

Building the Best-in-Class Tech Suite for Your Organization

It's time to rethink how you manage your technology. Tap into this modern Renaissance.

By Lauren Keates

Over the past decade, there has been a great shift in where and how people want to communicate with the organizations they support. It's estimated that 62% of donors prefer to give online, and 72% of millennials are inspired to give through social media (nptechforgood.com). Baby boomers are now just as (if not more) likely to donate online than millennials and gen xers (dunhamandcompany.com). And 13% of all online donations are from a mobile device (mrbenchmarks.com).

To take advantage of this shift, you need to build a technology suite that your organization can grow into instead of outgrowing.

What Is the Modern Technology Suite?

The modern tech suite is built on a flexible, scalable architecture that supports your organization's greatest aspirations, without limitations. It makes your supporters feel valued and safe in trusting your organization with their personal information. In technical terms, this infrastructure is a cloud-based API – or application program interface – a smart way for technical tools to talk to each other and share information in a structured way.

Think of it like a deck of cards: There's an infinite number of games you can create with the same 52 cards, but there's also a defined structure through which those games are developed – suits, numbers, and face cards. Everyone playing accepts the structure, but developing games is constrained only by your creativity.

"Today's modern-day Renaissance is being fueled by binary code instead of literature, APIs instead of paint brushes, and operating models instead of political structures. It's time for organizations to rethink what success looks like and how they can get started with their own digital and cultural transformations."

– TechCrunch (Techcrunch.com)



How Do You Build This Modern Tech Suite?

To support your digital engagement efforts, here are a few platforms your team should think about incorporating into your existing technology model:

Customer Relationship Database (CRM): This is an online database that stores relevant information about your supporters and their interactions with your organization. This database is usually at the core of your technology strategy. Developing thorough data capture and management standards is a best practice.

Example: Salesforce's Nonprofit Success Pack (salesforce.org/nonprofit/nonprofit-success-pack)

Content Management System (CMS): With this system, you can publish, edit, and modify your website content from a central user interface. Leading nonprofit organizations are moving their sites to a modular CMS model so they can use templates to quickly create new site pages. These templates cut in half the time nonprofits spend on website design and development.

Examples: Wordpress (Wordpress.com/create), **Wagtail** (Wagtail.io), and **Craft** (Craftcms.com)

E-mail Marketing & Communications Tools: These tools help you communicate with stakeholders, measure the results of those communications, and assure that your supporters take the actions you desire.

Examples: MailChimp (Mailchimp.com), **MyEmma** (Myemma.com), and **SilverPop** (Silverpop.com)

Digital Engagement Infrastructure: This cloud-based API platform ensures that websites stay up during high-traffic periods. The platform helps you raise funds, create surveys and forms, host online and offline events, and much more. It accommodates the needs of an organization with a small, non-technical staff as well as large tech teams that


want to build and deploy customized digital experiences with ease.

Example: The Groundwork API (developer: thegroundwork.com)

Eliminate Data Silos & Build a 360 Degree View of Your Supporters

When nonprofits hear “Standardize your data models” or “Build data capture processes,” they often think they don’t have the skills to do such things. That’s completely untrue.

Ultimately, a data model in its most basic form is how you manage your supporters and your interactions with them. When you think of a data point as John Smith and not just a record or ID number, your organization can quickly make a case for standardization and modernization that resonates with your leadership.

John Smith isn’t five different humans taking actions in silos, but that may be how your data model presents him. An API platform that supports the integration of your tools will help tear down the walls of your existing silos, and will help your organization move forward with a scalable tech suite that aligns with your vision and strategy. Plus, with the time you free up, your team can think strategically about furthering your mission – which is why we all have decided to be a part of the social impact community in the first place. 

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Use Technology to Forge Relationships

Create meaningful connections with supporters – and prospects – with articles such as these at NonprofitWorld.org:

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

Reach New Supporters with Multichannel Tools (Vol. 29, No. 2)

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

The Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Evolution (Vol. 30, No. 6)

Tips for Choosing Relationship-Management Software (Vol. 28, No. 6)

Here Come the Millennials — and Their Money (Vol. 34, No. 3)

How Mobile Marketing Can Work for You (Vol. 32, No. 4)

Two Surprising Ways to Broaden Your Reach Online (Vol. 32, No. 4)



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NonprofitWorld.org/social/
(free Yahoo login required)
or send a blank e-mail to:

NonprofitWorld-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

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



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