M+R

Benchmarks
2023

BENCHMARKS MENU

Appetizers

Entrées

Desserts

On the cover: It felt important to begin this project by centering food workers. Even bees! Food workers are intrinsic to every stage of our food experience, including planting, harvesting, delivery, preparation, and sale, to name a few. Food workers have led organizing for generations and are still fighting for what they deserve: respect, fair pay, and the right to form a union.

The Joy of Benchmarking

Wouldn't it be nice if there was a single recipe for nonprofit success? All the ingredients listed in precise proportions, the techniques and methods laid out just so. Follow the steps, one by one, then set it and forget it and... presto! A growing audience, impactful advocacy, and rising revenue, easy as pie.

Well, the annual M+R Benchmarks Study is… not that. The reality, difficult to swallow though it may be, is that our work and our world are much too complex to allow for such a prescriptive approach.

The methods for cooking up a successful digital program are as individual and varied as the methods to make curry, or pho, or chili. So, no recipe to follow, sorry (unless you want a recipe for Jackfruit Barbeque Sandwiches — that's on page 10). Instead we have a cornucopia of tables and charts, we have toplines and trends, we have insights to tantalize your senses and amuse your bouche. And honestly, it's all a lot more exciting — and a lot more useful — than any set of simplified instructions.

This year, Benchmarks is informed by the complicated, diverse, sometimes messy experiences of 215 nonprofits. Our wonderful participants shared the details of almost 5.4 billion email and SMS messages, 681 million website visits, 374 thousand social media posts, and so much more.

The findings in this year's Benchmarks represent the creativity and craft of nonprofit staff who strive every day to reach and expand audiences. They also reflect the core values and changing tastes of millions of supporters who react, click, share, take action, and donate to causes of all types. They reveal the ongoing evolution of digital channels that are increasingly the centerpiece of marketing, advocacy, and fundraising for nonprofits.

There's a lot here, and if you take the time to taste everything, you are sure to find some delicious new insight and inspiration. We certainly have.

We are grateful, as always, for the generosity of our nonprofit participants. We give thanks to everyone who submitted data, coded messages, and answered questions to help this year's Benchmarks come together. You are delightful people, we were pleased as punch to work with you this year, and we look forward to welcoming you back again next time.

In addition to the heaping helping of findings in each year's Benchmarks, we often like to choose a theme. Mostly, this is to make things a bit more fun for us and for you (yes, we know, it's a tall order to make an in-depth discussion of non-profit data *even more fun*, but a tasteful garnish can improve even the most delicious meal). If we have been too subtle so far: our theme this year is food — and we chose it for reasons beyond the ready availability of delectable puns.

Food is more than sustenance. It is culture and community, a way to come together and find connection. Preparing food for others can be a profound expression of care and love. Food is also labor, work that is often hidden from consumers — from farmworkers in the fields to packing plant assembly lines to the bussers, dishwashers, and line cooks in the back of your favorite restaurant.

The collages throughout this year's Benchmarks are intended to recognize and celebrate the variety of what food means: love, work, and shared experience. We're also excited to share some favorite recipes from the M+R staff who have contributed to this year's Benchmarks. We hope you enjoy them.

Now, the table is set, and it's time to dig in. *Bon appétit!*

We are M+R, and we are hungry for change.

We believe that the nonprofits we work for are essential to advancing the cause of justice, alleviating suffering, and solving the greatest challenges we face.

We bring experience, talent, and unshakeable dedication to our clients through fundraising and supporter engagement, movement building and issue advocacy, and message and brand development.

Campaign Strategy

Digital Advertising

Digital Fundraising and Advocacy

Media Relations

Digital Organizing

Social Media

We're always cooking up new resources, advice, and tools for nonprofits. Visit us at mrss.com.

Find out more about working at M+R and join our crew at mrss.com/careers.

The Cooks in the Kitchen

Chef	Breakfast order
Data Analysis	
Jonathan Benton	Coffee
Theresa Bugeaud	French Toast Casserole
Hannah Cullen	Apple with Peanut Butter
Lia Mancuso	Eggs Benedict
Mugo Muna	Chocolate Croissant
Sammy Stewart	Western Omelet
Sarah Vanderbilt	Biscuit, Egg, Cheese, Pepper Jelly
Writing	
Will Valverde	Chilaquiles
Design	
Melissa Hines	Stuffed French Toast
Laura Klavon	Salmon Eggs Benedict
Web Development	
Bobby Burch	Buttermilk Pancakes
Tom Giordano	Biscuits and Gravy
Participant Management	
Lucy Midelfort	Almond Croissant
Project Management	
Bobby Goldstein	Breakfast Burrito
Insights	
Evan Aczon	Hash Browns
Ankur Asthana	Lukewarm Pepperoni Pizza
Asha Bland	Leftovers
Miranda Carter	Blueberry Pancakes
Sarah Coughlon	Bacon & Cheese Sammie
Kait Grable Gonzalez	Strawberry Waffles w/ Whip
Ferenc Koszorus	Smoothie
Yoonhyung Lee	Poached Eggs and Toast
QA	
Julia Allenby	Granola, Yogurt, Berries
Alec MacIntyre	Breakfast Burrito
Anne Paschkopić	Oatmeal
Executive Sponsor	
Madeline Stanionis	Swedish Pancakes

Quick Bites

- Average online revenue declined by 4% in 2022.

- Revenue from one-time online giving decreased by 12%.

- Revenue from monthly giving increased by 11%, and accounted for 28% of all online revenue.

- Digital advertising investment by nonprofits increased by 28%.

- Return on ad spend was highest for search ads, $2.75 for every dollar spent. Return on ad spend for display was $0.33; for Meta $0.50; and for Twitter $0.41.

- For every 100,000 email subscribers at the beginning of 2022, nonprofits added an average of 9,000 subscribers through paid advertising.

- Nonprofits sent 60 email messages per subscriber in 2022, including 29 fundraising appeals. Email accounted for 14% of all online revenue.

- For every 1,000 email addresses, nonprofits had an average of 685 Facebook fans, 208 Twitter followers, and 160 Instagram followers. Nearly all participants were active on these platforms.

- TikTok was an active platform for 30% of participants. They had an average of 4 TikTok followers for every 1,000 email subscribers.

- The majority of nonprofit website traffic came from users on mobile devices — 57%, with 43% of traffic from users on desktop devices. However, 75% of revenue came from users on desktop devices.

Tasting Menu

A handwritten place card. A table setting just for you. A curated playlist paired with each course of the meal. It's ambiance. It's care. And the empty dishes and stained napkins when it's all over are signs of time well-spent.

Each collage comes with reflections on design, food, and data from our Art Director MELISSA HINES.

Tasting Menu

Buffets can be tricky. If you simply move down the line from start to finish, serving yourself a bit of each item that catches your eye, you risk filling your plate before you're halfway across and missing out on what might have been the tastiest morsels.

A wise buffet-goer will scout ahead first, identifying the most appealing options. Even better: find someone who's already sampled it all and ask for recommendations. That's what we're here for — we're full to bursting with all sorts of fun facts and eager to share what we've learned.

The rest of Benchmarks is piled high with data to suit every taste. Before you start exploring, we've prepared a menu of what we think are the most important, telling, useful, and sometimes surprising findings.

Appetizer

Let's whet our appetites with a couple of key data points that provide a taste of the data feast to come.

The average nonprofit reported a small drop in revenue from 2021 to 2022, a 4% decline year over year.

And listen, we don't like to start this data smorgasbord with the fundraising equivalent of sad, mushy broccoli. We want to see nonprofits thriving, supporters more engaged, resources going to where they can do the most good. But above anything else, Benchmarks is about two things: transparently
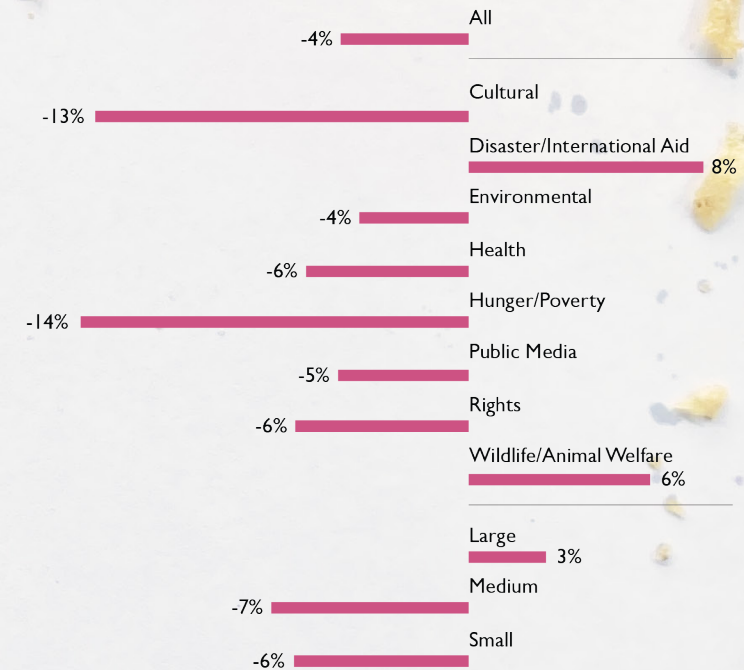
sharing the most accurate metrics we can, and digging below top-level findings to better understand the nuance and context.

The nuance and context surrounding the 4% decline in revenue are fascinating.

First, it's important to note that this decline was not evenly distributed. It's the median figure for all our participants, so **half of all participants reported a higher number.** (See the Methodology section on page 23 for more on how we calculate our metrics.)

