

Your Mission is Mobile

A guide to mobile
fundraising from PayPal
and Network for Good

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Introduction

In 2013, PayPal and Network for Good published “Why Mobile Matters: A Guide to the Mobile Web,” a look at the importance of mobile fundraising for nonprofit organizations. Since that time, mobile device use has continued its explosive growth – and has come to have an even greater impact on the many ways we communicate, work, and give. Today, smartphone and tablet adoption continues to climb across all age groups, and to become even more integral to our daily lives – making it more important than ever that nonprofits adopt a “mobile-first” strategy.

Follow the money, and you’ll hear an equally compelling story. In 2013 alone, PayPal processed \$5.7 billion in payments for nonprofits in North America. Together, PayPal and Network for Good have powered close to \$20 billion in charitable giving in the last 4 years. The opportunities for nonprofits in all areas of mobile giving will continue to increase, and knowing how to take advantage of that fact will help you increase both donations and donor engagement.

Fundraising in a highly mobile world

Smartphones and tablets have become integral parts of our lives. We use them for email and web browsing, but also to access banks, directions, calendars, books, games, music... you get the idea. In 2013, more than 967 million smartphones were sold worldwide, surpassing sales of traditional feature phones.¹ In the United States, it is expected that 163 million people – 51% of the population – will use a smartphone in 2014, and that the number will reach 220 million by 2018.² And those adoption rates are equally high for a wide range of the population, with similar use by men and women and by all racial and ethnic groups.³

Yet there's still plenty of room for growth, and if nonprofits want to stay strong over time, it's especially important for them to reach younger donors through mobile channels. As expected, younger adults lead smartphone use, with the highest ownership rates among those 25-44, and the most rapid acquisition happening in the 25-34 age range.⁵ And these users are spending large amounts of both time and money: American adults spend an average of 141 minutes per day using mobile devices,⁶ while 23% of smartphone users have made a purchase via phone.⁷

It's no secret that mobile has become the platform of choice for young, affluent users – but it's also becoming the standard for the population as a whole. To thrive in the next decade and beyond, nonprofit marketers should heed these trends, factoring mobile device usage into their communication and fundraising strategies in order to attract and connect with donors.

2013 smartphone sales, in millions⁴

Android	758.72
iOS	150.79
Microsoft	30.84
BlackBerry	18.61
Other	8.82
Total	967.78

If nonprofits want to stay strong over time, they must reach younger donors through mobile channels.

1 February 2014, Gartner, [press release on smartphone sales rates](#)
2 April 2014, eMarketer, [US Mobile Users: 2014 Complete Forecast](#)
3 April 2014, eMarketer, [US Mobile Users: 2014 Complete Forecast](#)
4 February 2014, Gartner, [press release on smartphone sales rates](#)
5 April 2014, eMarketer, [US Mobile Users: 2014 Complete Forecast](#)
6 August 2013, AdvertisingAge, [All The Facts You Need to Know About Mobile Marketing](#)
7 August 2013, Nielsen, [A Mobile Shopper's Journey: From the Couch to the Store \(and Back Again\)](#)

The future of mobile philanthropy

So what does the increasing dominance of mobile devices mean for nonprofits? To begin with, prospective donors used to mobile communication, shopping, and banking expect similar ease and sophistication from most, if not all, of the organizations they encounter. In fact, 61% of online adults surveyed said that they have more favorable opinions of brands that offer good mobile experiences.⁸ And for-profit expectations easily extend to nonprofits.

Mobile users expect the sites they visit to be friendly and easy to navigate, from whatever device they use – and if that’s not the case, frustration easily leads to site abandonment. And the smaller the screen, the more likely customers – or donors – are to walk away at the first sign of frustration.⁹ Luckily, there’s plenty of research on how to reduce frustration and increase conversion, keeping customers or donors on your site through checkout. For example, one Forrester A/B study showed a more than 30% increase in mobile conversion for sites using PayPal’s mobile-optimized payment flow.¹⁰ This paper also includes a number of specific suggestions for optimizing mobile checkout processes for maximum donations.

A rising tide of mobile donations

The last year has seen a rapid rise in mobile nonprofit donations, and the surge shows no sign of slowing. In the U.S. and Canada, total percentage of mobile nonprofit transactions using PayPal increased from almost 3% in 2012 to more than 7% in 2013, and in the nonprofit world as a whole, the percentage of donations made on mobile web browsers grew by a striking 205% in the same period.¹¹ Also, Google research shows that donors are already using mobile as a core way to find, research, and give to nonprofits:¹²

- One in 4 supporters use mobile to discover nonprofits they were not previously aware of.
- Over one third of users contacted nonprofits via mobile devices.
- 25% of supporters completed donations on mobile devices.

