



## The Good Guide to online fundraising

# Fundraising Futures

### Introduction

**GreaterGood** brings good causes and committed givers together in new and innovative ways to make a real difference in South Africa.

We are committed to a dynamic development sector where resources reach the organisations that will make the most difference where it counts. GreaterGood is about results-driven giving: we focus on performance-based, social investment philanthropy and promote investment opportunities with a measurable, life-changing impact on people and their communities.

Our world is changing rapidly and we at GreaterGood know that if you want to keep up, you have to be on top of the latest trends. The Fundraising Futures guide is designed to help build the capacity of South African non profit organisations to raise funds in an efficient and sustainable way into the future.

The guide will:

- Help you understand the basics of fundraising
- Give you tips and resources to support your strategic fundraising planning
- Show you how to make the most of your website and the internet for fundraising
- Provide guidance on creating an interactive Cause Space on our [Mygqsa.co.za](http://Mygqsa.co.za) online giving community – to attract and retain new givers.

**For more fundraising advice, news and tips visit our knowledge hub >**  
**[thefundingsite.co.za](http://thefundingsite.co.za)**

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# 1. Fundraising fundamentals

## What is fundraising?

Fundraising is the process of raising funds or other gifts to support the work of your non profit organisation by asking for donations from individuals, businesses, charitable foundations or government agencies.

No-one can support your work unless you tell them about it which means that one of the key skills of fundraising is **communication**. Telling donors and potential supporters about your work and encouraging them to give is fundamental to fundraising. So make sure that you have a thorough understanding of your organisation and its work before you start.

Everyone within an organisation is a potential fundraiser: from your trustees and managers to the receptionist and administrative staff. The whole organisation needs to be aware of – and support – your fundraising strategy.

### The GreaterGood Top 10 Fundraising Tips

- 1. You've got to ask.** People only generally give when they are asked. And even when they are asked, they don't always give. So you must ask for more than you need to bring in.
- 2. Know your stuff.** If you don't know what your organisation does – and what it hopes to achieve – you won't be able to tell potential donors. Make sure you are well briefed on new developments too: these often form the basis of funding proposals.
- 3. Always say thank you.** Donors are not cash machines: you must thank them, no matter how big or small their gift. Be sure to keep them posted on what your organisation is doing with their money if you want them to give to you again.
- 4. Be informed.** Keep up-to-date with developments in fundraising, business and the world – read papers, subscribe to relevant newsletters, magazines and e-zines. Know your way around the internet and social media – this is the future of fundraising.
- 5. Don't be a beggar.** Begging is when you ask for something you don't deserve. If you are a responsible organisation, doing good work then you deserve to get the funds to do it. Fundraising is an exchange: a donor provides the funds and you provide a benefit to society through your work.
- 6. Get help.** You can't do everything yourself. Get people behind your plans – your trustees, admin staff, colleagues and friends.
- 7. Think ahead.** Every giver, no matter what the size of their gift, should be appreciated. A small gift in kind is the start of a relationship that could lead to a major gift in the future. Today's R10 donors are tomorrow's legacy-leavers.
- 8. Get a return on your investment.** Make sure you cost your fundraising activity properly and measure it against the return you expect to get. A fundraising gala dinner that costs more than it raises won't do your organisation – or its beneficiaries – any good.
- 9. What's in a name?** Everything! Build and protect your cause's good name and reputation – it is worth its weight in gold.
- 10. Everyone has something to give.** People can support your cause by offering their skills, time or goods – as well as their money. Think about the things your cause needs apart from hard cash and give donors other ways to help you.

## Planning

A successful fundraising programme needs thoughtful planning and proper preparation. Good planning will clarify your mission, objectives and the strategies you will use to achieve your objectives.

Allocate at least two months to plan your fundraising strategy.

### Review

Start with a review of your organisation as a whole. This will help you confirm your mission, identify your goals and assess your fundraising needs. As part of this review you should develop, affirm or revise your organisation's case statement. Allocate time to analyse in detail what has and what hasn't worked in the past. Assess the results of the strategies you have employed. Discuss what you have achieved and share ideas about how you intend to move forward. This should include an informed, up-to-date assessment of the prevailing worldview and global trends.

### Case statement

A case statement is an internal document that records the essence of your organisation. You use this as the reference for your fundraising planning and all your activities. When you compile your case statement you need to ask and answer the following questions:

- Who are we?
- What is our mission?
- What are our values?
- What are our objectives?
- Why is this important?
- What do we need to achieve our objectives?
- What are our funding requirements?
- Who are the potential donors that we want to attract?
- How do we care for our donor relationships into the future?

### Mission or story

Your mission statement or organisation story should encapsulate the fundamental vision and values of your organisation. It should clearly define the reason for your existence, what needs your organisation addresses, what is unique about it and what role it plays in serving the community.

### Goals

To achieve your mission, you should have your short and long term goals clearly defined. What do you want to accomplish, and by when? You will obviously need a clear grasp of your destination – where you want to be and what you want to achieve. Visualise this. Once you have the end in sight, it is easier to identify the steps you will need to take to get there.

