

Using new media to grow engagement and loyalty with donors

Project 11c. Digital

Henry Rowling, April 2017

Summary guidance

This guidance is intended to help fundraisers, supporter engagement staff and the organisation you work for to design better online supporter experiences that engage and delight them. If you follow these steps:

- your supporters will learn more about your cause and how they can help
- you will increase their engagement with your cause online
- you will grow the loyalty of your supporters to your organisation through obtaining up to date, compliant permission for future marketing
- loyal and engaged supporters may go on to advocate for you through digital and mobile channels and take on an ambassadorial role

Executive summary

Fundraising and engagement via digital and mobile communications channels offer numerous ways to speak to supporters and prospective supporters about the great work your charity does. Through rich and interactive content you can tell stories directly to the people that matter, who sustain your organisation and beneficiaries. There are a number of low-cost, practical steps you can take detailed in this paper to drastically improve your supporter's experience of your organisation online. The possibilities of fundraising through online engagement change rapidly so you should constantly review and improve your objectives, goals and infrastructure in this area. Learn from your supporters, peers and the world around you.

Top-level guidance

The following guidance is intended to provide highly practical steps you can take within your organisation to improve your supporters online experience and to increase your reach to prospective audiences. Very few require major financial investments.

Below is a summary of the main steps. Further details and examples can be found after this summary.

1. Strategic steps

1. Create a digital engagement strategy for supporters and prospective supporters. This should set out a vision and some high level goals for online engagement that is supporter centric and will create interesting stories about the work you do.
2. Take time to find out and understand the interests and motivations of donors. You can then design the optimum online experience from there. This will help you create content and assets (such as video and pictures) that can play a role in their life and address a need they may have. Without that information you are guessing and hoping.
3. Review new technologies and hardware/software as it is released. Ask - can this add to the supporter experience? Don't be seduced by new things. Think always - how can this improve the supporter experience. If you can't answer this - don't do it. See page six for a checklist.
4. Consider if your hardware and back end setup enable an enhanced supporter experience? Are your systems integrated so that data flows allow a single supporter view?
5. Have a clear Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and Pay Per Click (PPC) plan. This will allow supporters and prospects to find you online and discover information about you. If you don't have any budget for PPC concentrate on improving your SEO.

2. Implementation

These steps will bring your strategy to life and help you plan your future work online.

1. Physically map the full and various journeys for supporters through all your communication streams. This should be done for online and offline channels together. Do not separate journeys by channel as increasingly messages are seen across multiple channels within integrated campaigns. You can do this at low cost with post it notes and a large room
2. This will help you understand the online experience from the supporters view and consider if the journey is something that you would consider to be positive, rewarding and inspiring
3. Ask for consent for online marketing in a compliant way. If you can't communicate to supporters through email, mobile or app - then any communication plan is flawed from the start. The Direct Marketing Association or NCVO websites are good starting points to establish how to do this
4. Test the best frequency of communication for each supporter. Some will prefer lots of regular contact; others less so. You can use measures such as unsubscribe rates, open rates, bounce rates, time spent on page - to judge engagement with your content. The data can inform the optimum frequency - and test different approaches constantly
5. Focus on accessibility - this includes language, design, legibility of fonts, font size on web pages and emails
6. Test your content in multiple browsers before you launch something new - if supporters can't read or work the asset you build - it won't satisfy them
7. Focus on telling stories. Supporters want to know the stories of the people or issue they are helping. Using emotions, real stories, and strong photos and graphics is key
8. Test usability regularly - 47% of donors trying to make a donation online don't finish.¹ Publish statistics and graphics showing exactly how donations are used
9. Use social media to have conversations with supporters and to tell stories in a human way
10. Plan your email marketing. Well targeted email communications can keep supporters up to date with what your organisation does. You should segment your email lists as much as possible to tailor content to the specific interests of the cohort. This will increase engagement and the number of people taking positive calls to action

¹ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/designing-the-perfect/>

3. Best practice

These steps can be considered best practice. If you have limited resources available they are less crucial than the steps above but should still be considered