The context of the moment matters — that's one reason that nonprofits in the Disaster/International Aid sector reported an 8% increase in revenue. With the conflict in Ukraine generating intense media attention and an outpouring of compassion and solidarity, nonprofits providing direct support saw an influx of donors. But if we are assessing change over time, we need to look at 2022 *and* what came before.

In the chart above, Hunger/Poverty nonprofits show the steepest decline in revenue, with a 14% drop from 2021.

Change in online revenue 2021 to 2022

Category	Change
All	-4%
Cultural	-13%
Disaster/International Aid	8%
Environmental	-4%
Health	-6%
Hunger/Poverty	-14%
Public Media	-5%
Rights	-6%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	6%
Large	3%
Medium	-7%
Small	-6%

Note: Includes online revenue from Facebook for 2021 and 2022 where groups provided that information

Change in online revenue 2020 to 2021

- **All** — 4%
- **Cultural** — 21%
- **Disaster/International Aid** — 11%
- **Environmental** — 12%
- **Health** — 7%
- **Hunger/Poverty** — -35%
- **Public Media** — 1%
- **Rights** — 1%
- **Wildlife/Animal Welfare** — 6%
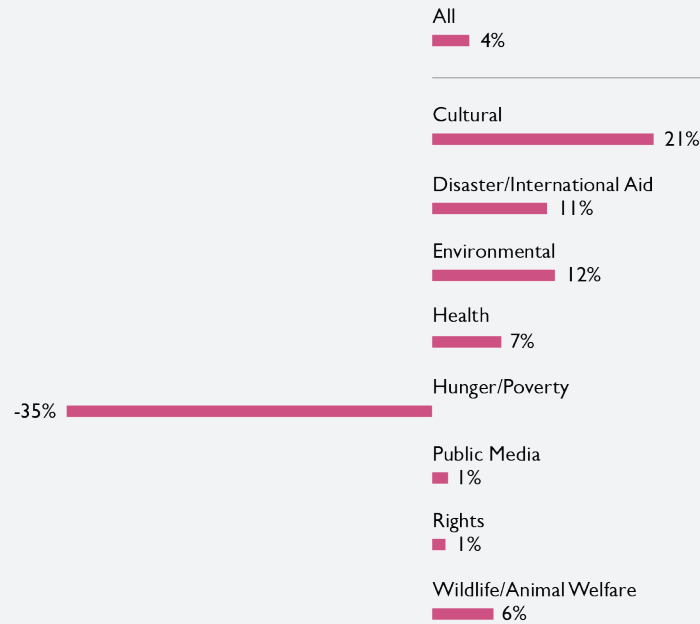
If we look further back in time, these same nonprofits reported an even larger decrease in revenue from 2020 to 2021 — a 35% drop! Two consecutive years of declining revenue might be alarming for any individual nonprofit, let alone for the cohort of nonprofits dedicated to ensuring that our neighbors have a safe and stable place to live and enough nutritious food to put on the table. Let's pull back even further in time and see what we find.

Online revenue change year over year

Legend: 2018-2019 | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | 2021-2022

All: 27%, 38%, 4%, -4%
Cultural: 2%, 143%, 21%, -13%
Disaster/International Aid: 1%, 30%, 11%, 8%
Environmental: 17%, 22%, 12%, -4%
Health: 13%, 38%, 7%, -3%
Hunger/Poverty: 12%, 390%, -35%, -14%
Public Media: 6%, 21%, 1%, -5%
Right: 5%, 33%, 1%, -6%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare: 9%, 64%, 6%, 8%
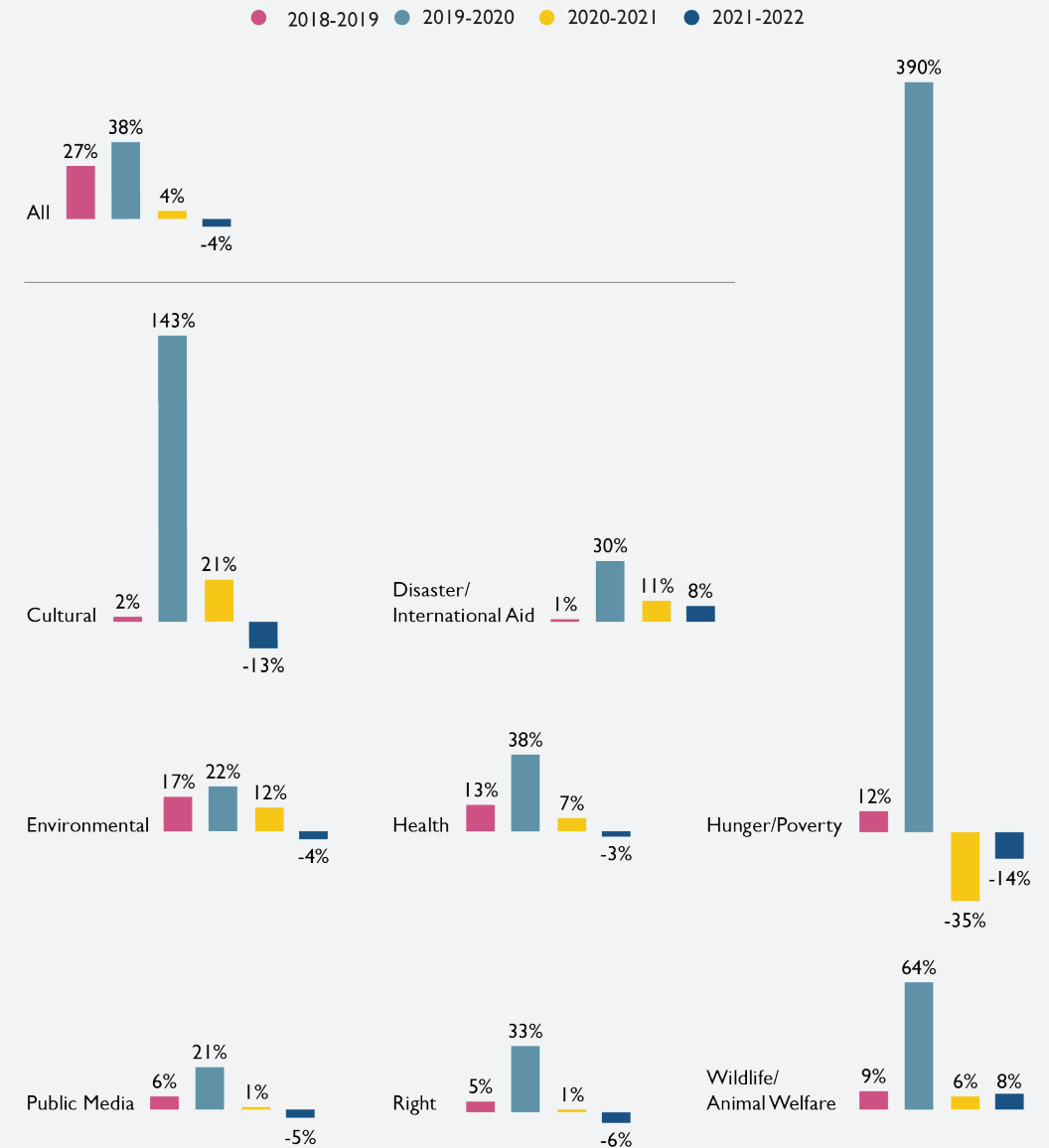
Note: Multi-year trend does not include revenue from Facebook.

Here we capture the initial response to the COVID pandemic, and it includes a 390% year-over-year increase in online revenue for Hunger/Poverty nonprofits.

Not to get too in the weeds on the math here, but that's almost a 400% increase! In one year! Starting from that baseline, we can better understand the context of

the 14% decline in revenue for this sector last year. The challenge for these nonprofits may be primarily one of retention, rather than donor acquisition (see the

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mains

▷ WATCH at mrbenchmarks.com/foodies

Food for Thought

Senior Vice President JONATHAN BENTON whips up **Jackfruit Barbeque Sandwiches** while walking us through some of the biggest data points from this year's study.

ingredients

- 2 cans young green jackfruit
- ~2 tbsp brown sugar
- ~2 tsp smoked paprika
- ~1 tsp garlic powder
- ~1 cup BBQ sauce
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- Buns
- Avocado (optional for topping)
- Cashews (optional for topping)
- Hot sauce (optional for topping)
- Slaw (optional for topping + side)

Step 1 | Take the jackfruit out of the can. In a colander, rinse and shred everything up.

Step 2 | Mix the jackfruit with the sugar, paprika, and garlic powder.

Step 3 | Put some oil in a pan, heat it up. Once hot, add chopped onion to pan. Cook on low for ~10 minutes.

Step 4 | Add jackfruit mix to pan. Cook for 5 minutes.

Step 5 | Add most of the BBQ sauce and ~1/4 cup of water. Cook for another 20 minutes. Add additional BBQ sauce for thicker consistency.

Step 6 | Once mixture is looking good, transfer to a foil rimmed sheet. Turn broiler on in the oven.

Step 7 | Cook under broiler for ~3 minutes, watching closely. Look for some of the jackfruit to have nice burnt edges.

Step 8 | Assemble sandwiches in buns with avocado, cashews, hot sauce, and/or slaw! Eat! Yum!

Fundraising section on page 26 to explore retention metrics).

It's helpful to understand that broad, long-term story — but focusing in on a couple of bite-sized data chunks can be just as instructive.

For many nonprofits, the critical end-of-year fundraising season kicks off right after Thanksgiving. While normal people are shopping for discounted air fryers and crafting increasingly improbable sandwiches out of leftovers, fundraisers are putting out a high-intensity push for donations that reaches a boiling point on Giving Tuesday.

