

# The Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Evolution

Here's a great way to involve your board in raising funds.

By Rachel English



**P**eer-to-peer solicitation — the act of a friend asking on behalf of an organization — is increasingly popular. A natural evolution from this form of fundraising is peer-to-peer solicitations via social media. Commonly referred to as social fundraising, this type of peer-to-peer fundraising combines two things your supporters are already doing: soliciting on your behalf and connecting with friends and family on social media sites.


Social fundraising is appropriate for supporters of all kinds. But it's an especially good opportunity for younger board members who care deeply about your cause but lack the clout or connections to command large checks from their peers. By leveraging their ever-expanding social circles, these board members can contribute significantly to your mission, both in terms of dollars raised and relationships launched.

To kick start your board's social fundraising, first encourage them each to set up a personal fundraising page. Guide board members to mix items like your logo with their personal story to make the most compelling case for their friends and family to support them and, in turn, your organization.

Their fundraising doesn't need to be tied to a specific event. But birthdays, graduations, and other personal milestones can act as good launching points.

Another way to enhance your organization's visibility is to ask board members to add board service to their social profiles. Encourage them to send updates and fundraising solicitations via their social networks. They can also use social networks to publicly thank their donors.

Ideally, your supporters' fundraising pages are on your site and connected to your constituent relationship management (CRM) system or donor database. If that's the case, you can easily track the donations, thank the individual donors, and begin cultivating them for a second gift down the road. Your ultimate goal is to build their loyalty to your organization, not just to your board member.

Engaging your board in fundraising isn't always an easy undertaking. But with exciting approaches like social fundraising, you can empower any board member to become a productive and influential participant in your fundraising efforts. 

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## KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

According to "Convio's Next Generation of American Giving Report" ([www.convio.com/signup/next-generation/next-generation-resources.html](http://www.convio.com/signup/next-generation/next-generation-resources.html)), it's not too early to be courting Generation Ys. While Gen Ys donate to fewer causes, they give approximately \$341 to the causes they do support. Younger donors can be quite profitable, especially when you consider their lifetime potential and their responsiveness to lower-cost online communications.

Convio's report concludes that fundraising is profoundly multichannel. While direct mail still works, the percentage of those who respond to it declines with each generation. Donors report a variety of other channels, such as e-commerce, online giving, event fundraising, tributes, monthly debit programs, and mobile/text donation as important giving methods. The younger the donor, the greater the number of ways they give. Younger donors often "channel hop" depending on the context and the moment. They might learn of a cause based on something a friend posts on their Facebook wall but then write a check or donate online. They might make a mobile phone gift to one cause and respond to a telemarketer for another cause.

It's a lot harder to be a fundraiser today. The silver lining is that new media channels and new strategies like peer-to-peer solicitation offer the promise of a lower fundraising cost and access to more donors than ever before.

“ This type of peer-to-peer fundraising combines two things your supporters are already doing. ”

## Where to Learn More

([NonprofitWorld.org/members](http://NonprofitWorld.org/members))

**Using Social Media to Advance Your Goals** (Vol. 27, No. 1)

**How to Make Social-Media Fundraising Work for You** (Vol. 27, No. 2)

**Accelerating Fundraising through Social Media** (Vol. 28, No. 3)

**Don't Take Risks with Social Media** (Vol. 29, No. 1)