1. Design mobile first, since website visits from mobile devices overtook traffic from desktops in the UK in 2015². Your supporters use mobile devices and therefore your content must display well on those devices
2. Use surveys on your website - to understand more about motivations, interests and how the supporter learned about the page/work. This will allow you to design better content and journeys
3. Use warm, conversational, short sentences and non corporate language online - people have limited time - they will only scan sentences
4. Encourage your staff to attend cross-sector events and network with other people engaged in producing online content for supporters. You can pick up many tips and low cost ideas from such activity

If you follow this approach - we are confident you will have happier and more engaged supporters - who know more about your charity and the work you do. This will create greater value to your organisation in the form of enhanced levels of engagement, campaigning, volunteering and advocacy within peer groups.

² <http://www.ecommerceweek.co.uk/news/461/mobile-overtakes-desktop-traffic/>

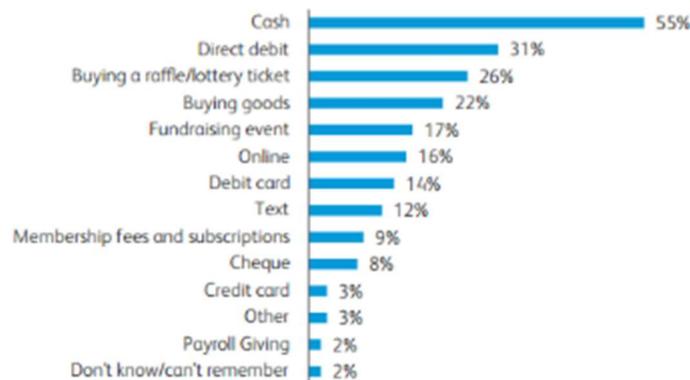
The approach

Digital, mobile and email fundraising did not feature a great deal in the Etherington report of 2015 - or the maelstrom of media focus following the tragic death of Olive Cooke. Permission for email and mobile marketing has always been 'opt in' based - as opposed to 'opt out'. In this regard it places more control in the hands of the supporter from a default position and thus is less likely to create some of the excesses highlighted last year.

However, while permission based marketing in the digital world starts from a position of strength - the amount of personal data that can be and is collected from users every minute of every day - means that data security is paramount and data must be collected in a sensitive manner; and always with the known permission of the user.

Further - fundraising via digital still lags surprisingly behind other methods of giving - and one of the main reasons for this is because charities are not creating fantastic online experiences for supporters. 90% of the UK population regularly uses the internet³ and spend on average 2 hours 51 minutes per day online⁴.

The audience is there - yet, according to a study by CAF in 2015, only 16% of people gave online last year - compared to 55% of people who give a one off cash gift.⁵ This feels intuitively unbalanced and reflects poorly on the sector as a whole. Though, a similar discrepancy applies in the commercial world. Despite the rise of Amazon and other online retailers, in the US people still do over 90% of their shopping offline.



Base: All adults 16+ who have donated money to charity in the last 12 months (n=2,433)

While charities struggle to keep up with the latest technological developments we must recognise and then address the skills gap in staff - at all levels - junior, mid weight and senior in regards to digital marketing techniques and a lack of investment in digital infrastructures that support a smooth and fulfilling supporter experience.

To create this guidance we gathered a group of interested digital marketers from across the sector together to formulate a best practice checklist. We sought input from a wide group of sector practitioners and then found examples of case studies and data to illustrate.

³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2016>

⁴ <https://www.iabuk.net/about/press/archive/definitive-time-people-spend-online-2hrs-51-mins-a-day>

⁵ https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/personal-giving/caf_ukgiving2015_1891a_web_230516.pdf?sfvrsn=2

Putting the principles and actions into practise

Technological innovation and its use for charity

The voices calling for charities to stay on top of new technologies are neither new nor small⁶, but it is important to keep the focus on the charity and fundraising mission when considering new opportunities. An exciting new technology with sweeping popularity is not necessarily a valuable fundraising or engagement tool. Its potential should be evaluated against your charity's aims and the donors' needs. That said, innovations in technology may open up unexpected and valuable new opportunities for fundraisers, which makes it imperative to stay informed about trending technologies.