In 2022, donations on Giving Tuesday alone accounted for 3% of the total online revenue for the year. That makes Giving Tuesday one of the most important days on the fundraising calendar, and makes the data point you are about to read especially notable. **Giving Tuesday revenue declined by 13% from 2021, and email revenue on Giving Tuesday declined by 18%.**

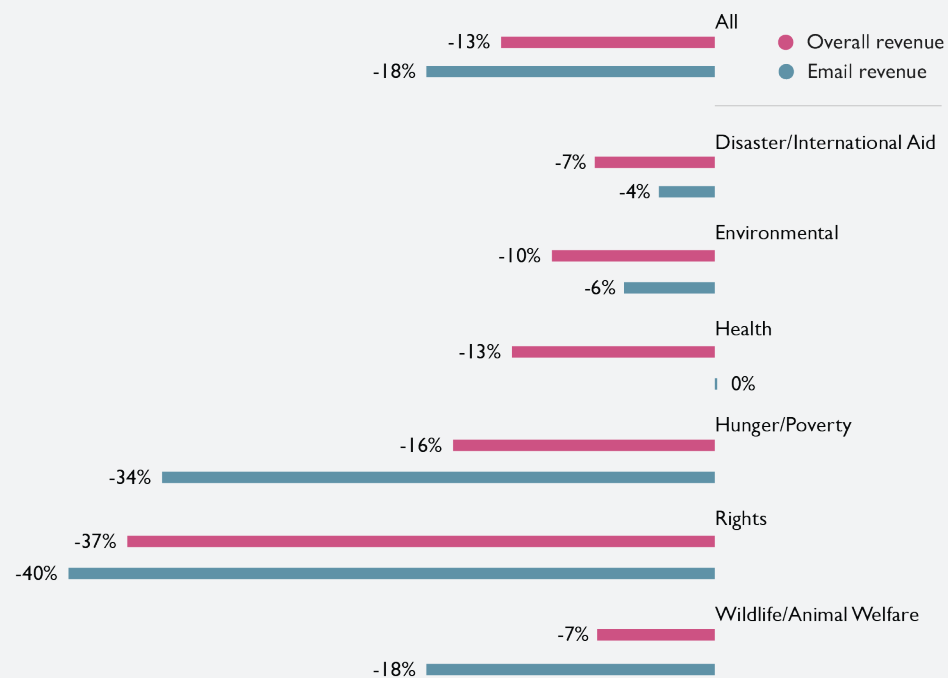As Giving Tuesday strategies have evolved over the last few years, many nonprofits have begun adding early-bird appeals in the days leading up to Giving Tuesday, or extending matching gift or premium offers past the midnight deadline. It's possible that some Giving Tuesday revenue has simply shifted to the surrounding days.

But this was not the only high-profile moment with a drop in year-over-year revenue. In fact, the biggest, most wonderful, most terrifying (wonderfying? terriful?) day of the year showed strikingly similar results.

We're talking about the day that online fundraisers consider the big enchilada. We're talking about the one day to make or break your annual budget numbers, pull out all the stops, post your 2X 3X 5X matching gift offers, send your LAST FINAL ULTIMATE CHANCE FOR REALS THIS TIME deadline appeals, and obsessively hit the refresh button on your CRM's reporting page all the way up until midnight.

We're talking about December 31, and it's a huge forking deal. Nonprofits received 5% of all 2022 revenue on the last day of the year — what happens on that day has an outsized impact on annual performance. And December 31, 2022 looked very different from December 31, 2021.

Change in revenue on Giving Tuesday from 2021 to 2022

Category	Overall revenue	Email revenue
All	-13%	-18%
Disaster/International Aid	-7%	-4%
Environmental	-10%	-6%
Health	-13%	0%
Hunger/Poverty	-16%	-34%
Rights	-37%	-40%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	-7%	-18%

Change in revenue on December 31st from 2021-2022

Category	Overall revenue	Email revenue
All	-13%	-22%
Disaster/International Aid	-13%	-25%
Environmental	-12%	-20%
Health	-8%	-18%
Hunger/Poverty	-19%	-36%
Public Media	-20%	-17%
Rights	-18%	2%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	6%	-1%
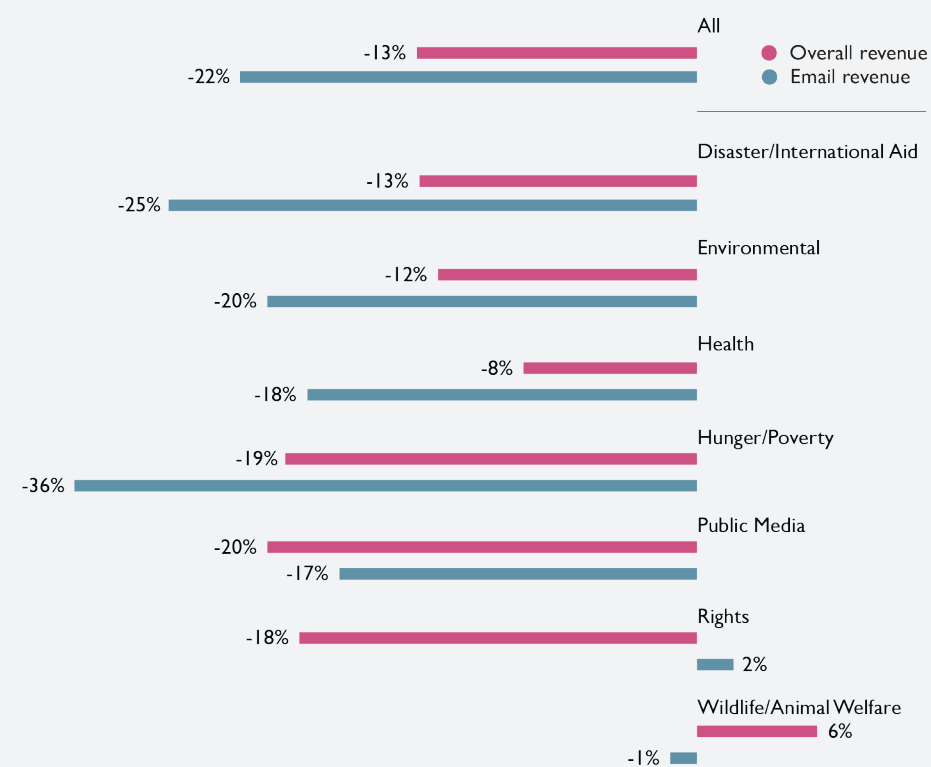
Overall revenue was down 13% from the same day the previous year, and December 31 email revenue dropped by 22%. This is a situation where our data can tell us what happened, but not why. It's an answer that spawns questions.

Did worries about inflation or a possible recession affect donor attitudes? Did a more crowded, competitive messaging environment make it harder for nonprofits to stand out? Is this partly a return to "normal" after COVID-driven fundraising in previous years, as we saw with Hunger/Poverty non-profits? How much of this decline was simply due to the fact that December 31 fell on a Saturday, and supporters were less likely to pay attention to those last-chance fundraising appeals?

If the last of these possible explanations holds water, there's some good news: we won't see another Saturday, December 31 until the year 2033. On the other hand, the last day of this year falls on a Sunday, which may be subject to some of the same effects.

Giving Tuesday and December 31 are essential, bread-and-butter components of the fundraising calendar. If nonprofits struggle to maintain performance on these days, it will have far-reaching impacts on digital fundraising programs.

Main Course

Some things are just meant to go together. Peanut butter and jelly. Fish and chips. Cheese and literally anything else. Email and digital advertising.

There's a well-known holistic truth here. In general, it's a good idea to adopt a multi-channel approach that carries a consistent narrative across different messaging streams — including email and advertising, along with direct mail, social media, tele-marketing, and so on. Branding is reinforced, supporters receive a coherent story, and a nonprofit develops a recognizable voice.

All true, but that's not really what we're talking about here. It's not just in the messaging that email and ads are intertwined. It's in the mechanics — how we identify potential supporters, how we reach them, how we build relationships, how we convert them to activists, volunteers, and donors.

We'll start on the ads side (for a full exploration of Digital Ads, see page 60). Branding, awareness, or education advertising accounted for 26% of all ad spending — this is the kind of advertising that typically supports visibility and broad narrative efforts. The remainder of ad spending was oriented toward direct response: fundraising (56% of spending) and lead generation ads that leverage a petition, online action, or other engagement to capture email, mobile, or other contact information (15%).

Share of digital advertising budget by investment type

		All	Large	Medium	Small
Percent of Digital Advertising Budget by Goal	Branding, Awareness, or Education	26%	29%	15%	7%
	Direct Fundraising	56%	56%	58%	54%
	Lead Generation	15%	13%	23%	22%
	Other	3%	3%	4%	16%
Percent of Direct Fundraising Budget by Channel	Display	22%	19%	35%	48%
	Search	35%	35%	31%	32%
	Meta	36%	38%	24%	20%
	Twitter	0%	0%	0%	0%
	TikTok	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Video	5%	5%	2%	0%
	Other	3%	3%	7%	0%

The cost to generate a single donation via direct fundraising advertising varied widely depending on platform and nonprofit type. For example, Public Media nonprofits spent $16 on search to generate a single gift — and $469 per donation on Meta platforms (i.e. Facebook and Instagram). For Wildlife/Animal Welfare nonprofits, cost per donation was $40 for search, $70 for Meta, and $152 for display advertising.

The cost per donation correlates strongly with return on ad spend (ROAS) — the more it costs to generate a gift, the smaller the net revenue. Overall, search had the strongest ROAS at $2.75 in revenue per dollar spent on ads. Display and Social advertising (including Meta, Twitter, and a relative handful of tentative TikTok investments) all had ROAS below $1.00.

