website.

Of all the people who land on your website, how many actually engage with your information? And how can you assure a strong conversion rate?

First, let's clarify some terms:

Conversion occurs when visitors to your site perform the action you desire, whether it's to volunteer, sign up for activities, or donate money.

Your conversion rate is the percentage of people who move from passive website visitors to active engagement.

How do forms fit into the equation? Online forms give you an opportunity to increase the ways in which people interact with your organization. By taking advantage of online forms, you have a unique chance to connect with prospects in a new way. You'll also capture information you can use to turn website visitors into long-term supporters.

A report by Formstack¹ found that nonprofits using online forms have many more conversions (15%) than those that don't (2%). If you add online forms across your website, it's safe to predict that your conversion rate will rise significantly.

So how can you use forms to spike engagement? A few small but strategic decisions can make a big difference. Here are a few tips to convert more donor traffic:

Use the Highest-Converting Types of Forms

For many nonprofits, collecting contact information is critical to building a strong database. Contact forms, however, only have a 3% conversion rate. In order to capture more information, consider using contests and surveys, which convert at 28% and 21%, respectively.

“How many people actually engage with your online information?”



“Nonprofits using online forms have many more conversions (15%) than those that don't (2%).”

Another way to increase leads is to use event registrations. Not only do registrations convert at 11%, participants are likely to be qualified leads.

Leverage the Power of Smart Forms

Forty percent of nonprofit organizations use “smart” or responsive forms, which show or hide questions based on how a user responds. This results in shorter, customized forms that are easier for people to fill out. These factors lead to higher-than-average conversion rates.

Maximize the Most Popular Time to Donate

Ever wish you could present your organization's donation form at the best possible moment? Formstack's report states that the peak time for donation form submissions is from noon to 3:00 p.m. Even though people are making donations at other times of the day (and night), the popularity of the early afternoon is worth noting.

To maximize contributions, coordinate social media and e-mail campaigns with the best time of day for donations. Being conscious of timing means that your marketing materials reach donors at the time they're most likely to take action.

“Online forms give you a chance to connect with people in a new way.”

Pay Attention to the Submit Button

When creating an online form, most people give lots of thought to the information they need to collect. They don't pay nearly as much attention to the submit button. But they should.

You'll get a much bigger response if you use words other than "Submit" or "Register" next to that final button. Neither of those terms is very motivating.

Instead, use specific language that describes what value people will receive when they click. As they hover over that final decision, the label on that button should communicate what you want them to do and what they'll receive when they follow through. In the case of donations, for example, you could use text like "Help children now" or "Give to find a cure." Test the impact of a small change in wording and see how it affects conversions.

This button is your last chance to convince people to commit. Make your words count. 

This article was prepared by Formstack (formstack.com). Over 500,000 users leverage Formstack to increase campaign participation and capture leads.

¹Formstack's "Form Conversion Report" (formstack.com) analyzed over 400,000 online forms. It found that nonprofit organizations have one of the highest form conversion rates at 15% (in comparison, the average conversion rate for all industries is 11%).

Coming Up in "People & Technology": Don't miss upcoming issues, in which you'll learn how to keep your online identity safe, build a best-in-class tech suite, and avoid e-mail mistakes that could be damaging your fundraising efforts.

Boost Online Engagement

See these articles at NonprofitWorld.org for more on connecting with web visitors:

Using E-Mail & the Web to Acquire & Cultivate Donors (Vol. 21, No. 1)

Ignite Passion by Connecting Online (Vol. 34, No. 4)

Harnessing the Internet to Raise Funds (Vol. 31, No. 2)

The Five Biggest Website Mistakes Nonprofits Make – and How to Avoid Them (Vol. 29, No. 5)

Online Fundraising Success Factors (Vol. 26, No. 2)

Planning for Digital Longevity (Vol. 34, No. 1)



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If you have any questions, contact Jason Chmura at jchmura@NonprofitWorld.org