

4 Trends Impacting Donor Engagement & Retention in Europe

Growing Regular Giving in a Digital World



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Introduction

Regular giving has never been more important. The continual flow of reliable income from committed supporters is sustaining nonprofits during times of uncertainty, enabling them to meet the challenges of the pandemic and continue their vital work.

But with donor numbers now stabilising, and in some cases starting to drop, there's an increasingly urgent need for nonprofits to redouble their efforts to keep valuable supporters, and bring in more like them. For example in the UK, most products performed similarly to 2020, thus continuing the shifts that we started to see in that year. Regular Giving was stable but down on previous years and with increases in other forms of giving the dependency has fallen with % of income received from regular gifts down from 64% in 2017 to 54% last year.

The growth of digital presents a huge opportunity, with more revenue now coming through these channels. The challenge is that donations usually come in the form of one-off gifts. So how can nonprofits – wherever they are on the digital maturity scale – not only inspire and engage new audiences, but maximise donor retention?

In this ebook, we look at four trends impacting these areas, and highlight the key tools and strategies nonprofits can use to strengthen and grow regular giving in today's digital-first world.



1

Regular giving is sustaining nonprofits through uncertainty

The value of regular donors in providing nonprofits with stable and unrestricted funding can't be overstated. In fact, it's thanks to this continual stream of donations that many organisations survived COVID-19. But while the pandemic saw most regular givers continue supporting the nonprofits they already had a relationship with, the rise in living costs in Europe is now forcing many to look hard at what they spend.

With today's 'cancel culture' making it easy to pull the plug on any Direct Debit deemed expendable, it's critical to keep supporters feeling engaged and valued through personalised communications and high-quality experiences.



Data and Statistics



1 in 4 nonprofits in Europe saw a drop in supporter numbers in 2021³

7 in 10 increased their reach and engagement with supporters digitally in 2021³

1 in 2 are now increasing their focus on supporter retention³



2. The Nonprofit Digital Marketer, Salesforce
3. 2021 Nonprofit Pulse, EFA / Salesforce
4. State of Marketing, Salesforce



Actions for keeping digital donors on board



Data drives engagement. Getting your data in order and integrated into one system will help to give you the single view of supporters required to create relevant and engaging communications.



Ensure your organisation has a data-driven fundraising strategy – it's essential for building an actionable understanding of your supporter base and for making sure opportunities to cultivate new and existing donors aren't missed.



Identify where you are on the digital maturity scale – what are your next steps and what key performance indicators (KPIs) can help you get there?

Join our community of trailblazers and complete our free digital marketing learning modules. [Get started with our trailhead on assessing your digital maturity.](#)

Customer Story

With target groups ranging from corporations, individual donors, and volunteers through to foundations, WWF turned to Salesforce and its Marketing Cloud platform to help them make the most of every interaction. They created personalised, cross-channel customer journeys using email, mobile, social, web, and more. With a single landscape view in one platform, and a more data-driven strategy, WWF is now able to reach more people, connect faster and convert those connections to long-term supporters.

“The best thing we’ve done since WWF started all those years ago is move from a campaign-driven organisation to a data-driven one.”



**Paul Zevenboom, Head of Digital,
eCommerce and Consumer Data**

2

New digital supporters are more likely to be one time givers

The pandemic saw a welcome flood of donors giving via digital to support nonprofits responding to or impacted by the crisis. Most of those donors gave one-off or emergency donations, responding fast and where need was greatest. These digital donors were relatively easy to recruit and low cost in comparison with other channels but a regular ask is clearly more of a challenge. And it's important to consider that the needs and wants of the digitally recruited regular givers often differ to those recruited offline through F2F or other channels.

To build longer-term and committed supporter relationships with digital donors, nonprofits first need to understand what drew them to their organisation as well as what those donors want from them. Only when armed with this insight can you develop an engagement strategy that will ensure their first donation isn't their last.