Digital advertising: cost per donation

	Display	Search	Meta	Twitter	Video
All	$217	$47	$126	$202	$305
Cultural	—	$45	$164	—	—
Disaster/International Aid	$215	$29	$96	$121	$514
Environmental	$274	$77	$142	—	—
Health	$227	$41	$156	—	$361
Hunger/Poverty	$163	$35	$112	—	$58
Public Media	—	$16	$469	—	—
Rights	$279	$119	$199	—	—
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	$152	$40	$70	—	$99
Large	$170	$35	$94	$155	$273
Medium	$333	$60	$181	$248	$2,038
Small	$441	$64	$38	—	—

Digital advertising: ROAS

	Display	Search	Meta	Twitter	Video
All	$0.33	$2.75	$0.50	$0.41	$0.13
Cultural	—	$3.75	$0.32	—	—
Disaster/International Aid	$0.12	$4.96	$0.66	$0.87	$0.13
Environmental	$0.08	$1.97	$0.30	—	—
Health	$0.60	$3.14	$0.51	—	$0.06
Hunger/Poverty	$0.96	$4.84	$1.07	—	$2.51
Public Media	—	$6.77	$0.21	—	—
Rights	$0.26	$1.61	$0.17	—	—
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	$0.21	$1.51	$0.52	—	$0.27
Large	$0.65	$3.24	$0.71	$0.39	$0.17
Medium	$0.28	$2.10	$0.27	$0.42	$0.02
Small	$0.21	$2.79	$0.58	—	—

Cost per digital advertising lead

All — $3.41
Disaster/International Aid — $2.50
Environmental — $3.45
Health — $5.08
Hunger/Poverty — $7.85
Public Media — $4.65
Rights — $2.71
Wildlife/Animal Welfare — $1.78
Large — $3.16
Medium — $2.84
Small — $5.14

So we have a situation where it can be costly to acquire donors directly from advertising, and in many cases the costs outweigh the immediate return. That means that in order to see positive net revenue from these new donors, we should be looking beyond that first interaction and seeking ways to motivate additional gifts (including recurring giving). That's where email comes in — the welcome series, the follow-up appeals, the cultivation and engagement messaging, the ongoing work of building and feeding relationships.

Making the most of your advertising program depends on having an effective email program.
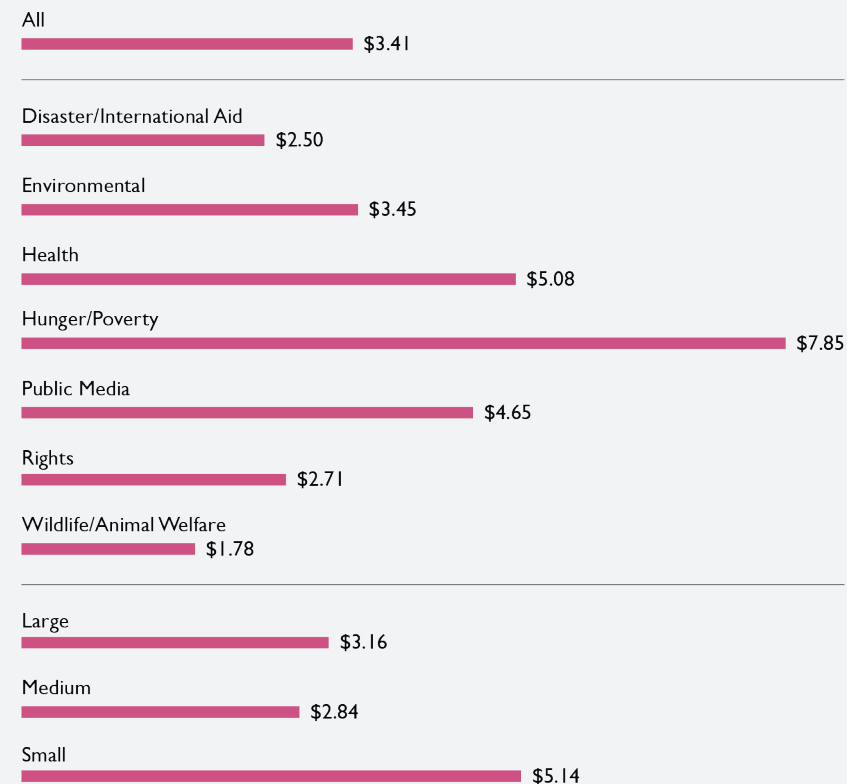
But also:

Making the most of your email program depends on having an effective advertising program.

Turning back to that 15% of advertising budgets dedicated to lead generation, we measure efficiency by the cost per digital advertising lead. On average, nonprofits spent $3.41 to acquire one new lead, though again we see a wide divergence between nonprofits of different types. Small nonprofits (those with annual online revenue under $500,000) spent significantly more per lead than their larger peers — perhaps due to having lower baseline brand recognition, or the challenges of optimizing ads on a smaller budget.

Still, even at the highest end ($7.85, the cost per lead for Hunger/Poverty nonprofits), this would be considered money well spent if it leads to a larger, more active supporter base. These new leads become email and text messaging subscribers, and breathe new life into those programs.

Email lists lost subscribers in 2022, with an average decrease of 2%. It's a small net decline, driven by a combination of bounces, unsubscribes, and nonprofits removing inactive users from their lists. Those losses were mostly balanced by new subscribers being added at nearly the same rate. Want to guess where a large portion of those new listmembers came from?

Ratio of ad-acquired leads to start of year email list size
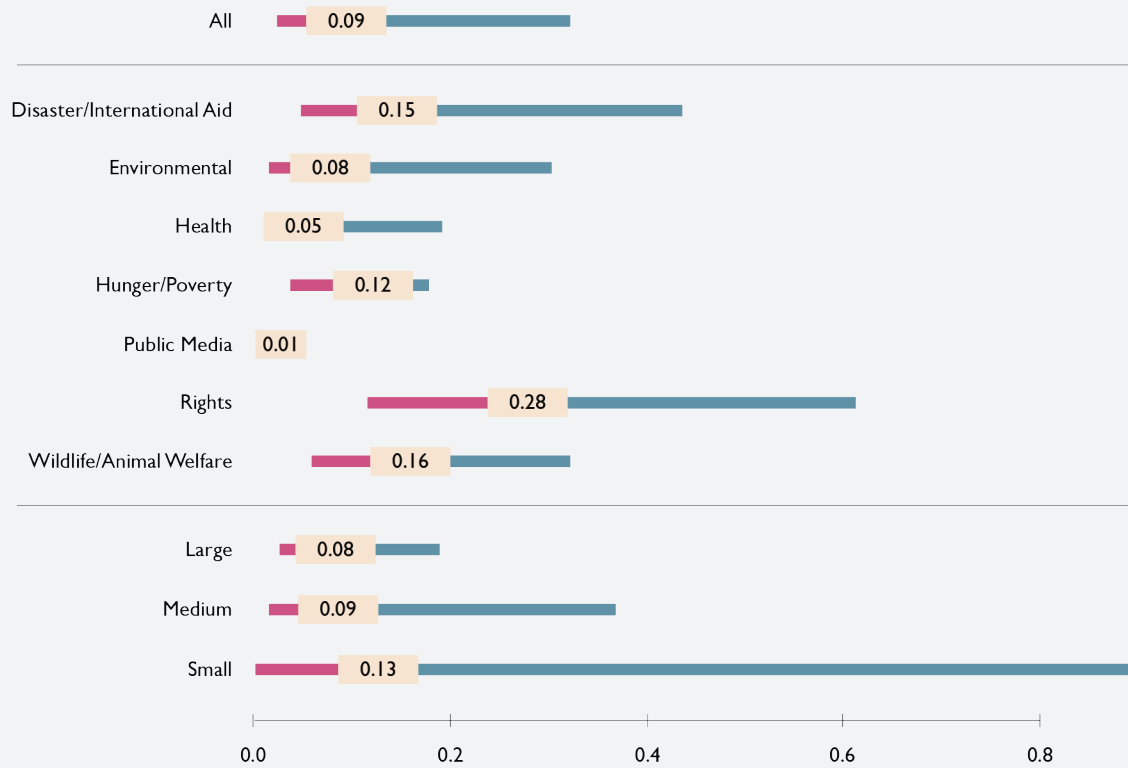
One of the new metrics we tracked for this year's Benchmarks is "ratio of ad-acquired leads to start of year email list size." Now, that's quite a mouthful, and probably not something you'll find on your CRM's default reporting dashboard. So let's just look at this chart for a second and then talk about what it means.

The average ratio of ad-acquired leads to email list size at the start of the year was 0.09. What this means is that **if a nonprofit came into 2022 with an email list of 100,000 subscribers, over the course of the year they would add 9,000 new subscribers through advertis-** **ing lead generation.** For Rights nonprofits, the average ratio is 0.28 — so a 100,000-subscriber list would add 28,000 ads-acquired subscribers in 2022.

That's a lot — and that's just the median. The colored bars in the chart above represent what we think of as the "normal" range — down to the 25th percentile on the left, and up to the 75th percentile on the right.

For nonprofits overall, that 75th percentile ratio is over 0.3, and even higher for some sectors. Small nonprofits in that upper range added nearly as many subscribers through paid advertising as they had on their entire list at the start of the year!

Considering the steady drain of churn, and how important new subscribers are to a thriving email program, the idea of email programs without support from ads is distinctly unappetizing.

The fundamental metrics underpinning email and ads programs show how much each depends on the other. If you aren't already, it's time to start treating them like milk and cookies, like bangers and mash, like cacio e pepe.

