



# Going where the donors are: PayPal aids Alzheimer's fundraising

alzheimer's  association®

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– **Dagmar Schildwach**

Chief Development Officer  
Alzheimer's Association – Northern California and Northern Nevada Chapter

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More than 5 million Americans live with Alzheimer's disease, a number that is only expected to climb. According to some estimates, it could triple to 16 million in the U.S. by 2050 – and threaten the fiscal well-being of the nation's healthcare system as the baby boom generation ages.

Beyond the public health implications of Alzheimer's, dementia robs individuals of their memories and personalities. It strains family resources and relationships, often taking a devastating physical, emotional, and financial toll on both sufferers of the disease and their caregivers.

PayPal supports efforts toward Alzheimer's prevention and treatment through myriad fundraising tools and charitable giving programs. Enter the Alzheimer's Association, the world's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to funding medical research, advocating for policy changes, and providing care and support for people living with the disease and for their caregivers.

## Accepting donations in motion

The Alzheimer's Association has long accepted PayPal on its national donation website, but its biggest fundraising draws are the more than 600 [Walk to End Alzheimer's](#) events it hosts across the country each year. While the walks are very successful – raising more than \$57 million in 2013 – the planning is complex, involving hundreds of thousands of participants and hundreds of volunteers and staff. In 2013, on the lookout for tools to help manage its more than 17 walks, the organization's Northern California and Northern Nevada chapter adopted [PayPal Here](#), the mobile payments processing app for smartphones and tablets.

Using PayPal Here eased logistics, lowered costs, and led to a substantial increase in dollars raised from credit card donations. No longer did the association have to rent expensive credit card machines, and there were no delays at the registration tents caused by a limited number of processing stations. Instead, volunteers roamed the events with PayPal Here mobile readers, ready to register walkers, sell promotional items, and accept donations from spectators.



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“It’s easy to use, intuitive, and requires very little training for the volunteers,” says Dagmar Schildwach, chief development officer for the Alzheimer’s Association – Northern California and Northern Nevada Chapter. “And we didn’t need wifi or an Internet connection [to accept mobile donations], so it even works in more remote locations.”

Attendees loved the PayPal Here tool as well. Adds Schildwach, “I had an 80-year-old donor who had already given but wanted to make another donation just because he thought the technology was so cool.” Users also appreciated that their receipts went straight to text or email – no paper to lose. On PayPal’s end, Schildwach notes, offering PayPal Here as an option “definitely increased the number of credit card donations” her team was able to accept at each event.

With PayPal Here, the events were successful on the back end, too. Schildwach’s team found it easy to set up user accounts in advance for those taking donations, and volunteers and staff downloaded the app and did test runs ahead of time to avoid glitches on site.

## Helpful and responsive

Ease of use is one thing, but effect on the bottom line is also important. PayPal provides up to 5 free credit card readers to U.S. nonprofits, along with low transaction fees. Just as important has been the live customer support, which Schildwach praises as “helpful, knowledgeable, friendly, and very responsive. I could call the PayPal customer service number from a weekend event and get an immediate response.”

PayPal has so far helped the Alzheimer’s Association raise millions of dollars, both online and in person, to support research and treatment. More than that, it has helped thousands of individuals join the fight against this insidious disease.

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