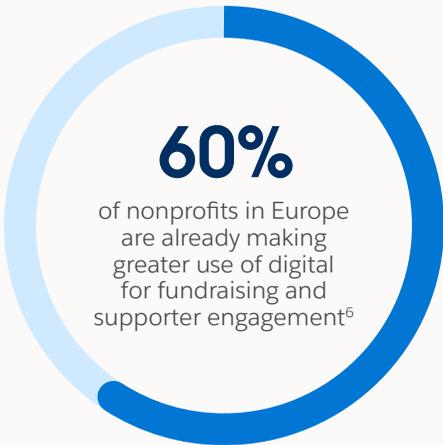


Data and Statistics



Only **1 in 5** who offer a recurring giving option on their website provide an actual value proposition for giving regularly.⁵

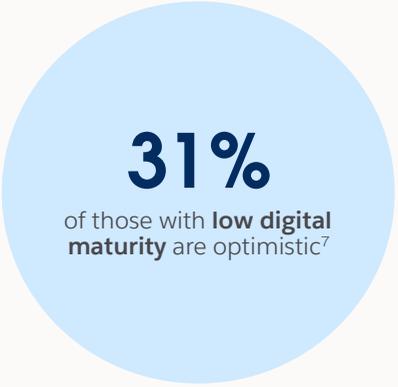
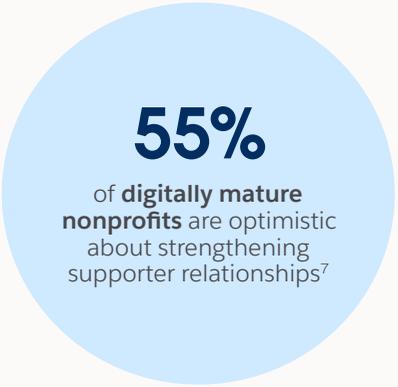
Donation pages are **3x** more likely to default to a one-time rather than recurring gift.⁵



Still, **76%** lack a data strategy.⁶



The outlook for supporter relationships in 2022 varies according to digital maturity:



5. [The Global Online Fundraising Scorecard](#), Salesforce
6. [2021 Nonprofit Pulse](#), EFA / Salesforce
7. [Nonprofit Trends Report 2021](#), Salesforce



Actions for building a deeper understanding of supporters



Take a 360 view, always aiming to deliver a consistent and supporter-centric experience.



A CRM system can give you the edge in getting to know your digital donors, when used properly, guiding you on their interests and what approaches or campaigns are likely to be most effective.



Ensure your organisation has a data strategy that goes beyond Recency, Frequency, Monetary Value (RFM) – it's essential for building an actionable understanding of your supporter base and for making sure opportunities to cultivate new and existing donors aren't missed.

Boost your digital know-how with our trailmix on [Getting Started with Marketing Automation for Nonprofits](#)

3

Digital donors don't always make the shift to regular giving

Nonprofits are ramping up their offering for supporters in the digital space, developing engaging and entertaining content, and encouraging supporters to get involved in a range of ways. Still, many organisations are struggling to convert digital supporters to become regular givers, and to develop a customised supporter journey that meets their needs.

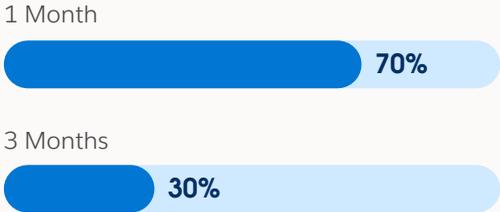
Engaging digital-first audiences and driving regular giving requires an integrated multichannel approach, far removed from siloed operations or campaign-led thinking. Digital savvy donors expect a supporter experience that will continue to excite and engage them. They want to feel part of the solution – an enabler or even an activist.

For nonprofits then, there is a need to make smart use of data and analytics for more personalised communications. This means taking advantage of technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and marketing automation to deliver tailored content and a streamlined donor experience, while navigating the legislative environment of GDPR and ePrivacy.



Data and Statistics

Nonprofits' timeliness of sending online donors a cultivation communication⁸:



There is still a tendency to focus on solicitation over cultivation – in our global study of nonprofits:



2 of 9 countries (the Netherlands and UK) send more cultivation emails than solicitation emails⁸



8. The Global Online Fundraising Scorecard, Salesforce and NextAfter
9. The Nonprofit Experience Index 2021, Salesforce

10. The Nonprofit Digital Marketer, Salesforce
11. Nonprofit Trends Report 2021, Salesforce





Actions for converting one-off donors to regular givers



Use prompts during the giving process or an upgrade ask on your gift confirmation page reminding supporters about the option and importance of regular giving.