### Structure and staffing

Your people are your most valuable asset. Organisations should be structured to enable and maximise the talents and energies of its people. Make sure that your organisation has the human expertise, skills and creativity demanded by your mission and objectives.

Staffing, administration, management and organisational procedures need to be clearly defined and reviewed regularly. People involved in your organisation need to be aware and sure of their roles and responsibilities. This includes board members, directors, consultants, co-ordinators and volunteers.

### **Evaluation**

Constant evaluation is one of the most useful ways to ensure that your organisation is aware, responsive, responsible and effective. You can make use of an independent consultancy to help you with this or you can establish an internal evaluation process with your staff and stakeholders. Try to be as objective as possible: use your case statement to assess whether you have achieved the objectives you set, in the way that you wanted to and on time. The evaluation process also helps you to clarify what you want to achieve in the future: it gives you the chance to devise new and improved strategies to reach your goals.

A **SWOT** analysis is one of the tools you can use to assess your organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats:

1. You start by analysing your strengths and weaknesses
2. You then take a broad view of the environment you are operating in and identify perceived threats.
3. Taking everything into account you then look at your opportunities. From there you can work out a strategy to maximise those opportunities. A strategy can be defined as a logical sequence of task-oriented activities that leads to the attainment of an objective.

You can use a SWOT analysis to evaluate your organisation as a whole, to evaluate each project and to evaluate aspects of your organisation, such as your human resources capacity.

### **Programme specifics**

Once you have reviewed your organisation, confirmed your mission, defined your goals and properly assessed your capacity, you are in an ideal position to establish the specifics of your fundraising programme:

- Compile a budget for each project, detailing exactly how much you need to achieve your objectives.
- Decide what kind of donors you want to approach.
- Define your fundraising strategies to connect with those donors.
- Write fundraising proposals.

### **Who are your donors?**

Because non-profit organisations welcome support from almost any quarter, many organisations view their potential donors as a faceless mass. This makes it hard to devise a targeted message and identify effective channels to deliver your fundraising call.

The nature of giving has changed. It is becoming increasingly important to deliver a meaningful message to targeted donors. A fundraising call to reach and touch the heart of the person-in-the-street will be different from the fundraising call to a corporate social investment programme or a donor organisation. It is important for you to identify who your potential donors are, before you can choose the most effective fundraising strategies to reach them.

Remember that all potential donors are people – either individuals who are part of the general public or individuals who make business-based decisions about how their organisations' money is allocated and spent.

Consider potential donors as people you want to connect with and then go on to build a relationship. You can enhance the success of your fundraising strategy by carefully considering:

- Who will be interested in the efforts of your organisation?
- How would they benefit from making a contribution to your organisation?
- What value do you offer to them?
- What key messages are mostly likely appeal to them?

## **Fundraising approaches**

There are many ways to connect with potential donors. Consider the following fundraising approaches to find the ones that suit your organisation best:

### **Corporate, Trust, Foundation and Government Agencies**

The most common form of fundraising involves sending a written proposal to corporations, trusts, foundations and government agencies whose social investment programmes and annual budgets are committed to funding the work of non profit organisations.

Today, these donors mostly have specific criteria which must be met by the non profit organisations that they fund. You need to find out exactly what the funding criteria are, and only apply if you can meet these criteria. Otherwise you waste your time and money – and the time and money of potential future donors.

You will increase your chances of success if your proposal is relevant and if your organisation does have the capacity to deliver the performance that the donor requires.

Increasingly, corporate social investment programmes require branding or some kind of marketing rights in respect to their sponsorship of a non profit programme or project. This may also be the case with donor organisations and government agencies. You need to understand what these requirements are upfront, and ensure that it is a fitting match – aligned to your mission, your values and objectives.

There are many international corporations, trusts, foundations and government agencies that will provide funding to South African NPOs. If you plan to undertake foreign fundraising you will need to pay attention to the specific requirements of the country and the donor organisation you intend to approach. In the USA, this typically means your organisation must have 501(c) tax exemption status. You can get this as a singular organisation through an attorney in the USA at a substantial cost. Or you can secure 501(c) tax exemption status more cheaply by subscribing to a Fund of Charities – for example, The American Fund for Charities ([www.americanfund.info](http://www.americanfund.info)) managed by Chapel & York.

If you are going to be fundraising in the UK, you may need to be registered as a UK charity – although there are some trusts and foundations who do not have this requirement. Chapel & York's Fund for Charities also operates in the UK ([www.ukfundforcharities.org](http://www.ukfundforcharities.org)). Gather all of this information before launching a costly mailing campaign.

Most donor organisations and corporate social investment programmes will feature their mission, values, objectives and funding criteria on their websites. Or you can send a fax or email requesting this information before you make an approach.

### **Capital campaigns**

A capital campaign usually involves raising funds for a high cost, specific need – for example, to buy or upgrade equipment or construct a building. Executing a capital campaign generally works well with a committed group of volunteers and a steering committee to guide them.

Capital campaigns are intensive, focused fundraising efforts that may span between six months to three years. Ideally, they should be run separately from your other fundraising projects. It is essential to plan them properly. This means compiling a solid case statement with your objectives, strategies, timelines and budget clearly mapped out.