Here it is, the one and only pie chart in this year's (or any year's!) Benchmarks Study:

If your organization engages in peer-to-peer text messaging (where individual staff members, organizers, or volunteers do outreach to individuals via text message), who are you targeting in that outreach?
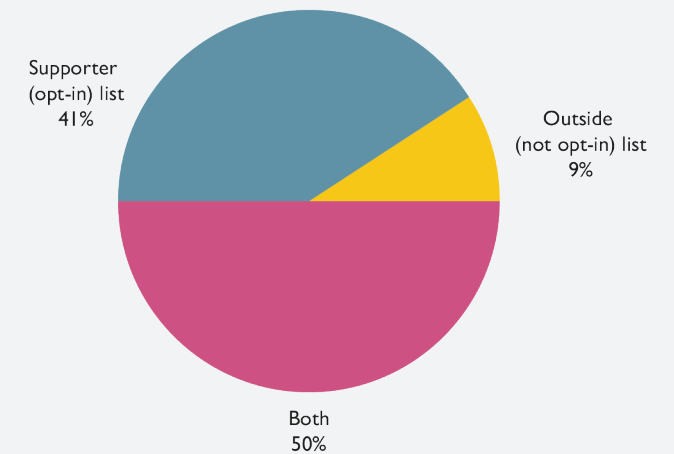
(We mostly abjure the use of pie charts because it's hard for people to accurately compare the relative size of pie chart slices — bar charts are easier to grasp at a glance. But sometimes it's okay to have a little pie chart, as a treat.)

Mobile messaging encompasses a variety of tools and techniques. There are broadcast messages sent from a nonprofit to its subscriber list, and peer-to-peer texting where each buzzing phone is intended to start a one-on-one conversation. There's quick, text-only SMS, and more robust MMS. And nonprofits are increasingly using mobile messaging to serve a variety of goals.

What is your organization using Peer-to-Peer text messaging for?

- Fundraising — 62%
- Advocacy actions — 47%
- Event attendance — 45%
- GOTV — 39%
- Volunteer recruitment — 39%
- Relational organizing — 27%

What digital organizing methods do you use?

- Email — 95%
- Events — 84%
- Volunteer tracking — 78%
- Peer-to-Peer — 69%
- SMS — 62%
- Volunteer community — 53%
- Relational organizing — 42%
- Phonebanking — 32%

The most common use of peer-to-peer text messaging is fundraising — 62% of participants who engage in peer-to-peer messaging included fundraising in the mix. Nearly half (47%) used P2P messaging to drive advocacy actions. (These numbers don't add up to 100% because they are not mutually exclusive; many nonprofits leveraged mobile messaging for multiple goals throughout the year. One more example of where you really need to rely on a bar chart to convey information. Pie charts could never.)

In addition to direct response efforts, mobile messaging (and in particular peer-to-peer) is an important aspect of digital organizing. Moving supporters from purely online actions — donating, taking action, sharing content on social media — to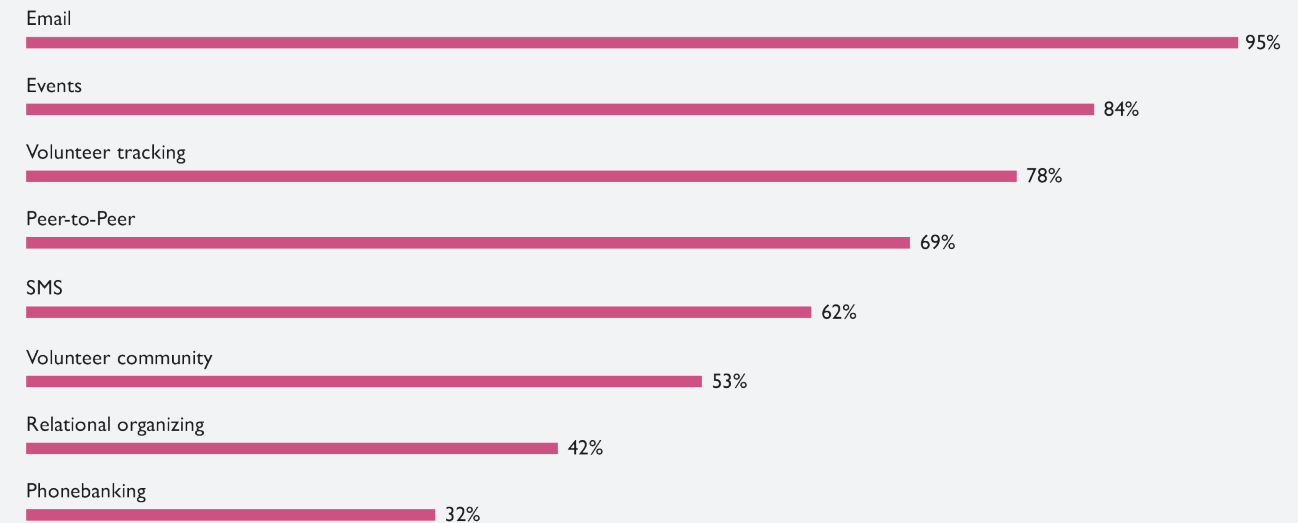 the deeper engagement required to show up at an event or put in a volunteer shift is difficult, resource-intensive work.

A cross-channel approach is essential. Those nonprofits that use one digital organizing tool are likely to use several, and 69% of them include peer-to-peer as part of that mix.

Leveraging digital organizing tools to build a base of supporters and volunteers that can then amplify peer-to-peer messaging efforts? That's what's called having your cake and eating it, too. (We think. It's a pretty confusing saying if we're being honest. Maybe better to stick with pie.)

breads

▷ WATCH at mrbenchmarks.com/foodies

Food for Thought

Director of Data Analytics THERESA BUGEAUD bakes **Blueberry Muffins** while sharing some of the new metrics she's excited about for this year's study.

ingredients

1/2 cup softened butter
1 1/4 cups sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 cup milk
2 cups frozen blueberries
2 frozen bananas, defrosted
    & smashed
3 teaspoons sugar

Step 1 | Preheat the oven to 375. Cream the butter and 1 1/4 cups sugar until light.

Step 2 | Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla.

Step 3 | Sift together the flour, salt and baking powder, and add to the creamed mixture alternately with the milk.

Step 4 | Fold in the blueberries and bananas.

Step 5 | Line a 12 cup standard muffin tin with cupcake liners, and fill with batter. Sprinkle the 3 teaspoons sugar over the tops of the muffins, and bake at 375 degrees for about 30-35 minutes.

Step 6 | Remove muffins from tin and cool at least 30 minutes. Store, uncovered, or the muffins will be too moist the second day, if they last that long.

Adapted from a recipe by Marian Burros

Before we move into the rest of the data, a couple of final morsels that provide some insight into an established marketing practice that is becoming more common for nonprofits: partnering with social media influencers.

We surveyed participants about their influencer strategies and results. Nearly half (47%) of nonprofits who answered our questions about social media influencers reported working with them in 2022 — but just 13% paid those influencers to post.

Among that 13%, the average number of paid influencer partnerships was 6 over the course of 2022, with an average of 10 posts from those influencers. The most common use for influencer partnerships was content creation around narrative, persuasion, and/or culture change — 82% of nonprofits who partnered with paid influencers reported this type of effort.

As nonprofit digital programs continue to evolve, we expect to find deeper connections across platforms, and continued experimentation with new channels and innovative strategies. Hungry for more? Keep eating reading.

drinks

Food for Thought

Mix a classic-ish **negroni** and hear about why Benchmarks matters for our community with M+R Partner MADELINE STANIONIS.

ingredients

1 oz dry gin, nothing fancy

1 oz sweet vermouth

1 oz Bruto Americano

Orange

Step 1 | Mix all ingredients with ice in pitcher.

Step 2 | Stir for about 15 seconds.

Step 3 | Strain into ice-filled rocks glass.

Step 4 | Add a twist or slice of orange.

Methodology

There's so much more to a meal than what you see on the plate. The labor of people who grow, harvest, pack, and prepare the food. The interconnected foodways and traditions that create ever-evolving cuisines. The experiences, training, and perspective of the chef.

Benchmarks is no different. We strive to present the most comprehensive, clear, informative collection of data we can — but there's a lot going on beneath the surface. Here are a few things you should know to help you better understand our findings and put them to use.

Wherever possible, we have broken out the findings by sector. Each of our participants self-identified the appropriate sector (or, in some cases, fell outside of our defined sectors and selected "Other"). If you are not sure which sector represents your peer group, review the full list of participants (page 99) to find where you belong.

We also sort our participants by size. For our study, "Small" refers to nonprofits with annual online revenue in 2022 below $500,000; "Medium" is those nonprofits with annual online revenue between $500,000 and $3,000,000; and "Large" covers all those with annual online revenue greater than $3,000,000.

The averages displayed in each chart and discussed throughout Benchmarks represent the median figure for a given metric for all participants who reported data. Not all participants were able to provide data for every metric. If a chart does not include data for a certain sector or size, it's because we were not able to collect enough results to report a reliable average.

We use median rather than mean to minimize the risk of a single participant with unusual results having an outsize impact on the overall findings. You will also see some charts that include a range showing the 25th percentile to the 75th percentile. Half of all reported values fell within this range, which can be considered "normal" results for participants in our study.

Some of the most useful and interesting data in Benchmarks relies on year-over-year comparisons. Wherever we include this type of finding, we are including long-term data from this year's participants — an apples-to-apples comparison. We do not compare this year's findings to what was reported in previous editions of Benchmarks, because the participant pool changes from year to year. That would be more of an apples-to-oranges situation at best. At worst, it would be more like apples-to-pineapples or grapes-to-grapefruits, where a superficial similarity hides a massive underlying difference.

If you have any more questions about how we cooked up Benchmarks this year, please reach out to @mrcampaigns or email benchmarks@mrss.com.