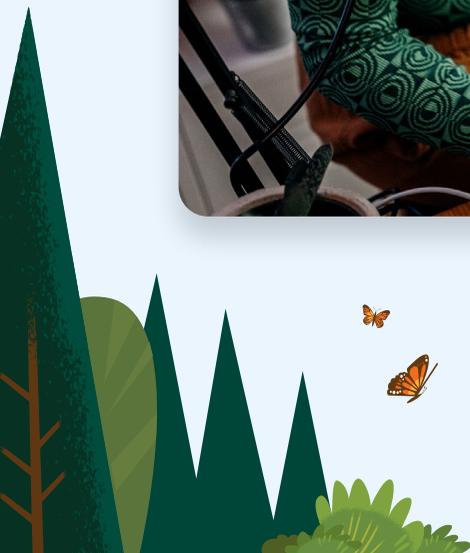


Set up a simple series of automated email messages to welcome new supporters and cultivate that relationship. Then deepen the engagement by communicating the impact of their gift and making them feel good about what they have done.



Use predictive analytics to segment audiences based on their profile, preferences, interests or behaviours, establishing who is most likely to give regularly and tailoring their supporter experience to promote this.

Learn how to manage your donors and donations with our trailmix on [Fundraise with Nonprofit Cloud](#)



4

People, processes and technology are changing

In today's digital-first world, transformation is a necessity. But successful digital transformation is not just about having the right systems and tools, or even the right strategy – it also means having the organisation and your people firmly on board. According to PWC, 70% of digital transformations¹² fail because staff and other users don't adopt the new technology.

Organisational culture and an engaged workforce are key to driving change. After all, your people are your biggest asset. How can you successfully inspire your donors without inspiring, equipping and empowering your own people. They need to be willing to go with you on your digital journey, to understand why change is happening, how to make best use of the tools available and – critically – what this means for their workload.

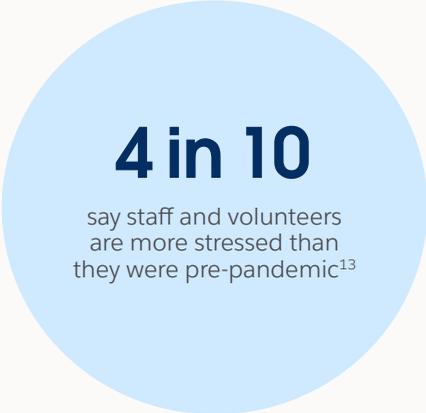
Nonprofits are struggling to attract and retain staff and volunteers, and so looking after your workforce really is critical. What's more, people want to learn, to achieve and to innovate. Organisations that invest in their people, and those that build a culture that supports change will inevitably find staff more eager to stay and more inspired to achieve.



12. [Digital Pulse 2021](#), PWC

Data and Statistics

European Trends



1 in 5 nonprofits have seen a fall in staff numbers in the past year¹³

1 in 3 nonprofits have seen a drop in volunteers¹³

Global Trends



1 in 3 said ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of their employees was a major issue for them over the past year¹⁴



13. 2021 Nonprofit Pulse, EFA/Salesforce
14. Nonprofit Trends Report 2021, Salesforce





Actions for retaining and upskilling staff



Help people feel involved by including them in your plans for change. Set out a clear vision and bring them on the journey with you. You can use marketing journeys internally.



Minimise the risk of burnout by implementing digital tools that help staff to work in more efficient ways and free up time for learning on Trailhead or other platforms.



Automate processes and interactions to streamline and optimise the donor experience, and free up time for staff to focus on the supporter experience rather than doing manual uploads.



Customer Story

With a database of two million mostly older donors, key priorities for CBM International are raising awareness more broadly and widening its appeal to younger generations, as well as staying in touch with its existing donor community. Automation through Salesforce's Marketing Cloud is helping: the donation, and what it's for, is automatically recorded in the system, triggering follow up actions such as personalised thank you letters, further building the relationship between the donor and CBM and saving staff valuable time.

“The result of these efficiencies is that we are shifting our attention onto our donors, using that extra time to talk to them and understand more about their interest in us, instead of on administration.”



**Heidrun Schoenborn, Head of
Donor Relationship Management**

Conclusion

5 Key Takeaways for Growing Engagement and Retention

Wherever your nonprofit is on the [digital maturity scale](#), and whatever your budget, much can be done to engage and retain digital-first donors. Here are five key takeaways:



Good data (supporter insight) is the foundation for creating and delivering inspiring supporter journeys and experiences.



Automation reduces the burden on staff, improving working processes and maximising efficiency.



What gets measured gets managed – make sure your KPIs reflect the organisation's key priorities and the things that need changing.



Strategy drives digital transformation. Use our [Vision and Value maps](#) to make the business case. However, culture eats strategy for breakfast! You can't just buy a tool or apply a strategy and expect it to work.



You need an agile, innovative culture that cuts across silos and takes an integrated approach to deliver the best possible supporter experience.