Nesta experts remind charities that to successfully deploy new technologies, the focus should be on the features wanted by donors, that online and offline experiences need to be linked, and failures along the development path are inevitable⁷. In a 2013 experiment with ten charities, the following checklist was established to prepare the implementation of innovative solutions, from a general operations perspective⁸:

1. Why are we doing this? Be clear on the strategic rationale for open innovation.
2. What is the problem we are looking to solve? What is the opportunity we could take?
Uncover the unmet needs. Ask
 1. this question several times. Challenge your answers.
 2. Does it need a tech solution? Consider all possible ways to solve the problem, include no tech and low tech.
3. Who will use this? Apply a user-centred approach to design, build and test your
4. innovation.
5. Who will help us build this? Partner with users for requirements, external experts for advice and delivery partners for implementation.
6. How will we know it will work? Use an evidence-based approach and build low-cost minimum viable products. Test with both 'cold' and known end-users regularly throughout the build process.
7. Have we considered using agile methodologies? Using simple, iterative processes can foster creativity and collaboration, while lowering costs and building usable products.
8. Where will the solution be hosted? Understand the process and infrastructure
9. implications of hosting internally vs. external / cloud-based options.
10. Who will maintain this post-launch? Put plans and service level agreements in place for when things go wrong.
11. How can we scale this? Prepare a portfolio of strategies and business models to ensure your solution is replicable, scalable and can be sustainably financed in the long-term.

Marie Curie's gaming platform to engage new donors, Mencap's online giving in schools project, Keep Britain Tidy's online network and the Children's Society's "pop up" experiences for prospective supporters are all examples of this framework put into practice.

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2012/nov/29/technology-innovation-increase-charity-donations>

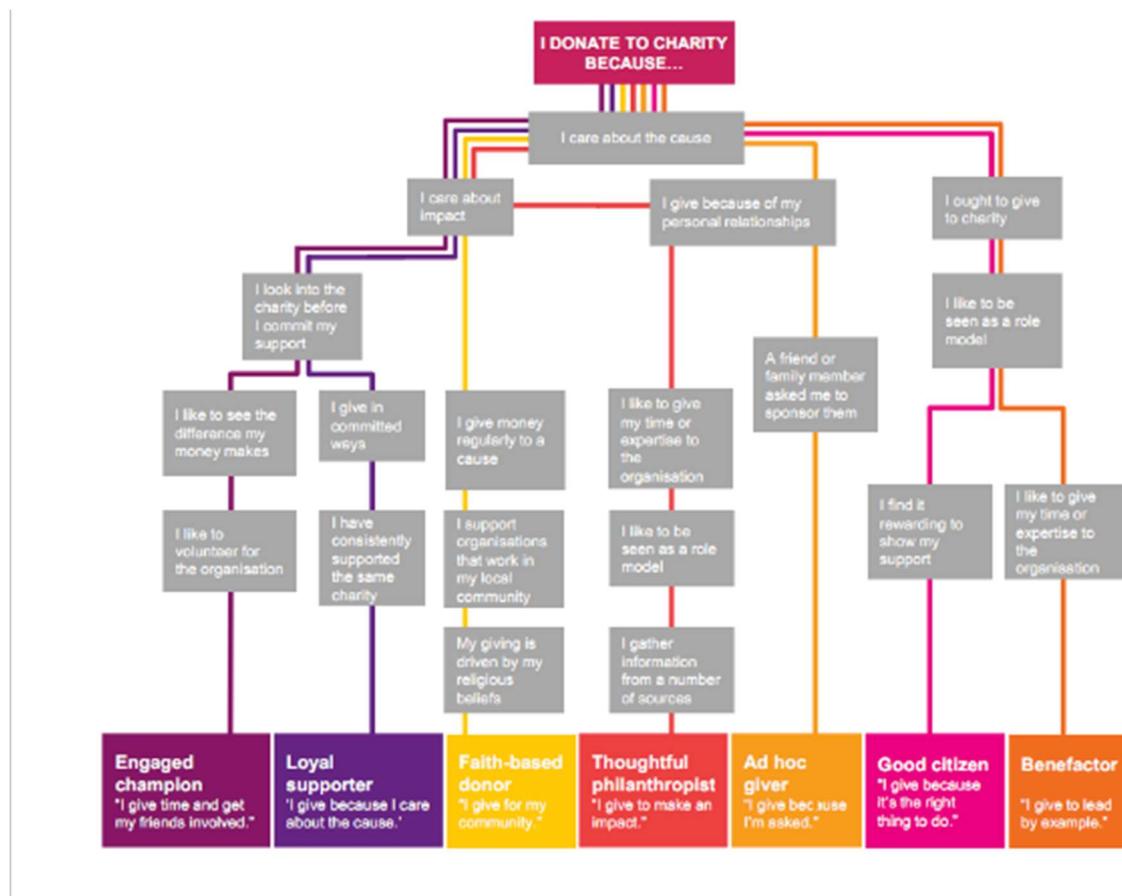
⁷ <http://www.nesta.org.uk/blog/digital-social-good-three-fundamental-points-you-dont-want-miss>

