



# A Charity Badge to Raise Dough?

## Would a charity badge be a good fundraising vehicle for your organization?

By Lance Trebesch & Taylor Robinson

Charity badges are increasing in popularity and may become more important in the future. If you don't have one, here's what you need to know.

A charity badge is a small widget (a mini-Web page), often including a picture, brief description of the organization, and link to where you can make a donation. The beauty of the charity badge is that it lets users share with one another by simply clicking on "get this badge" (wording may vary depending on the badge provider), then copying and pasting the html code onto their Web site or blog. Much like a chain letter, the potential for spreading the badge is great, especially when used on social networking sites or blogs. Below is an example of a charity badge from Network for Good.

\$100,000 raised in only three weeks, [www.sharingfoundation.org](http://www.sharingfoundation.org)), the majority of charity badge fundraisers have less impressive results. According to TechSoup ("Show Me the Numbers: Can Group Fundraising Help You?", [www.techsoup.org](http://www.techsoup.org)), which collected data from group fundraising sites (these numbers don't exclusively reflect charity badge fundraisers), the average group fundraiser yielded revenue of only \$692.80.

**2. Number of Participants.** The concept of charity badges is still relatively new and not yet widespread. The average group fundraising campaign has from 4-40 donors.

**3. Personal Contact.** People are more compelled to give if they receive acknowledgment for their donation. One problem with online donations is that there's little or no personal connection between the organization and the supporter. According to Mashable, a social networking news site ([www.mashable.com](http://www.mashable.com)), a RockYou charity widget received 2,257,505 views but generated only \$69 during that time period.

your cause by seeing who puts your badge on their Web site, blog, or social network profile.

**4. Targeted Audience.** According to Wikipedia ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)), more than 61% of all donations come from personal requests. A charity badge is often shared from one friend to another, targeting requests to individuals who may donate. For example, if you were an environmental nonprofit, you could place your badge on an established "environmental group" within a social networking site, and friends in the group would share the badge, giving it a much more targeted viewing.

**5. Unknown Future.** The future of charity badges is still largely up in the air. By experimenting with badges now, your organization will gain a better understanding of how they work and how you can effectively use them in the future.

### How to Create a Badge

Creating a badge is very easy and can be done in a matter of minutes. Simply follow the step-by-step instructions on your provider's Web site. Some of the most popular providers include Network for Good ([www.networkforgood.org](http://www.networkforgood.org)), ChipIn ([www.chipin.com](http://www.chipin.com)), and CareBadges ([www.carebadges.com](http://www.carebadges.com)).

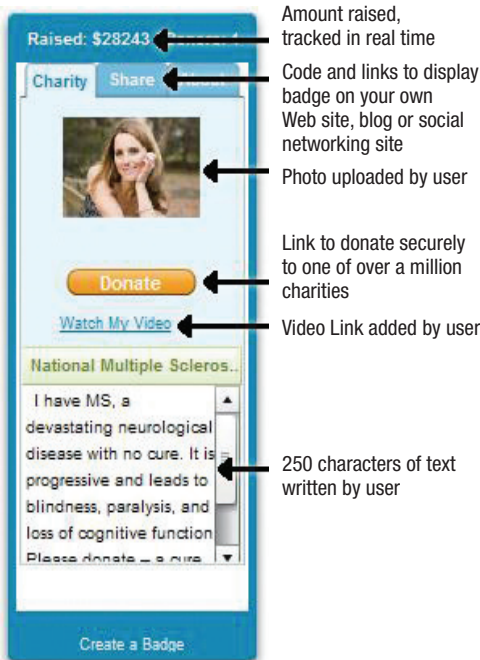
### Five Reasons Why You Should Use One Anyway

**1. Awareness.** The most important reason to create a charity badge is to raise awareness of your organization. While there's potential for a highly successful fundraiser, the most likely benefit will simply be that more people are exposed to your cause.

**2. Little Expense.** ChipIn ([www.chipin.com](http://www.chipin.com)) and Network for Good ([www.networkforgood.org](http://www.networkforgood.org)) currently don't charge to create badges. Your only costs would be the potential credit payment fees and the labor to create and promote your badge.

**3. Community Networking.** Placing your badge in targeted locations can help you reach new demographic groups. Furthermore, you'll be able to easily track who's interested in

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To decide if a charity badge is right for your nonprofit, you'll want to know the following:

### Three Reasons a Charity Badge May Not Help Your Organization

**1. Campaign Success.** While there are some noted exceptions (such as the Sharing Foundation's astounding