The smaller the screen, the more likely donors are to walk away at the first frustration.

In 2013, 25% of donors gave via mobile device.



8 December 2012, Latitude, [Next-Gen Retail: Mobile and Beyond](#)

9 March 2014, eMarketer, [What's the Upside to Shopping Cart Abandonment?](#)

10 July 2012, Forrester, [Total Economic Impact of PayPal Express Checkout for Web and Mobile](#)

11 2014, Artez Interactive, [Mobile Matters: The Impact of Mobile Technology on Peer-Driven Fundraising Campaigns](#)

12 September 2013, Google, [MISSION 501\(c\)\(3\): Driving Donations, Digitally](#)

Working the mobile web

It's clear: Nonprofit organizations that want to be successful now and in the future need to learn all they can about mobile fundraising and donations, and apply that learning in all aspects of their work. While a complete mobile fundraising solution also incorporates email, event-based fundraising, and social media campaigns, this paper focuses primarily on browser-based mobile web access – the foundation of mobile fundraising.

Mobile web is the easiest and most affordable way for nonprofits to build relationships with mobile-savvy donors. So what's "mobile web?" It simply means using a browser on a mobile device to access the Internet, rather than using an app or other such tool. View a website on your phone or tablet computer, and you're using the mobile web. And for all the buzz around apps, the mobile web is still by far the most common conduit for online donations; a Google study of nonprofit donors found that 45% had used mobile browsers to make donations.¹³

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Serving donors – and nonprofits – with mobile

When dealing with nonprofits, smartphone users bring the same behaviors and expectations that they do when acting as e-commerce consumers. To attract and retain donors, fundraisers must meet their needs, giving them experiences that match their expectations. When this is done well, nonprofits can use the mobile web to serve both donor needs and organizational goals.

In addition, trends in mobile donations tend to follow those in e-commerce. If you want to know where mobile philanthropy is headed, look to e-commerce numbers like these:

- 80% of shoppers now shop digitally.¹⁴
- In the first quarter of 2014, eBay saw mobile-enabled commerce increase to 19% of its total volume.
- In 2013, PayPal processed \$27 billion in mobile payments, up 99% from its 2012 mobile total.

PayPal saw a 99% increase in mobile payments in 2013.



¹³ September 2013, Google, [MISSION 501\(c\)\(3\): Driving Donations. Digitally](#)

¹⁴ 2014, Cisco, [Digital Shopping Behavior in an "Internet of Everything" World](#)

The good news: Smartphones offer opportunities for nonprofits to connect with supporters at any time, anywhere, and they have an amazing potential to unleash generosity. The decision to give is often impulsive – and the easier a mobile donation solution makes it to act in the moment, the more successful it will be.

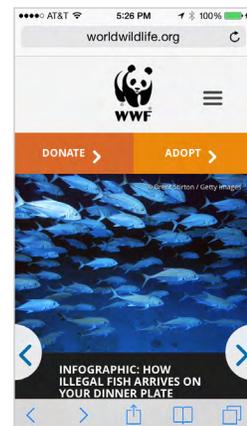
Doing mobile right: Three success stories

When you're thinking about how to optimize your website for mobile donations, it can help to look at other nonprofits that get it right. Here are three that set great examples in important areas.

Home page design: World Wildlife Fund

The cardinal rule when creating a home page for mobile users (or better yet, designing a mobile-optimized home page that can work well on almost any size screen and any device): Keep it simple. The [World Wildlife Fund](#) does it right with a clean, high-impact design that:

- Features the group's logo.
- Looks good on virtually any size screen.
- Uses simple, clear text to drive donor action.
- Inspires visitors to learn more with an intuitive scrolling interface.

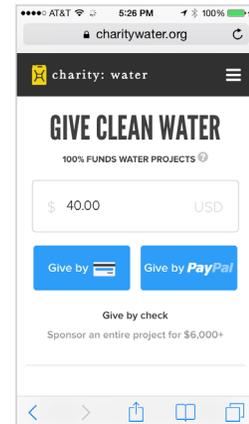


Optimizing the donation process: Charity Water

Simplicity is even more crucial when it comes to driving mobile donations. [Charity Water](#), whose mission is to “bring clean and safe drinking water to every person on the planet,” uses one strikingly clean and simple interface that works on multiple screen sizes.