In most cases, a successful capital campaign is underpinned by raising general awareness of your need. So a media strategy will be an integral part of your capital campaign. If your capital campaign is for the purposes of establishing or upgrading infrastructure, you will have an opportunity to acknowledge donors by offering them naming rights or donor plaques.

### **Commercial ventures**

Commercial ventures may include establishing branded physical or virtual retail outlets or providing branded products or services to retail outlets, corporations or other specified target markets. The aim of a commercial venture is that the profits contribute to the funding of the work of your organisation. You will need to ensure that you have access to the business acumen that is required for a commercial venture to be profitable like production, logistics, quality assurance, business management, product design, sales and marketing expertise.

### **Special events**

Special events can be used to raise funds for specific projects or to encourage support for the work of an organisation. Special events can also be highly effective at raising public awareness for a cause that needs immediate support.

Running a successful event is a complex, specialised undertaking involving many variables that need to be carefully considered. An event requires clear and detailed planning and you must be sure you have the capacity and expertise to plan, manage and implement the event.

Before you start, ask yourself:

- What is the aim of the event?
- What is the theme and nature of the event?
- Who are the targeted supporters of the event?
- Is the event attractive, fun and innovative enough to draw these people?
- How many tickets must be sold to achieve your fundraising goal?
- Does the ticket price offer value to your targeted supporters?
- How will you market the event?
- Who will sell the tickets?
- How will the funds be collected?
- What facilities do you need – venue, hiring, audio visual, staging equipment etc?
- What services do you need – catering, decor, entertainment, transport, technicians, labour etc?

- Do you have the capacity and expertise to ensure that the event delivers value to your targeted supporters?
- Is this event viable – in other words will it raise substantially more than it will cost?

## Writing effective proposals

Written proposals are the core of your fundraising programme: they deserve much thought, attention and energy.

Before you start, take some time to imagine a potential donor reading your proposal. Remember that your proposal is a message directly to them and the most effective messages are written with the receiver in mind. Too often, proposals are written that please the writer rather than the reader. Think about it like giving a gift to a friend: we all know that people appreciate and value gifts more when they have been specifically chosen to suit their interests and tastes, not ours. Your proposal is not a platform for you to express what is important to you but an opportunity for you to engage a donor by tapping in to what is important to them.

Try to think like your donor: what is the important information I need before I can make a decision to allocate the funds I'm responsible for? How would I like that information presented to make my task as easy as possible? What would appeal to both my heart and mind?

### Effective proposals are:

- Focused and articulate
- Concise and comprehensible
- Inspiring and compelling

You will need to use both facts and your organisation's story to provide the necessary information and engage the reader at the same time.

### The GreaterGood Top 5 Proposal Writing Hints

1. **Be concise.** Keep your sentences short and to the point.
2. Use words that you are comfortable with. **Avoid jargon** and **long words** in the hope of impressing your reader. They won't, they will just frustrate a potential donor and leave them thinking: what is this person trying to say?
3. Make sure there is a **rational flow** to your proposal – lead your reader step-by-step, logically from beginning to end.
4. Be **heartfelt** and true when you tell your story but don't get carried away. Donors aren't stupid, they can tell when something is more style than substance.
5. Focus on the real **impact** of your organisation's work. How does it make a difference to people's lives? Use quotes, case studies and photographs to illustrate this.

Before you send a proposal out find out how your donor would like it presented: some donors want proposals in a certain format, others will provide application forms to complete and you will need to incorporate your proposal in that structure. Either way, it is useful to prepare a core proposal and then adapt it where necessary.

Proposals should include the following:

### **Covering letter**

This is the first impression your donor will get of your project so it is very important. It should be a very brief summary of your proposal. Personalise each covering letter and make sure you have addressed it to the correct person.

### **Title page**

This is usually a cover page with the title " Proposal to X" printed on your organisation's letterhead, or it could be a summary information page that includes the following information about your organisation:

- Key contact person(s)
- Postal address
- Telephone number
- Fax number
- Email address
- Website
- NPO and PBO registration numbers
- Bank & branch
- Branch code
- Bank account number
- Bank account name (as required on cheques issued)

### **Executive summary**

This is a synopsis of your organisation and the proposed project. It should include:

- Your mission or story
- Your goals
- A brief statement of the need your project addresses
- A brief description of how your project addresses this need
- Information on your organisation's past experience and achievements
- Your capacity to execute the current project

### **The case for support**

This section of the proposal is motivational. It explains the need for your project in more detail. You can use researched facts and reputable statistics to make the case for your cause. Always quote your sources.

State clearly how your project will address the issue. Highlight links between the aims of your project and the objectives of your potential donors. Show them why they would want to be involved. Make a clear and earnest appeal to your reader's sensibilities. Formulate a good argument and write persuasively. Present your solution with confidence. It is also good to state whether you have support or collaboration from other NGOs, government or civil society partners.

## **Project description**

This provides the detail of how your project will work. This section of the proposal should be specific, factual and practical.

Define your measurable objectives – for example: to produce xxxx vegetables to feed xx people; to train xxx number of disabled adults in litter recycling and trench building. Also state your methods which are the specific activities that will be implemented to reach your objectives. These will be a sequence of task-oriented steps with a start and end date.

