The Five-Step Approach to Digital Fundraising

Digital Fundraising eBook

Digital fundraising is more important now than ever.

2020 saw an unprecedented level of cancellations for fundraising events that ordinarily form the backbone of the nonprofit sector.

Sponsored sporting events from the Tokyo Marathon to Australia's Community Cup were postponed, participation reduced, or cancelled altogether. Likewise, the majority of nonprofit conferences were forced, like so many aspects of our lives, to go virtual.

Even going forward, with the optimism of vaccine roll-outs and the slow move towards a return to 'normal', many charities are keen to increase their emphasis on the digital side of fundraising in the future.
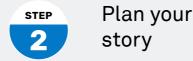
Going online not only protects nonprofits against the unpredictability of relying on physical events, but is a reflection of an obvious 21st-century shift to digital that the charity industry is not exempt from. After all, 59% of the global population are now classed as 'active Internet users', with Northern Europe seeing a yet higher Internet usage rate of 95%[1].
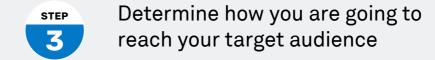
For many nonprofits, digital fundraising may be a new endeavour. Many may not have the technical setup or expertise to be able to strategise and implement wide-reaching digital fundraising campaigns. According to the 2020 Charity Digital Skills Report[2], just 49% of charities currently have a digital strategy, with 45% of nonprofits surveyed classing their capabilities as 'poor' when it comes to digital fundraising.
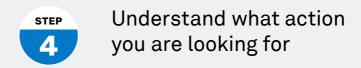
And that is the purpose of this ebook. We will walk you through the steps for establishing a logical and thorough process for executing a digital fundraising strategy that will drive results.

We will break this down into five main steps:

STEP **1** Identify your audience

STEP **2** Plan your story

STEP **3** Determine how you are going to reach your target audience

STEP **4** Understand what action you are looking for

STEP **5** Report on success and refine your campaign

1. statista.com   2. report.skillsplatform.org

About Wipro

Wipro Limited is a leading global information technology, consulting and business process services company.

We harness the power of cognitive computing, hyper-automation, robotics, cloud, analytics and emerging technologies to help our clients adapt to the digital world and make them successful. A company recognized globally for its comprehensive portfolio of services, strong commitment to sustainability and good corporate citizenship, we have over 180,000 dedicated employees serving clients across six continents. Together, we discover ideas and connect the dots to build a better and a bold new future.

Contact our dedicated nonprofit team to discuss how to streamline your digital fundraising processes and transform your technology.

From Matthew Early, Wipro's Business Unit Manager for Nonprofit

"At Wipro, we believe that we have a responsibility to leave the world in a better place than we found it. Before joining the Wipro brand, our team at 4C developed our Nonprofit and Education focused practice in 2018 and it has become the fastest growing vertical. Our team members have extensive nonprofit and education expertise to understand your unique challenges and impact goals. By enabling your purpose of improving lives, your mission becomes ours.

Fundraising enablement is the most common goal we can improve to increase mission impact. We start with the relevant visibility and allow our customers to action greater qualified constituent reach and support. The key to consistent growth is cyclical evaluation and innovating the constituent touchpoints and lifecycle to identify and optimise your diverse channels. Improving fundraising capabilities can add increased productivity and efficiency across your organisation, which all leads to greater impact."

Identify your audience

Before you begin planning your digital fundraising campaign, take a step back and think carefully about who you're going to be targeting, **ask yourself:**

- Are you going after an existing network of fundraisers, seeking new donors, or both?

- Are you going to be keeping your campaign local or focusing on certain areas?

- Do you want to target a specific demographic, e.g., age group, gender, or interest base?

When answering these questions, avoid a reliance on instinct. Use data and research wherever you can to identify an audience that is going to engage well with your cause.

For this, having a well-set-up CRM will provide you with significant benefits, particularly if you have run digital campaigns in the past or have a way of breaking down the demographics of your existing fundraising base. If you can understand what has worked well previously, that can hugely help how you determine who you want to go after in this instance.