The donation page:

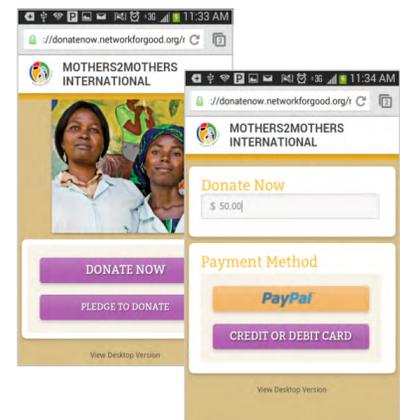
- Leads with a call to action.
- Strips away any unnecessary content.
- Makes it easy for donors to choose donation amount and payment source.
- Lets donors give by credit card or PayPal.



Giving on the go: mothers2mothers

[mothers2mothers](#), which trains, employs, and empowers mothers living with HIV around the world, offers supporters a simple, mobile-friendly way to give on the go through Network for Good’s [DonateNow](#) solution. Because the organization reaches out with customized email and social media campaigns, an easy mobile fundraising option is a must. The donation experience:

- Features the mothers2mothers logo and campaign design.
- Detects and adapts to smartphone browsers automatically.
- Provides a clear call to action.
- Allows donors to make one-time or recurring donations.
- Offers easy PayPal payment options.



Seven best practices for mobile

You know mobile donations are important, but what if a full redesign isn't in the budget? There are still many ways to improve how mobile visitors experience your site. A few simple design changes can make your site much more usable on any mobile device – and enhance your visitors' experience across all platforms.

These best practices can help optimize your nonprofit website to attract and retain mobile donors:

1. Keep it simple.

A simple, clean design is a good idea for any site, whether it's accessed on a desktop browser, tablet, or smartphone. Clear the clutter, minimize scrolling, and focus on one or two clear calls to action, enhanced by one high-quality image. Not only does clean design improve usability, but it can also boost conversion rates by removing unnecessary distractions.

2. Write short and sweet.

Online visitors skim. Reduce the amount of text on each page, and break up text with headings. Use an easy-to-read font size and type. Avoid long paragraphs in favor of shorter sentences and clear calls to action.

3. Put content where users expect it.

Don't force mobile users to scroll to find what they want. Consider what action you want to inspire on each page – then make it easy to accomplish from front and center. Add a prominent Donate button at the top right and bottom of each page, where users expect it.

4. Look at links and buttons.

Are they large enough to click on small screens without zooming? Provide enough space in between to keep wayward thumbs from clicking the wrong thing.

5. Make it snappy.

Keep page load times under 5 seconds – under 3 seconds is best. Remove anything that makes pages stall or fail to load. Swap out popups and animation files requiring browser plugins – formats that many mobile devices can't display correctly – for powerful single images and clear, compelling copy.

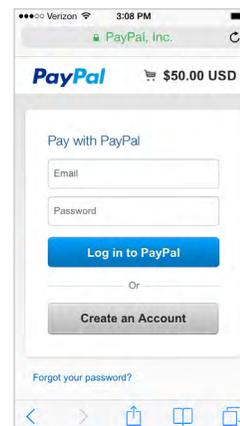
A few simple design changes can make your site much more usable on any mobile device – and enhance your visitors' experience across all platforms.

6. Minimize data entry.

Typing in a lot of information can quickly become a drag on even the smartest of phones. Use autofills wherever possible, allow for guest users instead of requiring signup, and take advantage of the simplicity of PayPal on many donation forms.

7. Fewer clicks = more donations.

Streamline your payment process wherever possible, and make the remaining fields clear and easy to navigate. Again, using PayPal as a payment option can streamline the payment process while increasing the possibility that you get accurate donor info.



What now?

As this paper has shown, mobile giving is growing rapidly, and donors expect nonprofit organizations to be as sophisticated as for-profit businesses when it comes to mobile capabilities. The sooner you can make your website mobile friendly, and offer a well-designed mobile donation option, the sooner you'll reap the rewards of happier donors and increased donations.

And because the mobile landscape continues to change as more and more users shift their digital habits to mobile, the best thing you can do is keep learning. Read, talk to coworkers and partners, and stay alert to technologies and behaviors in both the for-profit and nonprofit worlds.

Bringing your website into the mobile age, and keeping it responsive over time, can feel overwhelming. But you can start with a few simple steps:

Donors expect nonprofit organizations to be as sophisticated as for-profit businesses when it comes to mobile capabilities.

Take inventory.