End with your evaluation process – how you intend evaluating this process and how you will report on the results. Anticipate the impact you feel your project will make and back this up with encouraging statistics and stories from previous successful projects.

## **Funding requirements**

This is how much you need to successfully complete your project. You can include a detailed budget in the body of your proposal or in the appendices. Either way, make sure the budget is clear and accurate and attach quotes for any large expenditure on capital items.

Keep it as streamlined as possible. Consider carefully if some costs could be covered by gifts-in-kind.

You should include the organisation's operational costs and salaries in your budget. Make sure they are clearly itemised and explained as most donors like to know that the bulk of their funding will go directly to the target beneficiaries, not on staff salaries. Running costs are generally hard to fund but many donors are now beginning to accept that without funding for operational expenses, projects cannot be maintained.

## **Conclusion**

This should be a brief statement highlighting the aims of your proposal, the worthiness of the cause and the value of your project in addressing an important need. Present a positive appeal for assistance. End on an upbeat and committed note, leaving your donor enthused rather than exhausted.

## **Supporting documents**

Supporting documents are normally attached to proposals as appendices. These may include:

- a letter of endorsement from a reputable source
- photographs of your project and current media clippings
- your annual financial statements, registration certificates and constitution
- details of the organisation's staff members and Board of Trustees
- names and contact details of referees who can comment on your work
- details of other organisations who you network or partner with
- any formal evaluations of your completed projects
- your strategies to increase self-sustainability

Some donors will have very specific supporting document requirements so make sure you check their website or grant materials before you send your proposal.

## **Nurturing relationships**

Fundraising is essentially about building and maintaining positive and mutually rewarding relationships with your donors, ideally well into the future.

Relationships with your donors are just like any of the other important relationships in your life. If they are going to work well, they must be underpinned by the values of trust, understanding, commitment and appreciation. Relationships need nurturing, they need care, sensitivity, clarity and responsiveness.

Because donors are so vitally important to non-profit organisations, it stands to reason that nurturing donor relationships should be one of your highest operational priorities.

### **Communicating is relating**

Communication is the channel for relating. If you are not communicating regularly with your donors, you will not have a relationship with them. Communication is a two-way interaction so don't simply send messages to your donors: interact with them and listen to their views. You can only understand – and therefore meet – the needs of your donors if you know what is important to them. You can only find out what is important to them if you ask and they tell you.

### **You get what you give**

You might think that it takes too much time and energy to nurture relationships with donors but consider what it costs your organisation every time you have to initiate a new donor drive because your current donor database is barely responding to you. It makes much more sense to develop long-term, reliable, deep donor relationships than to be constantly trying to reach more and more people that you don't intend to relate to in a sustainable way.

### **Feedback**

Feedback is paramount and you should regard it as your absolute obligation. When you report back fully on a donation to the donor, you give them the joy that comes with giving. If you fail to acknowledge donations and the impact they have made on your organisation's beneficiaries, you are cutting your donors out of the cycle of giving and receiving. Think about how good you feel when you have given someone a birthday present and they tell you how much they have used and enjoyed it. This is how your donors should feel – they'll be much more likely to give to your organisation again.

### **Thank you**

A prompt and genuine "thank you" is absolutely essential, preferably within 48 hours of receiving a gift. It doesn't matter how you thank – a personalised letter, an email or even a phone call – as long as you acknowledge the gift and express your appreciation. When you thank, talk about what the donation will contribute towards and why it is so welcome. It is always a nice touch to include the organisation's latest newsletter or brochure. This may invite your donor to consider a repeat donation.

### **Reports**

It is very satisfying for a donor to receive reports on a project they have supported. A report that provides both financial information and a narrative gives donors the assurance that progress is being made; that you are in control of things; that funds are being effectively and correctly spent; and that your organisation is actually making its intended impact on society.

Your reports should state exactly what the grant was used for, what impact it had, the current status of the project and what's in store for the future.

### Newsletters

Through your relationships with donors you have a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of your organisation's work and the social problems you address. Interesting newsletters are a great way to inform and educate donors. Regular newsletters also serve as a mechanism for transparent progress reports and can often help raise support for new programmes.

You can use newsletters as a two-way communication channel by inviting feedback, comments or asking for responses to your queries. Make sure you are giving donors what they want. Don't inundate or overload them. If you don't know what your donors want, ask them and respond appropriately to their feedback. If you have the capacity to produce interesting, informative and worthwhile newsletters, you can establish them as a monthly communication channel. If you lack this expertise and capacity, you should still try to produce a minimum of one newsletter a year, while building your capacity to increase this.

### Site visits

Site Visits can be a compelling motivation for donors to invest in a project: it allows the donor to see your work in action. These visits can often make a big impression. When organising a site visit, make sure you inform everyone that they should expect visitors and encourage them to speak about the projects they are involved in and the impact of your organisation's work.

## 2. Fundraising online

Our world is changing fast. To keep up you must stay in touch with current local and global trends and adapt your strategies and plans to fit. Fundraising, like everything else, is constantly evolving and to build sustainable resources for your organisation you have to be on top of the game.

And this means constantly looking for new and better ways to operate and achieve goals.