⁸ https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/the_open_innovation_blog_series.pdf

Understand and design based on donor preferences

The above implies that charities need to understand the preferences and interests of potential or loyal donors and to design the website and donation process in the way that best corresponds to those. Surveys and trials are likely to give valuable insight into the quality and attractiveness of a donor's journey, which makes them an investment of great importance.

Money for Good UK undertook a major study⁹ and mapped donor motivations as below. These motivations have major implications for designing the donor experience online, concerning messaging, prompts and information about the charity's work provided on the website. It is therefore of utmost importance that charities conduct thorough analysis into the "types" of supporters likely to visit their website, their preferences and motivations, in order to design an online donation experience that is most attractive to the audience in question.



As an example, Barnardo's saw a 17% increase in online donations after an extensive study and redesign of its online journey¹⁰. Key to this project was a thorough analysis of the website visitors, which uncovered preferences and attitudes among potential donors that could then be mirrored in website and user experience design.

⁹ <http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/money-for-good-uk/>

¹⁰

http://www.digitaltrainingacademy.com/casestudies/2013/04/case_study_barnardos_gets_17_rise_in_online_donations_after_web_revamp_1.php

Online Journeys

In order to effectively and meaningfully engage donors online, it is advisable to imagine the donor's interactions with the charity as a journey. Charities should put themselves in donors' shoes and aim to understand how the donor might hear or read about the charity, what would make it more likely for him or her to stay engaged. While the idea has already gained traction, with for example a UK fundraising guide available¹¹, there are also paid services to help charities improve their digital donor journey¹².

Recommendations for designing online journeys:

- To motivate a potential donor to give, some of the most powerful emotions are empathy and creating a sense of “it could have been me”
- Rewards are important, but if rewarding/thanking messages appear prior to completion of the donation process, they may actually discourage and disrupt the donation.
- Incorporate reciprocity as far as possible, to make donors feel engaged as partners rather than purely givers. Most charities also emphasise “the difference you make” in their messaging, with MacMillan Cancer Support as a good example¹³
- Social validation: tell the donor about actions others have taken and the difference they made¹⁴. This will help foster a sense of community of people joining together to solve an issue or help someone or something become better
- Thank you messages at the end of the donation process are of great importance, they should be persuasive (see Storytelling) and can invite donors to take further action for the charity¹⁵
- Base every decision on features and design, on traffic data and statistics. Use this data to ensure a donor receives the right type of message through the right channel at the right time. MacMillan Cancer Support reduced their attrition rate by 50 % in that way¹⁶
- Touchpoints after the first donation are crucial: charities need to keep up a sense of being welcomed and engaged for the donor through follow-up emails, mail, and to provide easy ways for them to engage other potential donors. Barnardo's is a good example here - their follow-up email included a survey asking about the donor's motivations and attitudes, which again feeds into building a better experience and making the donor feel valued¹⁷

¹¹ http://fundraising.co.uk/2015/03/16/7-simple-steps-for-developing-effective-supporter-journeys/#.V9bL_aXybmM

¹² <http://donorfy.com/blog/how-to-create-a-donor-journey-to-support-your-fundraising-activity>