Palak Paneer

ingredients

5 to 6 cups roughly chopped spinach

4 green chilies

1 to 2 small to medium garlic cloves – roughly
chopped (optional)

1 inch ginger – roughly chopped

3 cups water for blanching spinach

3 cups water for ice bath

2 tablespoon oil or ghee (clarified butter) or butter

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

1 small to medium tej patta (Indian bay leaf)

1/3 cup finely chopped onions

1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic

1 cup crushed tomatoes

¼ teaspoon turmeric powder

1 teaspoon red chili powder

1 pinch asafoetida (hing) – *optional*

½ cup water or add as required

¼ or ½ teaspoon Garam Masala

200 to 250 grams Paneer or tofu

1 teaspoon kasuri methi leaves (dry fenugreek
leaves) – *optional*

10 tablespoons cream cheese

½ to 1 inch ginger – julienne

lemon or lime wedges

salt as required

Step 1 | Rinse the spinach leaves very well in running water. Tender stem are fine. If the stems are stringy, then discard the stems.

Step 2 | Boil 3 cups water in a pan or microwave or electric heater. Add ¼ teaspoon salt to the hot water and stir. When the water comes to a rolling boil, switch off the flame. Add the spinach leaves in the hot water. Let the spinach sit in the water for about 1 minute. After 1 minute, using a pasta tong, take the spinach out.

Step 3 | Immediately add the spinach in a pan or bowl containing ice cold water. This method helps in preserving the green color of the spinach. Just add 8 to 10 ice cubes to 3 cups water to get cold water. Allow the spinach leaves to be in the cold water for a minute.

Step 4 | Then drain the ice cold water. Add the spinach in a blender or grinder jar with chopped ginger, garlic and green chilies.

Step 5 | Make a smooth spinach puree. No need to add water while making the puree. Keep the spinach puree aside.

Step 6 | Heat oil or ghee or butter in a pan or kadai. If using butter, melt it a low flame making sure that the butter does not brown.

Step 7 | Add the cumin and let them splutter. Then add the tej patta or Indian bay leaf.

Step 8 | Add the finely chopped onions. Saute till the onions become golden. Then add the finely chopped garlic. Saute till the raw aroma of garlic goes away. No need to brown the garlic.

Step 9 | Add the crushed tomatoes. Stir and saute the tomatoes till they soften.

Step 10 | Once the tomatoes are softened and you see fat releasing from the sides of the mixture. Then add the turmeric powder, red chili powder and asafoetida/hing. Mix very well.

Step 11 | Then add the spinach puree and mix well. Add about ½ cup water or as required. Mix again.

Step 12 | Simmer for 6 to 7 minutes or more till the spinach is cooked. Season with salt. The gravy or sauce will also thicken by now.

Step 13 | Stir and add garam masala powder. Stir again and then add the paneer (Indian cottage cheese) cubes.

Step 14 | Mix very well and switch off the heat. Be quick as we don't want heat the paneer for more 30 seconds to 1 minute.

Overcooking paneer will make them chewy and dense.

Step 15 | Lastly, add 9-10 tablespoons cream cheese and 3/4 cup water. Stir gently again so that the cream gets incorporated in the gravy uniformly.

Step 16 | Pour the palak paneer in serving bowls. While serving you can top it with some butter or cream. You can also drizzle a few drops of lime or lemon juice on top along with ginger julienne on the palak paneer.

Food for Thought

Vice President ANKUR ASTHANA knows digital organizing strategy takes time, patience, and just the right mix of ingredients to be successful. Not unlike his favorite **Palak Paneer** recipe.

Adapted from a recipe by Dassana Amit
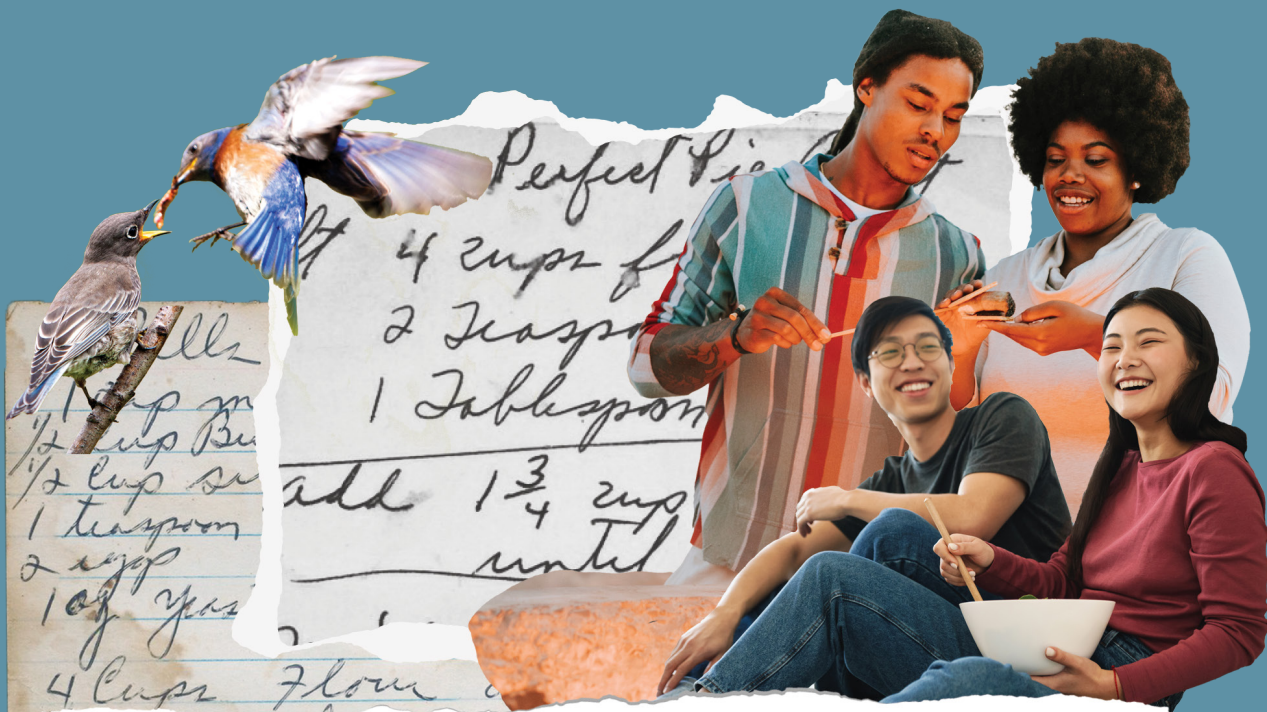
Fundraising

Quick Bites

- Online revenue for the average nonprofit decreased by 4% in 2022.

- Disaster/International Aid and Wildlife/Animal Welfare were the only sectors to report an increase in revenue.

- Much of the decline in revenue occurred on December 31. Overall revenue on that day was 13% lower than on December 31, 2021, including a 22% drop in email revenue.

- There was also a decline on Giving Tuesday. Overall revenue on Giving Tuesday was 13% lower than in 2021, including an 18% drop in email revenue.

- Monthly giving increased by 11%, while one-time revenue declined by 12%. Monthly giving accounted for 28% of all online revenue in 2022.

- The average one-time gift was $121, up from $115 the previous year. The average monthly gift was $25, up from $24.

- Revenue per donor per year was $287 for supporters who made monthly gifts. For those who made only one-time gifts, revenue per donor per year was $192.

- Overall online donor retention for one-time donors was 29%. For one-time donors who made their first gift in 2021, retention was 16%. For previous repeat one-time donors, retention was 49%.

- Membership giving accounted for 64% of online revenue for Cultural nonprofits, with membership revenue growing by 9% in 2022, following 33% growth in 2021.

The act of gathering to share food at a table, a picnic blanket, or mid-air (if you're a bird) is just about the best thing ever. Especially when it includes the very best potluck recipes, rousing conversation, and good company.

Fundraising

Leftovers get a bad rap sometimes, undeservedly so. Sure, that pizza is not going to perk back up in the microwave, and yesterday's french fries may be a lost cause. But so much work goes into preparing a meal, it's often a shame not to get another chance to enjoy it.

And then there are the times when something is just as good and maybe even better the second time around. Jambalaya, for instance, or a rich and hearty maafe. Or — spoiler alert for when we talk about retention in a bit — renewed support from previous donors.

Before we get to that, let's reheat some of the metrics we looked at in the Tasting Menu section (see page 6), including the big one: **Overall online revenue for the average nonprofit declined by 4% from 2021 to 2022.**

Change in online revenue 2021 to 2022

All	-4%
Cultural	-13%
Disaster/International Aid	8%
Environmental	-4%
Health	-6%
Hunger/Poverty	-14%
Public Media	-5%
Rights	-6%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	6%
Large	3%
Medium	-7%
Small	-6%

Note: Includes online revenue from Facebook for 2021 and 2022 where groups provided that information

As you can see, there were two sectors which experienced an increase in revenue: Disaster/International Aid, and Wildlife/Animal Welfare. The 8% increase for Disaster/International Aid nonprofits is most likely attributable to the conflict and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, along with the devastating floods in Pakistan.

The Wildlife/Animal Welfare sector also reported an increase, with 6% higher revenue than in the previous year. It's possible that these stories are related — many animal welfare nonprofits also engage in emergency response work, and may receive higher levels of support in the wake of conflict or natural disasters.

Now that we've warmed up the leftover charts we've already seen, let's season them with some new details.