### What is ePhilanthropy?

ePhilanthropy is essentially giving money over the internet. But it is about more than simply giving money online. ePhilanthropy fundamentally changes the way people give; it changes how they interact and even the purpose of their giving.

	traditional giving	ePhilanthropy
<b>who</b>	the wealthy	everyone
<b>what</b>	donating money	donating money, investing time, skills and goods
<b>how</b>	through large, centralised organisations	directly with people who need support
<b>why</b>	broad humanitarian goals	personalised projects, with direct

<b>result</b>	generalised, steady but slow support	highly focused, immediate and interactive support
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Traditional giving is losing its dominance to the immediacy of the internet. Non profits must be prepared to take advantage of this by making it easy for people to give and by being prepared to take what's offered to them, when it's offered. ePhilanthropy means non profits can accept not only someone's money but their time, their effort and their resources too.

ePhilanthropy is a completely new way for you to interact with donors and other stakeholders: it is quicker, cheaper and more effective.

## The power of technology

There is a giving revolution underway: every day brings new attitudes, new ways of giving and a move towards the "reinvention of philanthropy". Today's donors are making use of new techniques and tools to help them decide where to put their social investment and charitable funds.

### The GreaterGood Top 5 Trends online

1. **Individuals** make up the majority of the donor pool giving some **74%** of all financial gifts in 2003. This group is increasingly representative of the global giving population.
2. **International giving** is growing at a rapid pace among all types of donors and Diaspora giving (immigrants supporting causes back in their homelands) is surging ahead with an estimated annual **\$80 billion** being given worldwide through country giving opportunities.
3. **New vehicles** are emerging to facilitate giving: donor advised funds, social media, giving circles, learning journeys, community foundations and online marketplaces.
4. The **internet** is becoming a major giving medium: online giving grew by **35%** in the US in 2010 and accounted for 8% of all fundraising<sup>2</sup>.
5. **Donors are more proactive**: they are increasingly attracted to personal research, self-formed learning and self-generated opinions. The social networking revolution is enabling givers to connect with each other directly and form relationships in their giving. At all levels, these individuals are passionate about their role in giving and we are likely to see groups forming around shared values, interests, life styles or geographic areas of commitment.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from dot.org (2007): [www.dotorggroup.com](http://www.dotorggroup.com)

<sup>2</sup> Blackbaud 2010 Online Giving Report

More and more donors will take care of all their giving using internet giving portals – even using "low tech" giving and other offline activities together with the efficiency of online transactions and donor management tools. This will make it harder for charities without a web presence to raise the funds that are out there.

Harnessing the available technology and using these as tools for resource mobilisation, communication, organisational, social and economic development and social capital investment represents a huge opportunity for addressing some of the most enduring problems of poverty in South Africa. It has never been easier or cheaper to raise awareness of your work using simple online tools like the [Myggsa.co.za](http://Myggsa.co.za) online giving community, free blogging software like WordPress, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

So having an internet strategy is now more important than ever:

- It opens your organisation up to **new donors**, daily, and makes you more accessible to international donors.
- The **communication** of impact and achievement – always a critical component of effective fundraising and donor retention – is made quicker, easier and cheaper by the internet.
- Your website puts you right in **your donor's living space**. You can be ready at any instant to be let in the door while the donor retains a sense of power and control over when you make your entry into his/her life. And if they found you online to donate to in the first place, they will find you again to see what you have done with the money they gave you – and possibly donate again.
- Your online presence can play a major role in communicating your purpose, **raising awareness** about your work, motivating consumer behaviour and retaining donors who can, in their own time, see visible results of their support.
- Websites are a cheap and effective **marketing and communications resource**: nowadays people expect a website address alongside any marketing or publicity campaign. It's much easier to give a web address than a telephone number or postal address in an interview.
- Because the technology is increasingly **accessible and easy to use**, it is not only the well-branded non profit agencies who benefit from the immediacy and efficiency of the web, smaller and lesser-known organisations can also achieve success by actively engaging in online marketing.

## Six steps to ePhilanthropy success<sup>3</sup>

### 1. Start with a plan

Select key people in your organisation to honestly assess your current situation and establish key goals. Evaluate your organisation's overall communication, marketing, fundraising and services plans and map out how the web can enhance these efforts.

Survey both key decision-makers and employees to uncover issues and ideas. Make sure the project has the required funding and that everyone is clear on what the project entails, what benefits the organisation will realise, and how progress will be tracked.

### 2. Get a website or enhance your existing website

An attractive, informative website has become a fundraising essential. First, decide what you want your website to achieve: is it for information, for fundraising or for campaigning? Do some research by looking at similar organisations to see their approach. Which ones stand out and

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from [www.ephilanthropy.org](http://www.ephilanthropy.org)

appear to be easy to use? You can then put some ideas to a designer on how your website will look and operate.

If you can make updates yourself (using a Content Management System or CMS), you will save time and money, especially when you need to add current news or change important details. You can now create your own website with a Content Management System for free using tools like WordPress ([www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)) and Joomla ([joomla.org.za](http://joomla.org.za)). Professional photographs make a big difference. Keep the site simple, clean, easy to get around and quick to load. Avoid animations, soundtracks or anything else that will distract visitors from doing what you want them to (ie give you money!).