The first consideration, in terms of whether you're going to be aiming to attract new fundraisers or engage existing ones, will play a notable role in your strategic planning. It will directly impact what story you tell. For new donors, you will need to work harder to introduce your cause, who you are, and the good you can provide. For existing donors, they will already know you, but it will require a new 'hook' to encourage them to re-engage. We will go into this in further detail in the following chapter on story-telling.

The beauty of online fundraising campaigns is that digital platforms provide you with the ability to tailor your messaging to who is going to see it. So if your target audience is a combination of old and new, you can customise how you introduce yourselves and the campaign focus to get the right messaging in front of the right eyes.

Again, having a CRM system will really help you get granular with this segmentation and targeting. If you wish to learn more about CRM platforms, as well as how to select and optimise your nonprofit digital capabilities, contact the Wipro team.

Plan your story

Your digital fundraising campaign should centre around a consistent, compelling, and engaging story. This is the heart of your campaign and arguably the most critical component to get right.

Your planned story should stem from the question of what are you going to be getting your audience interested in?

Examples include:

◯ An upcoming event they can attend, either virtually or in person.

◯ A competition they can enter, e.g., a draw to win a prize.

◯ A sponsored event they can take part in.

◯ A particular target you're trying to hit or a goal you're aiming to achieve.

◯ An online challenge to get involved in.

◯ Community engagement - e.g., encouraging people to share their own stories and experiences.

Once you have the focal point of your campaign, it's time to plan the messaging. As mentioned above, this will largely depend on who you are speaking to and whether they may already be familiar with your nonprofit.

When ideating what slogans, messaging, visual content, and creative you will use, we recommend getting as many people from your organisation involved as possible, especially individuals who speak directly with fundraisers and donors on a regular basis as part of their role. The input and ideas from a greater variety of sources will be the best way to identify campaign 'hooks' that will resonate with your audience.

Remember that the key to getting a message across online is to be concise and efficient. On average, website visitors read only 20% of the page content[3]. Your campaign story therefore needs to be as eye-catching and easily digestible as possible.

For example, the Florence Nightingale White Rose Appeal

In the midst of the pandemic, the Florence Nightingale Foundation launched a digital fundraising campaign that was timely, wide-reaching and, most impactfully, had a fantastic 'hook'.

To mark May 12th, the bicentenary of Florence Nightingale's birth and the date celebrated as International Nurses Day around the world, the Foundation launched its White Rose Appeal, asking the public to support nurses and midwives by buying a special white rose for £5.

This simple but highly effective story was perfect for the digital age of fundraising. It gained media attention as celebrities such as the Foundation's ambassador Helena Bonham Carter and Emilia Clarke joined the cause. The campaign raised almost £73,000 from over 422 donors[4].

During this, and Florence Nightingale's other digital endeavours, Wipro and 4C have been a key support, allowing them to get the most out of their technical stack and Salesforce implementation.

Florence Nightingale
White Rose Appeal

"If it wasn't for us going digital with the help of 4C a few months before the COVID-19 pandemic, we wouldn't be able to support nurses and midwives during the crisis. Within two weeks of the lockdown, we launched a fully remote service, Nightingale Frontline, a leadership support service for nurses and midwives. We supported over 1,000 nurses and midwives since we launched this programme in addition to our regular services. Having everything in place with Salesforce and the solutions, we had the capacity to work remotely and still continue our services."

'Head of Membership & Alumni Engagement at Florence Nightingale Foundation'.

Determine how you are going to reach your target audience

The Internet is a big place, especially if you've not previously done much digital fundraising. Now that you know who you're talking to and what you're saying to them, the next step is to determine where to find them.

With your existing donors and database, email is an obvious first point-of-call to directly reach out to them and start spreading the word of your campaign. But for addressing those who may be new to your brand — or who require more re-engaging — there is a plethora of channels and platforms available to you:

Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube): Particularly through using paid social campaigns, you can get extremely granular with demographic or lookalike audience targeting in order to find your target market. Appearing among their social timelines is effective for engaging users before they start searching, catching their attention and giving you a chance to tell your story.