¹³ <http://www.macmillan.org.uk/get-involved/why-choose-us/>

¹⁴ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/designing-the-perfect/>

¹⁵ <https://whitefusemedia.com/blog/we-donated-5-different-charities-what-happened>

¹⁶ http://fundraising.co.uk/2015/03/16/7-simple-steps-for-developing-effective-supporter-journeys/#.V9bL_aXybmM

¹⁷ <http://www.shoutdigital.com/insights/white-paper-what-makes-a-good-digital-experience-for-charities/>

Usability

The importance of user experience is underlined by statistics published by THINK Consultancy Solutions and Nomensa in 2011¹⁸: 47% of visitors attempting to make a donation through a website did not finish the process, and sites that have not been tested for usability tend to elicit donations from only 15% of visitors.

Recommendations for improving usability:

- Websites should provide information on the cause, previous impact and call to action, ideally at first click
- Particularly useful are donation shortcuts to their homepage, directly accessible through Google.
- Donation sites need to be well-functioning and quick, as well as secure¹⁹
- Donation sites should be designed like the charity's own, to retain trust
- Setting up a donate-button on the right hand margin makes it resemble advertisements too much, thus reducing conversions²⁰
- Donate-button needs to be easy to find. Good and bad examples from Cancer Research UK, PDSA and others can be found here²¹
- Reducing the number of clicks in the donation process is recommended.
- Clear navigation is important. The donor needs to see the number of steps needed to complete the process, with clear information at every relevant element. MSF displays a good example²².
- Inform donors clearly of what their money will be used for - do not show only overhead percentage, but concrete examples of what a certain amount can fund. Again, the MSF page referenced above shows a good way to go.
- Statistics, graphics or rich content can bring numbers to life and the money-to-impact link on your website, too²³.
- Setting default options for certain amounts or a regular donation can be powerful, but the donor needs to feel in control and high pre-set donation amounts can be discouraging.
- Beware of lost opportunities: you can end the donation processing page with an opt-in/out for newsletters, ask about donors' motivations and how they learned about the charity or allow them to set up an account to make future donations more easily²⁴

¹⁸ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/designing-the-perfect/>

¹⁹ <http://www.shoutdigital.com/insights/white-paper-what-makes-a-good-digital-experience-for-charities/>

²⁰ <https://antistatique.net/fr/nous/bloggons/2015/03/14/user-experience-ux-ong-et-associations-am%C3%A9liorer-les-dons-en-ligne-part1>

²¹ <https://antistatique.net/fr/nous/bloggons/2015/03/14/user-experience-ux-ong-et-associations-am%C3%A9liorer-les-dons-en-ligne-part1>

²² <https://whitefusemedia.com/blog/we-donated-5-different-charities-what-happened>

²³ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/designing-the-perfect/>

²⁴ <http://www.shoutdigital.com/insights/white-paper-what-makes-a-good-digital-experience-for-charities/>

General website usability:

- Links should change colour when hovered over
 - Sitemaps and breadcrumbs (typically found at the top of a webpage, these provide links back to where you started) help users identify where they are on the webpage. Navigation should be easy and intuitive.
 - Site navigation needs clear terminology
 - All pages should be designed similarly, including font sizes and type styles.
- Accessibility recommendations can be found below.

- Too much text or content is confusing if it is not well designed or logical in its layout.²⁵

Case study:

JRDF²⁶ increased online donations by 18%, by eliminating distractions from its landing page to make the donation path clearer, reducing the number of steps needed to complete the donation process, rephrasing its confirmation email in more friendly language and making its website mobile-friendly.

Accessibility

Accessibility means making the website easily understandable and navigable for audiences of all reading abilities and levels of web experience. Consider the below to make your online content as accessible as possible:

- The readability of all content is essential. The Web Content Accessibility guidelines (WCAG) provide some neutral, extensive guidance in this area. There are various tools that can be used to assess the accessibility of your content. For a good example visit Age UK²⁷. Readability includes font size and type, as well as not overusing reversed out type.
- Colour contrasts, making text easily readable can also be useful for some people with certain types of visual impairment
- Making alternative text and captions available for images and videos, to accommodate users using screen readers, look at Age UK's example
- Structuring headings in an intuitive way
- Accompanying briefs with "read more" links²⁸
- Be careful with interactive tools, they can present a major obstacle to certain users
- Look at accessibility as a vital part of fundraising websites, incorporated into efforts to make the site more responsive and easy to use in general, not as an optional feature²⁹