Consider integrating your website with social media (Twitter and Facebook are currently the main ones) and e-newsletter tools – it will help to drive visitors to your site and keep them coming back. Getting people to subscribe to your newsletter on your website will help you build up a great database of supporters to use at a later stage.

### ePhilanthropy.org

#### Website tips

- Provide **content** that is frequently refreshed
- **Educate** people about your organisation's cause
- Communicate with simple **images**
- Prove the organisation's **fiscal fitness (financial responsibility)**
- Share **successes**
- **Recognise** donors
- Shine the spotlight on **volunteers**
- Allow people to **keep in touch** with your organisation

### 3. Create policies and procedures

Although a new website could automate functions like processing donations, it will also create the need for new processes. For example, if you offer an email address for visitors to use to get more information on your organisation, you need to make sure you have staff available to answer these inquiries. Web users expect quick responses (the same day at the very least), so be prepared to provide them. It's also important to evaluate and update your existing procedures and to take a look at reports you run to ensure you are effectively measuring your online efforts.

### 4. Make it easy for donors

Before you begin directing people to your website, make sure your call to action is clearly visible. Locate your "donate now" button where it is easy to see and help visitors find where they can sign up to volunteer. Allow supporters to respond to a call to action without jumping through too many hoops. The more screens you force people to go through, the more likely they are to abandon their visit to your website.

If your organisation can't afford an online giving function (where people donate to your cause using their credit or debit card), use your [Myggsa.co.za](http://Myggsa.co.za) **Give Now** button which you can find in your Cause Space – click on Tools. GreaterGood SA processes donations for free and has managed to negotiate the lowest possible payment gateway and credit card fees from the bank

(R1 per transaction and a 2% + VAT credit card fee). This is currently the most cost-effective non profit online giving function in South Africa.

### **5. Drive traffic to your website**

Create an e-communication plan that focuses on driving people to your website, including targeted e-newsletters with links to relevant areas of your website. Get the word out about your site in as many ways as possible. Register your organisation on Twitter and create a Facebook page. Ask organisations you work with to provide your website as a link on their site and include your web address prominently on all printed materials (direct mail appeals, advertising, membership information, marketing brochures, acknowledgment letters, business cards, letterhead, volunteer information, annual reports, pledge reminders, press releases, and even the staff's email auto signatures). Take the time to educate your supporters about the benefits of using your website. Donors will appreciate your desire to be more cost efficient.

### **6. Track your progress**

Track your online activities using website usage statistics and reports from your donor management system. Compare your online results with progress made using other methods, and see what's working. As soon as you think everything is up and running go back to the first step and assess your needs again. The more you use the web to enhance your efforts, the more ideas you will have.

Google provides a free analytical tool which will help you track and monitor visitors to your website. Find out more at: [www.google.com/analytics](http://www.google.com/analytics) or ask your web designer about it.

## **Email fundraising**

Email is cheaper, more direct and more immediate than direct mail and many non profit organisations are beginning to use email appeals and newsletters to raise funds and drive traffic to their websites. It is also kinder to the environment – no trees have to die for your direct mail appeals!

Internet fundraising expert Alan Sharp<sup>4</sup>, says there are four strategic reasons for causes to use email for communicating with donors:

### **1. Involve**

Email, by its very nature, is interactive. Your readers expect to see links in your email messages, links that they can click. Your readers expect to be able to hit Reply and answer a question you've posed or share their opinion. Email is attractive to donors and members and your organisation because it helps them get involved.

By using "Forward-this-to-a-Friend" buttons in your emails and message boards and forums on your website, your email messages help your constituents share information with friends and colleagues and discuss relevant topics. If your donor file has plenty of donors who are not engaged in any meaningful way with your organisation, email is a cost-effective way to make them more active, with their happy cooperation.

### **2. Advocate**

Email is powerful because of its immediacy. The letter you draft and send at 10:09 am arrives in

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Alan Sharp, [www.raiserssharp.com](http://www.raiserssharp.com)

your donor's email inbox within minutes, a feat impossible using a letter, envelope and postage stamp.

Because email is immediate and because it encourages interaction, it's the perfect medium for mobilising your members. With email, you help your members simply and easily advocate for your cause.

The easier you make it for your members to act as advocates, the higher your response rates will be to petitions and other "take action" messages you mail to further your cause.

### 3. Fundraise

The key to raising money online is not your website but your email. Email is how you build relationships with your members and donors. Email is how you invite them (and inspire them) to donate. Your website is simply where your donor makes the donation..

One exception is emergency appeals, where organisations like The Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders and Habitat for Humanity raise a great deal of money online from strangers. But the secret to securing second and subsequent gifts from online donors is your emails, not your website. Your website informs and educates, certainly, but your emails are the vehicle that must transport your donors there.

### 4. Inform

A leading cause of donor attrition is lack of communication by the non profit. Donors who send gifts but do not hear from their charity often enough soon take their gifts elsewhere. Just as important as frequent communication is relevant communication.