Your own website: As your own space, you have more control over your website than any other platform. It should be at the forefront of where users go to learn of your campaign. Create landing pages, embed videos, and use your related content as an entry point through which to encourage users to sign up to future communications.

Harnessing the power of sharing: Word of mouth is one of the most impactful tools in any fundraiser's arsenal. If you can get users who have already bought into your cause and campaign to convince their friends and family to join too, your potential reach instantly multiplies. Make sure your content is easy and compelling to share, and directly ask your current donors to share with their network. You may even choose to incentivise this, for example through increasing entries into a competition for those that share.

Social media

Your own website

Harnessing the power of sharing

Users are unlikely to participate in your campaign the very first time they hear about it, so be prepared to offer them multiple touchpoints along their journey.

For users that first hear about you through word of mouth, you can use social media to re-engage them, encourage them to visit your website, and sign up for emails, which you can use to prompt them to participate. This may seem complicated to orchestrate, but once you have your digital processes linked up and are able to use a CRM system to track a user's journey, it's easy to automate and highly effective.

Understand what action you are looking for

Having a clear and consistent call-to-action throughout your campaign content will enable prospective donors to quickly gain an understanding of what's expected of them.

What are you actually asking of your fundraisers? Are you asking them to donate a certain amount? Are you asking them to participate in an event? To share a story or spread word of mouth about your cause?

Plan your specific call-to-action carefully and make sure that it's tailored to who you're talking to. This is where database segmentation can come in extremely handy, as you can group your target market based on their past behaviour. If you know that a certain subset of your database has shown previous interest in hands-on participation in upcoming events, target them if you're looking specifically for active volunteers. If you have a segment of regular past donors, seek them out first if looking to drum up funds.

Having a clear CTA and goals set up within your CRM platform will also help with reporting. You will know which actions are driving the right engagement, and you can adjust your campaigns accordingly.

Automate reporting tasks & refine data insights

Without a full understanding of how your fundraising is performing, it will be so much harder to pivot your approach based on what is and isn't working.

Going digital allows for much more advanced data analysis and report automation. If you have one centralised system to capture all your data in a meaningful way and generate live dashboards on campaign performance, your team can spend its time more constructively by interpreting the data, instead of organising it.

This is the secret to implementing an agile and truly digital fundraising campaign: arming yourself with the tools to understand, interpret, and react.

How centralised data & automated reporting helped the Progress Educational Trust

Wipro's nonprofit team worked in close collaboration with the Progress Educational Trust (PET), a small charity overcoming the big hurdle of digitizing their processes. Previously, they had duplicate contacts living in multiple different places (including numerous bulky spreadsheets) on fragmented systems. This made it impossible for them to interpret their data, as well as plan and coordinate their outreach smartly.

The solution we delivered was to implement Salesforce's Nonprofit Success Pack (NPSP), creating one central system to store all contacts and related information, thus transforming how they manage and engage with their audience.

Not only did this equip PET with a much smarter way of reporting on their successes and areas for improvement, but it automated much of what was previously manual - leading to a significant lift in their teams' workload.

Progress Educational Trust
informing debate on assisted conception and genetics

Retain your new fundraisers

Once you have new fundraisers in the door, you've completed the hardest step. To make future campaigns easier, the trick now is to continue engaging them so that they'll be easier to convince to participate in future campaigns.

Capturing emails and setting up post-fundraising emails or retargeting flows through your CRM system will allow you to stay top-of-mind and continuously nurture your previous donors to get them involved again in the future.

Releasing regular content with useful information, tips, and updates on how their contribution is benefiting your charity's cause will help your participants feel appreciated and part of the bigger picture. It also helps because it varies the type of interactions they receive from you. If your community only ever hears from you when you're asking for their help, it makes it much less likely that they'll feel compelled to provide that help.

Conclusion

Digital fundraising, especially if it's new to you, may initially sound complicated. But, with the right tools and a thought-out strategy, you can make sure your team's efforts are being utilised where they're going to have the greatest impact.

If you feel as though your technical setup may be holding you back from implementing the digital fundraising campaigns you want to, contact the Wipro team to discuss options for a digital transformation that will streamline your processes.