Know your audience.

Who are your current and prospective donors, and how mobile savvy are they? What do they expect when they interact with your site?

Identify your assets.

Which pages get the most overall visits? The most visits from mobile users? If you haven't yet, optimize those first. Home, About Us, Contact, and Donate are usually the first pages to address.

View your site through a mobile lens.

Understand which tools and content won't render well on mobile devices, and think about how to make those elements more mobile friendly, or replace them with alternatives that work for mobile users. Common culprits: extremely large graphics files, complex animations, and some dropdown/hover actions.

Set aside what you know about your website and organization, and go through your site as a novice.

Test, test, test.

The best thing you can do for your website is find out how mobile users experience it – then act on what you learn.

Be the donor.

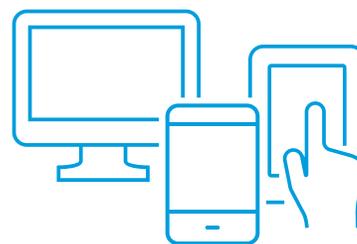
Set aside what you know about your website and organization, and go through your website – including completing the donation process – as a novice. Try it on a range of smartphones and tablet types. What you experience can guide your mobile optimization process. Don't be afraid to ask recent site visitors or donors for feedback on their experience.

Get analyzed.

Use analytics tools to track site visits. (Major search providers offer free analytic tools; your site host may also offer built-in analytics.) How much of your traffic is mobile, where is it coming from, and what do mobile visitors do on your site?

Bring in the pros.

Professional user testing can help you pinpoint exactly how visitors experience your site on their mobile devices, and highlight what you can do to correct problems that lead to confusion or drive away donors.



Focus on the essentials.

Optimizing your site for mobile use costs time and money. If you don't have the resources to tackle your entire site right now, concentrate your efforts on the pages with the most value to your organization. If you can't optimize your full site for mobile users, consider creating a mobile-optimized mini-site that's automatically detectable by smartphones, containing just those essential pages. Or use Network for Good's [DonateNow](#) solution to handle donation page autodetection. Any change that makes your site more mobile friendly is a step in the right direction.

More resources

If you want to learn more about optimizing your site – and your organization – in the mobile age, take a look at these resources:

- [Mobile First](#), Luke Wroblewski. A great online guide to thinking mobile from the start.
- [Tech Soup](#). A nonprofit dedicated to connecting other nonprofits with products, services, and resources that can help inform decisions about technology.
- [NTEN](#) (Nonprofit Technology Network). A membership organization of nonprofit technology professionals.
- [Mobile for Good: A How-To Fundraising Guide for Nonprofits](#), Heather Mansfield. An expert in nonprofit fundraising shows how to take full advantage of today's fastest-growing digital platform.
- [Don't Make Me Think, Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability](#), Steve Krug. This short, accessible web usability classic has been updated with new information on usability for mobile web sites and apps.
- [@PayPalNonprofit](#) and [@Network4Good](#) Twitter feeds.
- Network for Good's [Nonprofit Marketing Blog](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

Resources are listed for convenience only. Their inclusion in this document does not imply endorsement or sponsorship by PayPal.

PayPal and Network for Good: A strong mobile partnership

Mobile devices have become integral to our lives. To succeed in today's world, nonprofit organizations must communicate with donors where they are, through the devices they use every day. When people have a positive mobile experience of your site, great things can happen. Take small steps to make the most of the mobile web, and you'll see real rewards today – and in the years to come.

PayPal is the faster, safer way to pay and get paid online, via mobile devices and in stores. By accepting online donations from mobile phones and social media sites, PayPal enables nonprofits to tap into donors at the moment they are most motivated to act. PayPal processed more than \$5.7 billion in donations in 2013, and is currently used by more than 400,000 nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and Canada.

Network for Good, a leading platform for online giving, has processed more than \$1 billion for over 100,000 nonprofits. Its services help nonprofits raise money and engage supporters through websites, mobile-optimized microsites, and social networks – so they reach more donors and attract more online donations. Together, Network for Good and PayPal offer solutions like [DonateNow](#), an all-in-one fundraising tool that helps nonprofits optimize their online donation pages and take advantage of mobile fundraising. This solution provides a hosted and secure donation page that automatically displays differently on computers vs. smartphones. Best practices recommended in this paper are reflected in DonateNow, including PayPal mobile checkout.

For more ideas on how to optimize your fundraising efforts for mobile, visit [Network for Good](#) and [PayPal](#). Or contact us directly to discuss your needs:

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