And that's where email newsletters are so attractive. Because a good email system integrates with your donor database, you can customise email newsletters for the unique interests and preferences of each of your constituents. Email lets you satisfy everyone by sending personalised messages to your donors and members, messages that speak directly to their known interests.

Email fundraising has its challenges, of course. Spam filters, for one thing. And crowded inboxes. But as a tool for involving donors, mobilising members, raising emergency funds and delivering late-breaking news, email stands alone.

## The GreaterGood Top 6

### Email fundraising tips

1. Before you can even think about email appeals or newsletters, you need an accurate list of donor or potential donor **email addresses**. So start collecting addresses wherever you can – on donor information forms, through your website or investigate buying email lists.
2. **Get consent** and allow people to **opt out**. You can do more damage to your cause than good if you spam people indiscriminately. Target your emails at people you think will be interested, get their consent to mail them and allow them to 'unsubscribe' on every email.
3. Keep it **simple** and **clickable**. Busy people get a lot of emails so make sure yours stands out by being simple, interesting and interactive. People expect to have something to click on so provide lots of links.

4. Use an **email marketing provider**. Sending thousands of emails from your Director's inbox will clog up your system so find and employ a reputable bulk email provider. Balance this cost against what you might gain from online donations or better relationships with your existing donors.
5. **Monitor and evaluate** your campaigns and newsletters. The great thing about this technology is its pinpoint evaluation mechanisms: with the right provider, you can tell how many people opened your email, what they clicked on and if they sent it on to a friend. A bulk email supplier should be able to provide you with easy to read statistics on each email you send out.
6. **Keep it up**. Maintain your email database accurately – this should be a priority. Delete addresses that are no longer valid (it will save you from sending them emails which just bounce back) and remove people who have unsubscribed. And keep collecting email addresses: put a 'subscribe to our newsletter' option on your website, collect addresses at fundraising functions or through competitions.

#### **Email marketing providers**

GreaterGood SA uses an Australian email marketing provider called Campaign Monitor – [campaignmonitor.com](http://campaignmonitor.com) – for all its email communications because it is reputable, effective and has excellent monitoring facilities.

Some others to consider are Pmailer ([pmailer.co.za](http://pmailer.co.za)), Mail Chimp ([mailchimp.com](http://mailchimp.com)) and GraphicMail ([graphicmail.co.za](http://graphicmail.co.za)).

## 3. Online giving community

If you look at the trends and read the research, ePhilanthropy is the future of fundraising. But the internet is constantly evolving too: it is becoming even more interactive and immediate. With the rise of the social networking phenomenon – Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn – and the mushrooming of blogging, YouTube and Wikipedia, the internet has become a conversation, not just an 'information highway'. And it's a conversation that's open to anyone with a computer and an internet connection.

The development of the internet as a conversation makes it an even more effective fundraising tool because we know that at the heart of all fundraising is communication and feedback.

### **What is an online community?**

Online communities are places for people with similar interests to come together online and create content that draws in new members of the community.

For many donors and volunteers – especially the younger ones – traditional fundraising approaches such as direct mail and phone calls are just not appealing anymore. These donors are satisfying their philanthropic urges online. They're turning to blogs and social networking to give, spread the word and raise funds for their favourite causes. And what's more, they're sending email and web-based fundraising appeals to their friends and families, encouraging them to give and, in turn, to forward the approach to their own contacts.

At the same time, a growing number of charities – from start-ups to established names like the Salvation Army – are creating their own profiles on popular social networking sites, hoping that young people will link up to the pages. Some are also encouraging bloggers to mention the causes on their sites, raising thousands in small donations from readers.<sup>5</sup>

With this in mind, GreaterGood SA has created an online giving community where givers and good causes can add their own content and really connect with each other.

## Your Myggsa Cause Space

GreaterGood SA provides a free service to non profit organisations across South Africa. There's no joining or set up fee. And there is no monthly subscription for causes. As a member of the [Myggsa.co.za](http://Myggsa.co.za) giving community you get:

- An **online donation** facility and **donate now** button
- Your own **cause profile** web page
- **Regular exposure** to tens of thousands of givers, newsletter subscribers, website visitors and Twitter and Facebook followers.
- Exposure to [GreaterCapital](#) **corporate clients** looking for social investment opportunities.
- Instant **connection** and **networking** with supporters and other causes.
- **Tools and tips** to help you promote your work and fundraise.

When you login, you are taken straight to your Cause Space. This is where you can keep track of giving to your cause and manage all your activity, including:

- Editing your profile (update contact details and description, change logo or photo) and resetting your password
- Creating and managing volunteer or fundraising projects
- Creating requests for goods, money or skills
- Posting news and reports
- Tracking giving to your cause and thanking givers directly
- Downloading donation buttons for your own website and newsletter

You will also be able to see your **activity rating** at the top right of your Cause Space. Causes earn activity icons (shown in red if you have them, in grey if you don't) depending on what they have added to their Cause Space and profile. The rating helps givers choose from the thousands of causes listed on the site. Causes with icons are displayed as FEATURED Causes on the home page, listed first in searches and are more likely to be featured in GreaterGood group news.

> The myggsa.co.za website is an online community, driven by its members! Causes are in control of their profile and activity on the site so it is important that they **visit regularly**, keep **active** and **update contact details** if they change.