#2 SNACK + DATA PAIRING RECOMMENDED BY BENCHMARKS PARTICIPANTS: chocolate

Change in online revenue by type 2021 to 2022

All
- -12% (One-time)
- 11% (Monthly)

● One-time
● Monthly

Cultural
- -15%
- 0%

Disaster/International Aid
- 9%
- 12%

Environmental
- -12%
- 13%

Health
- -3%
- 14%

Hunger/Poverty
- -21%
- 10%

Public Media
- -19%
- 1%

Rights
- -10%
- 7%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- 7%
- 15%

Large
- 0%
- 11%

Medium
- -14%
- 11%

Small
- -11%
- 10%
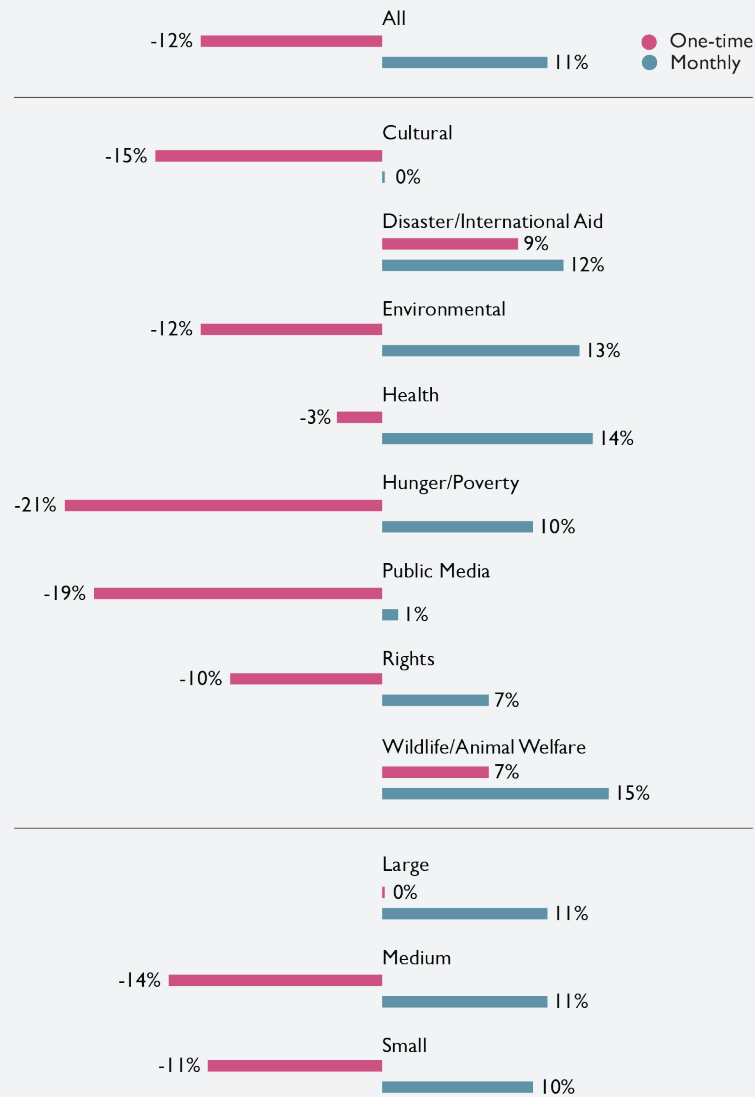
As with overall revenue, Disaster/International Aid and Wildlife/Animal Welfare nonprofits were the only sector to see an increase in one-time giving. **But while one-time giving declined by 12%, monthly giving rose by 11%.** And those gains in monthly giving were distributed much more broadly, with nearly every sector reporting a double-digit increase.

The rise in monthly giving paired with lower one-time revenue means that monthly donations made up a larger share of overall revenue. Monthly giving rose from 24% of all online revenue in 2021 to 28% of all online revenue in 2022. For Public Media nonprofits, which have long embraced a sustaining-giving model, more than half of all online revenue last year was sourced to monthly donations.

These are aggregate, program-level metrics. Now let's take a look at the individual-serving-size numbers.

Monthly giving as a percentage of online revenue

All
- 24% (2021)
- 28% (2022)

● 2021
● 2022

Cultural
- 4%
- 6%

Disaster/International Aid
- 29%
- 25%

Environmental
- 26%
- 31%

Health
- 11%
- 13%

Hunger/Poverty
- 23%
- 32%

Public Media
- 45%
- 54%

Rights
- 35%
- 41%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- 33%
- 32%

Large
- 28%
- 33%

Medium
- 25%
- 30%

Small
- 18%
- 21%
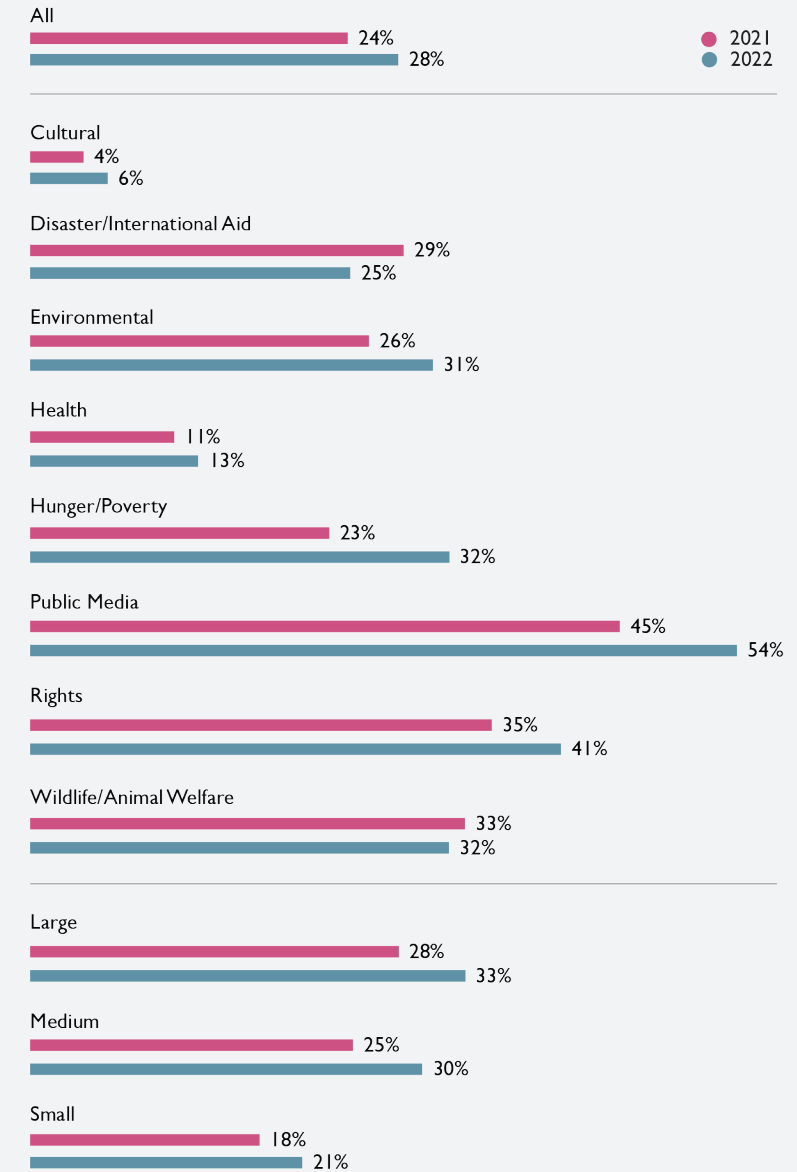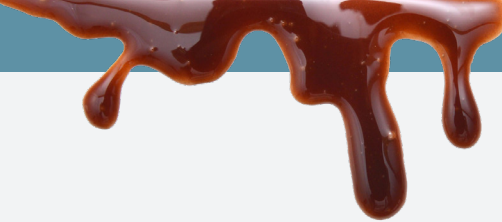
The average gift for both one-time giving and monthly giving was a tad larger in 2022 than in 2021. For one-time giving, average gift rose from $115 to $121; for monthly giving, average gift rose from $24 to $25. While there were differences in average gift size from sector to sector, the year-over-year changes within sectors tended to be fairly small.

Average one-time gift

All
- 2021: $115
- 2022: $121

● 2021
● 2022

Cultural
- 2021: $117
- 2022: $141

Disaster/International Aid
- 2021: $134
- 2022: $147

Environmental
- 2021: $104
- 2022: $104

Health
- 2021: $98
- 2022: $102

Hunger/Poverty
- 2021: $172
- 2022: $175

Public Media
- 2021: $111
- 2022: $120

Rights
- 2021: $119
- 2022: $118

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- 2021: $58
- 2022: $58

Large
- 2021: $110
- 2022: $120

Medium
- 2021: $111
- 2022: $115

Small
- 2021: $129
- 2022: $127

Average monthly gift

All
- 2021: $24
- 2022: $25

● 2021
● 2022

Cultural
- 2021: $27
- 2022: $31

Disaster/International Aid
- 2021: $31
- 2022: $32

Environmental
- 2021: $20
- 2022: $20

Health
- 2021: $29
- 2022: $30

Hunger/Poverty
- 2021: $46
- 2022: $46

Public Media
- 2021: $11
- 2022: $10

Rights
- 2021: $21
- 2022: $22

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- 2021: $19
- 2022: $19

Large
- 2021: $23
- 2022: $25

Medium
- 2021: $23
- 2022: $24

Small
- 2021: $25
- 2022: $28

Gifts per donor per year

● One-time donors
● Monthly donors

All
One-time: 1.2
Monthly: 9.8

Cultural
One-time: 1.1
Monthly: 9.2

Disaster/International Aid
One-time: 1.3
Monthly: 10.0

Environmental
One-time: 1.2
Monthly: 9.8

Health
One-time: 1.2
Monthly: 9.5

Hunger/Poverty
One-time: 1.4
Monthly: 10.2

Public Media
One-time: 1.1
Monthly: 10.1

Rights
One-time: 1.2
Monthly: 10.0

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
One-time: 1.3
Monthly: 9.4

Revenue per donor per year

● One-time donors
● Monthly donors

All
One-time: $192
Monthly: $287

Cultural
One-time: $173
Monthly: $346

Disaster/International Aid
One-time: $227
Monthly: $444

Environmental
One-time: $129
Monthly: $211

Health
One-time: $194
Monthly: $355

Hunger/Poverty
One-time: $259
Monthly: $504

Public Media
One-time: $133
Monthly: $110

Rights
One-time: $199
Monthly: $239

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
One-time: $92
Monthly: $210

The average non-monthly donor made 1.2 gifts over the course of the year. This roughly captures the success of within-year retention: how effectively nonprofits are motivating one-time donors to make additional gifts within the same calendar year.