²⁵ <http://www.wearesigma.com/media/1555/sigma-charity-online-experience-report.pdf>

²⁶ http://support.engagingnetworks.net/cc16presentations/CASE_STUDY_JDRF.pdf

²⁷ <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

²⁸ <http://www.wearesigma.com/media/1555/sigma-charity-online-experience-report.pdf>

²⁹

<https://www.eduserv.org.uk/~media/Insight/Reports/WEB1400%20Optimising%20charity%20websites%20for%20donations%20report.ashx>

Language use

Language on websites, donation pages, emails, mobile messages should always be:

- clear
- concise
- use short, strong sentences rather than long and eloquent-sounding ones
- address the user directly
- provoke a certain feeling with the reader
- personal where appropriate
- free from jargon

Some good examples are showcased here³⁰. The Plain English Campaign have some good free guidance and resources on their website.

Storytelling

Improving storytelling should be a vital part of your charity's online communication strategy. It is a difficult aspect to achieve as all donors are different, although making an emotional connection is essential before someone will donate.

Recommendations:

- A central story to your organisation should be easily visible on the first landing page, such as this one from The Children's Society³¹
- Useful tips can come from screenwriting: focus on a person, not idea or organisation; describe a conflict - the essence of any good story; create a desire to help that person, change their world.
- Enable the donor to locate themselves within that story. The UNHCR has a library of stories to read, a role for many people to identify with³²
- Showcase what your organisation stands for through the story - donors give to organisations that reflect their own values and identity
- Create emotions. An emotional connection is much more powerful than cognitive persuasion as a motivation.
- Avoid painting your organisation rather than the concerned individual as the hero. Charity:Water has a good range of those³³
- Not all stories need to have a happy ending - tell real stories and people will be motivated to get involved
- Make the call to action clear at the end of your story, coupled with a deadline for action in the near future
- Images and videos are powerful storytelling tools. Invisible Children's "Kony 2012" video, the first charity video to "go viral", is a case in point³⁴.

³⁰ <http://www.pedalo.co.uk/in-search-of-the-best-third-sector-websites-in-the-uk/>

³¹ <http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/news-and-blogs/childrens-stories/jennys-story>

³² <http://stories.unhcr.org/>

³³ <http://www.charitywater.org/projects/stories/>

³⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sqc>

- To tell stories, you need to obtain them first: it is important for those stories to be genuine, reflecting the beneficiary’s rather than the charity’s viewpoint.³⁵
- Stories are more convincing the less they are filtered and polished³⁶
- Tell stories through a variety of digital channels and life events to increase reach and engage different audiences. Sightsavers’ #SeetheMiracle campaign has witnessed a significant increase in donation this way³⁷
- Make the “nature of your challenge” the centre of the story, and emphasise your organisation’s unique selling point through it
- First-person storytelling can be the most persuasive
- Keep stories short
 - Avoid jargon and technical terms - stories are about people and experiences, not “evidence-based interventions” etc³⁸

Storytelling and conversations

The importance of social media has been emphasised by countless studies and opinion pieces. In 2015, 30% of online donors stated they were motivated to donate through social media channels, thus optimising the connection between the website and social media, just as good social media management, become of great importance³⁹.

Recommendations:

- Engagement through social media requires skilled and dedicated resource, strategic planning, market research, and thus needs to integrate with the organisation’s operational and fundraising activities⁴⁰
- Social media interaction is an online journey: start from identifying interested people (likes, retweets), cultivate relationships through asking and answering questions, storytelling, personalised messaging and thanking⁴¹
- Integrate social media sharing buttons into your website, especially the donation confirmation page

Case studies:

- The #nomakeupselfie raised £2m and benefitted a number of cancer charities.⁴². The charities did not create the phenomenon - it was an existing meme - but they were quick to capitalise on a trending topic to give it relevance to their cause that resonated with