The internet is the perfect tool to facilitate relationships between givers and good causes in South Africa – but it is out of reach of many non profit and community based organisations. In fact, some 45% of organisations registered with GreaterGood South Africa do not have any presence on the internet apart from their Cause Space on Myggsa. Many of these, including

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from A New Generation Reinvents Philanthropy, by Rachel Silverman in the *Wall Street Journal*, August 2007

those in remote rural communities, are using their Cause Spaces to access new resources to fund their work.

## Making the most of Myggsa.co.za

Here are a few simple ways to get the most from the community:

1. **Pump up your profile.** Your profile page is like a mini-website. It is how givers find you and decide whether to give to you or not. Make sure you tell your story in a short and compelling way, that your details are up-to-date and remember to add a photograph of your work and your logo, if you haven't already. Click **Edit your profile** to make changes.
2. **Shout about it.** Find **GIVE NOW buttons** in your Cause Space by clicking the link under Tools. You will see some code that you can put on your own website, in your email signatures and on your newsletter (ask your tech person to help you). This button links directly to your online donation page so use it wherever you can to drum up support. Let your existing supporters know that they can help you this way, you will be surprised by the results.
3. **Get active.** The more active you are in the community, the more people will notice and give to you so make sure to post requests, projects, news and reports. Causes earn **activity icons** which show givers how active each cause is. The causes with icons are listed first in searches and are more likely to be featured in GreaterGood news and on the home page.
4. **Be a regular visitor.** Our givers regularly post offers of things they have to give away – everything from financial planning advice to computers and even, cars. Make sure you visit regularly to see what's on offer ([myggsa.co.za/connect/offers](http://myggsa.co.za/connect/offers)) so you can be the first to respond.

## 4. Resources

### Links

#### GreaterGood SA

South Africa's first online giving community connects good causes with potential donors for the greater good. If your organisation is not already registered, you really should be:

**Apply to join now > [myggsa.co.za/receivers](http://myggsa.co.za/receivers)**

#### The Funding Site

Powered by GreaterGood SA, The Funding Site helps non profit organisations to access resources through a searchable online database of prospective donors, information, training, advertising and marketing services.

[thefundingsite.co.za](http://thefundingsite.co.za)

#### The South African Institute of Fundraisers

Professional body for fundraisers, includes a code of ethics for fundraisers, links and resources.

[saifundraising.org.za](http://saifundraising.org.za)

### **SANGONeT and SANGOTeCH**

SANGONeT is a development information portal for NGOs in South Africa. SANGOTeCH is an online technology donation and discount portal providing software for a very low fee and helping NGOs to make the most of their ICT purchases and infrastructure.

[sangonet.org.za](http://sangonet.org.za)

[sangotech.org](http://sangotech.org)

### **Global Giving**

Useful blog with online fundraising tips and how-to webinars.

[tools.blog.globalgiving.org](http://tools.blog.globalgiving.org)

### **Mashable**

For everything to do with social media and technology.

[mashable.com](http://mashable.com)

### **ePhilanthropy Foundation**

US based education organisation which helps non profit organisations learn to use the best internet practices to build and enhance relationships with supporters and raise money.

[ephilanthropy.org](http://ephilanthropy.org)

### **Katya's Non-Profit Marketing Blog**

An American non profit marketing expert's blog provides tips and discussion around fundraising and marketing your organisation.

[nonprofitmarketingblog.com](http://nonprofitmarketingblog.com)

### **Civicus**

World Alliance for Citizen Participation, headquartered in Johannesburg, provides resources and toolkits for civil society.

[civicus.org](http://civicus.org)

### **The Grassroots Fundraising Journal**

Published every other month for more than 25 years, the Grassroots Fundraising Journal offers practical, how-to instruction on fundraising strategies such as direct mail, special events, major gift campaigns, and online fundraising.

[grassrootsfundraising.org](http://grassrootsfundraising.org)

### **The Plain English Campaign**

Free guides and software to help you write, design and create proposals, reports and a website that everyone will be able to read and understand

[plainenglish.co.uk/guides.htm](http://plainenglish.co.uk/guides.htm)

## **Recommended reading**

### **Fundraising**

*Fundraising for the New Millennium - A comprehensive guide to raising money for the Southern African NGO Sector* by Jill Ritchie

*Relationship Fundraising: A Donor Based Approach to the Business of Raising Money* by Ken Burnett.

*Hank Rosso's Achieving Excellence in Fund Raising* edited by Eugene R. Tempel

**ePhilanthropy**

*Nonprofit Internet Strategies: Best Practices for Marketing, Communications, and Fundraising* by Ted Hart, James M. Greenfield and Michael Johnston.

*Fundraising on the Internet: The ePhilanthropyFoundation.org's Guide to Success Online* edited by Mal Warwick, Ted Hart and Nick Allen.

*The Nonprofit Guide to the Internet: How to Survive and Thrive* by Michael W. Johnston, Robbin Lee.

*www.Fundraising: A Guide to using the Internet as a Fundraising Tool* by Jill Ritchie.

**Website design**

*Don't Make Me Think!: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability* by Steve Krug.