³⁵ <http://www.fundraising123.org/files/NFG-Storytelling-Guide.pdf>

³⁶ <http://blog.justgiving.com/five-charities-using-authentic-storytelling-online/>

³⁷ <http://www.charitycomms.org.uk/articles/seethemiracle-live-digital-storytelling-from-sightsavers>

³⁸ http://www.thegoodmancenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Storytelling_Best_Practices_Websites.pdf

³⁹ <http://www.charitydigitalnews.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/09/Charity-websites-what-does-good-look-like.pdf>

⁴⁰ <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-campaign-elements/>

⁴¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2014/nov/24/how-to-achieve-fundraising-success-on-social-media>

⁴² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-26683817>

huge swathes of people. There are many lessons to be learnt from it, including on donor motivations and parts of the public that found it inappropriate⁴³.

- This Just Giving guide⁴⁴ details the online journey through the examples of the Rotary Global Swimathon, Child's i foundation, Cancer Research UK and Cystic Fibrosis Ireland.

Marketing consent

Considering charities will be in the spotlight on fundraising and consent matters for the foreseeable future, it is vital your online marketing consent statements and processes are fully robust and compliant. Any form of digital interaction that produces or keeps personal data needs to be carefully planned and supervised to rebuild trust. All processes should be regularly spot checked and revised to keep up to date with changing regulation in this area.

Detailed recommendations:

- The Institute of Fundraising's FAQs on fundraising include advice on both data protection and consent and a guide to optimise fundraising websites⁴⁵.
- A comprehensive guide to the legal aspects of consent and marketing can be found here⁴⁶.
- The UK Fundraising website has also published advice on creating appealing permission statements for charities⁴⁷.
- A more detailed guide around marketing consent, based on desires, fears and brand communications and including a matrix against which charities can test their own website, can be found on DMA's website⁴⁸.
- IoF and Fastmap effective marketing: Fundraising Media DNA 2016/17 is accessible to IoF members⁴⁹.
- Concerning the use of third party platforms, the IoF has published a guide to support charities in making the most of online donations⁵⁰, as has a financial advice website⁵¹.

⁴³ <http://charitychap.com/2014/03/no-makeup-selfie/>

⁴⁴ <http://pages.justgiving.com/friends-with-money.html>

⁴⁵ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/guidance/frequently-asked-fundraising-questions/>

⁴⁶ <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1555/direct-marketing-guidance.pdf>

⁴⁷ <http://fundraising.co.uk/2016/01/27/how-to-create-charity-permission-statements-new-guide-published/#.V9vSOqXybmM>

⁴⁸ <http://dma.org.uk/article/you-could-be-a-consent-marketing-hero> and <http://www.fastmap.com/consent-optimising-benchmarks.aspx>

⁴⁹ <http://www.fastmap.com/fundraising-media-dna-2016.aspx>

⁵⁰ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/forms/making-the-most-of-digital-donations-guide/>

⁵¹ <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/charity-fundraising-sites>

Email marketing

Once consent has been obtained, email communications are still an activity that needs careful planning. It is important for charities to know their audience well when communicating by email. Empirical testing can answer questions such as:

- How often do the supporters want to receive an email?
- How much content can or should an email have?
- What time of the day/week is the best time to send it?
- What style of communication is most appreciated?
- What is the optimal mix of asks, updates, thank you messages?

Shout's White Paper emphasised, specifically because many charities were not doing so:

- The importance of including a sender's name in every email, to avoid it being sent to the spam folder and allow for personalised relationships
- The value of buttons allowing for every action on their website to be shared on social media
- The importance of style and language, such as a warm style in donation confirmations
- To be personal on the part of the sender, highlight achievements and how this donation will make a difference⁵².

Mobile-oriented design and browser adaptation

Research from 2014 showed that responsive web design, i.e. websites adapted to mobiles, tablets and other screens, increased conversion rates by a third⁵³. Website visits from mobile devices overtook traffic from desktops in the UK in 2015⁵⁴ and mobile donations are increasingly popular.

According to a 2015 study, charities are lagging behind in adapting their websites to mobiles and tablets. An increasing proportion of online donors express a preference for mobile uses, thus this merits some attention.

⁵² <http://www.shoutdigital.com/insights/white-paper-what-makes-a-good-digital-experience-for-charities/>

⁵³ <http://npengage.com/nonprofit-fundraising/does-responsive-design-really-raise-more-money-for-nonprofits-infographic/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.ecommerceweek.co.uk/news/461/mobile-overtakes-desktop-traffic/>

Recommendations:

- make a strategic decision to invest - responsive or adaptive design? The Red Cross provides a good case study⁵⁵
- avoid too small links - finger-friendliness
- avoid unidentifiable links
- avoid excessive zooming and scrolling for users
- label buttons clearly
- have an easily accessible menu⁵⁶. Look at Citizens Advice’s website for a good example of all of the above.

	Mobile site	Responsive design
Rendering experience	Essentially a copy of your website, a mobile site can still be a unique experience for mobile users. Pro: A good choice when it might be too expensive to redesign responsively.	The device automatically adjusts according to a device’s screen size on-the-fly. Pro: A more flexible and adaptable solution for the long term.
Domain protection	You must create a different domain (i.e. m.domain.com) Con: can dilute domain and hurt organic search traffic.	You keep your own domain; nothing changes except code on the back-end. Pro: better for search because maintaining a single shared site avoids any complicated redirects.
Future proofing	You might need to rework to stay current with next-generation phones and mobile browsers. Con: Higher maintenance and expense in the long-run.	Once responsive design is added it will work on future devices without having to be programmed further. Pro: A better long-term return on your investment.

⁵⁵

<https://www.eduserv.org.uk/~media/Insight/Reports/WEB1400%20Optimising%20charity%20websites%20for%20donations%20report.aspx>

⁵⁶ <http://www.wearesigma.com/media/1555/sigma-charity-online-experience-report.pdf>

Search Engine Optimisation

Charities need to ensure that their website as well as the donation page are easily found through search engines such as Google. Potential donors may not know the name of the charity if they are cause-driven, thus it is important to appear high up on

the list of searches for the keywords the charity considers as strategic.

Recommendations:

- Use important keywords throughout the site, tips can be found here⁵⁷
- Link it to related sites, giving platforms and social media
- Build a recognisable brand
- Encourage supporters to share the page
- Create content that is worth sharing, and easily sharable

How donations are accepted

The way we pay for things – and by extension – the way supporters make donations is changing very rapidly. There are now a myriad of options – and to offer supporters choice and ease you must stay on top of them.

It is crucial that charities make it simple, easy and quick to make donations online, via text, through messaging apps, through contactless, bitcoin and through multiple gateways for payment. Few people want to spend time filling in forms to make a credit card donation. It is important you are able to move quickly in this area – so regular market scanning and having an approved technology roadmap is important. You might want to consider measuring how quickly you can set up a new payment provider internally.

You may also want to consider the interplay of donation mechanism and channel. SMS donations could be generated experientially – in a retail shop, online, as part of a sponsorship of a friend, on the street through face-to-face fundraisers. Again – mapping all these potential journeys will ensure you can provide an optimised experience for the supporter.

In such a rapidly changing payment landscape, you may feel overwhelmed and unsure about which methods to enable or 'bet on'. The answer is to test and research. Ask your supporters what payments they would like to be able to use, test a new payment route against more established methods and ask around to gather data and results from others who may have already tested certain combinations.

What then is the future for online donation payments? A scan of the external environment shows payment methods such as Apple Pay, Google Wallet, PayM and Android Pay leading the way in contactless and card free online payments and social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram are hosting these payment sites through an in app 'shop now' function.

As of 8 March 2017 Apple Pay made it easier in the UK and more secure to donate to charities from an iPhone iPad or Mac. So far this includes charities such as ActionAid UK, Alzheimer's Society, Barnardo's, British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK, Comic Relief, Unicef UK, Oxfam and WaterAid. Apple Pay say they want to make it easy and secure for supporters to make private payments, right at the moment they feel inspired to donate.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ <http://www.seobook.org/>

⁵⁸ <https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/rspb-news/news/438666-donate-with-apple-pay-coming-to-uk-charities->