Meanwhile, monthly donors made an average of 9.8 gifts over the course of the year. This includes donors who began or ended their monthly contributions at some point in 2022, as well as existing, ongoing sustainers. It also includes additional one-time gifts made by monthly donors.

There's a tension here. The average gift for one-time donations was larger than the average monthly gift. On the other hand, sustaining monthly donors gave more times than donors who needed to take a separate action for each donation.

When we combine all giving from monthly donors, and all giving from donors who only made individual gifts, we can assess their total annual value. **The average one-time donor gave $192 over the course of 2022; the average monthly donor contributed $287.**

Overall, monthly donors were more valuable — and for some sectors the difference was dramatic. For Hunger/Poverty nonprofits, one-time donors contributed an average of $259, while monthly donors gave $504 in 2022. Public Media was the only sector where the per-donor value was higher for one-time donors than for monthly donors.

With little change in average gift size, frequency of giving is crucial. Inspiring that second gift (or third, or fourth, or dozenth, or baker's dozenth) is essential to developing an efficient, growing, thriving fundraising program. Over in our Digital Ads section (page 60), we report that the cost to generate a single gift through paid advertising ranged from $47 on search to $305 for video ads.

Recruiting new donors eats up a substantial amount of resources and staff time, like lasagna made from scratch. Retention stretches that meal into the future and helps make sure that effort is worthwhile in the long run — all the ingredients for success are already there, and we just need to make the most of them.

Overall online one-time donor retention

Year	Percentage
2019	33%
2020	38%
2021	28%
2022	29%

Online one-time donor retention

Legend: ● Overall ● New Donors ● Prior Donors

All
- Overall: 29%
- New Donors: 16%
- Prior Donors: 49%

Cultural
- Overall: 15%
- New Donors: 14%
- Prior Donors: 49%

Disaster/International Aid
- Overall: 29%
- New Donors: 15%
- Prior Donors: 49%

Environmental
- Overall: 32%
- New Donors: 19%
- Prior Donors: 48%

Health
- Overall: 26%
- New Donors: 14%
- Prior Donors: 49%

Hunger/Poverty
- Overall: 33%
- New Donors: 16%
- Prior Donors: 46%

Public Media
- Overall: 37%
- New Donors: 22%
- Prior Donors: 50%

Rights
- Overall: 25%
- New Donors: 14%
- Prior Donors: 46%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- Overall: 31%
- New Donors: 19%
- Prior Donors: 50%

Overall retention for 2022 was 29% — that is, 29% of nonprofit donors who made a one-time gift in 2021 made another one-time gift in 2022. This was a slight increase from the previous year, though well below the 38% retention reported for 2020.

Across nonprofits of every type, there is a clear and sharp distinction between retention rates for new online donors, and those for previously retained donors. Only 16% of donors who made their first online gift in 2021 returned to make another donation to that nonprofit in 2022. But prior donors — those who gave at least once from 2018 to 2020, and again in 2021? They had an average retention rate of 49%, with the lowest sector average at 46%.

Let's rehash the data we just went over:

- Monthly giving was up across the board, while one-time giving decreased for nonprofits in most issue areas.

- Monthly giving made up more than a quarter of all online revenue in 2022.

- Average gift rose slightly, but seemed resistant to major swings within sectors.

- The average monthly donor contributed more over the course of the year than the average one-time donor.

- Donors who have a history of repeated giving were much more likely to keep donating than first-time donors.

None of this means that new donor acquisition is not a crucial priority for nonprofits — without it, growth is impossible. It does suggest that there is significant value in emphasizing long-term relationships, growing the monthly donor base, and optimizing retention efforts.

Leftovers are good. Spread the word.

mains

ingredients

1 pound beef brisket
1 whole yellow or white onion
6-8 cloves of garlic
2 scallions
1 tablespoon Guk Ganjang or regular low-sodium soy sauce
1 pound frozen dduk, soaked in cold water for 30 min–1 hour
1 to 2 teaspoon soy sauce
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 tablespoon sesame seed oil
1/2 tsp sugar
Salt and pepper to taste
2 egg omelet, sliced into thin ribbons
1 pack dried, toasted seaweed, sliced into thin ribbons
1 to 2 scallions, sliced thinly on the bias
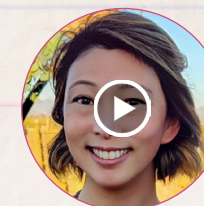
▶ WATCH at mrbenchmarks.com/foodies

Food for Thought

Partner YOONHYUNG LEE loves fundraising metrics almost as much as she loves this **Dduk Guk (Rice Cake Soup)**. Hear her talk about both!

Step 1 | Soak the beef brisket for 20 minutes in cold water to draw out the excess blood. Rinse the beef off and then add to a large pot with 10 cups of water. Add a whole peeled onion, garlic, and the scallions, roughly chopped. Bring to a boil. Skim off any foam. Reduce to medium low heat, cover and let simmer for one hour. Beef should be fork tender. Let it cook longer if it's not ready. Remove the onion, garlic and scallions and discard. This step can be prepared in advance up to 3 days.

Step 2 | Remove the beef and set it on a plate to cool. Once it's cool, you can shred it and add the seasonings: sesame oil, soy sauce, minced garlic, sugar, salt and pepper. Can be prepared in advance and saved until the soup is ready.

Step 3 | Add the dduk (rice cake ovalettes) and let cook for about 7 to 8 minutes, or until the cakes are completely tender. Season with up to 1 tablespoon of soy sauce, and then add salt until it's the right saltiness.

Step 4 | Make the omelet and prepare the seaweeds strips and scallion garnish. Serve individual soup bowls with garnishes on top. Don't forget to serve kimchi on the side!

Change in number of online gifts 2021 to 2022

- All: 0%
- Cultural: -17%
- Disaster/International Aid: 8%
- Environmental: 1%
- Health: 4%
- Hunger/Poverty: -8%
- Public Media: 0%
- Rights: 7%
- Wildlife/Animal Welfare: 6%
- Large: 3%
- Medium: 0%
- Small: -4%
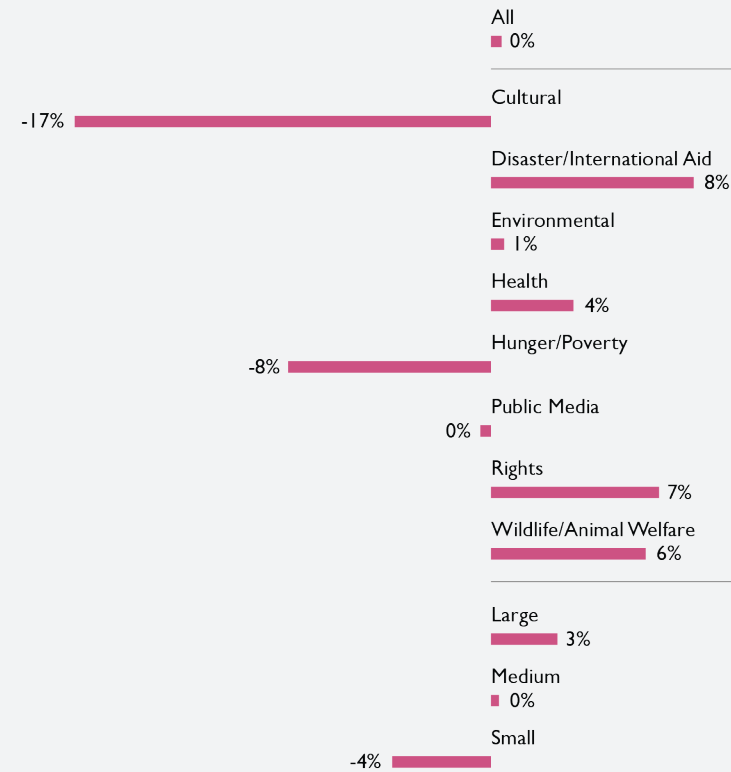
Percent of monthly donors retained in month 13

Started gift in 2019	Started gift in 2020	Started gift in 2021
60%	63%	63%
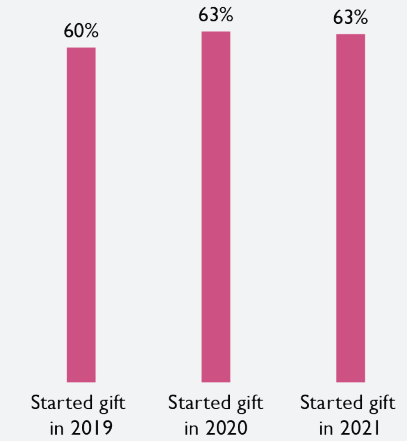
Percent of revenue raised in each month

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
All	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	13%	26%
Cultural	5%	7%	8%	10%	6%	8%	6%	7%	6%	7%	12%	19%
Disaster/International Aid	4%	6%	13%	8%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%	4%	8%	17%
Environmental	6%	6%	6%	7%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	13%	28%
Health	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	13%	33%
Hunger/Poverty	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%	7%	16%	25%
Public Media	7%	7%	10%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%	7%	8%	9%	17%
Rights	5%	5%	8%	4%	6%	6%	5%	5%	6%	5%	9%	25%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	6%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	6%	11%	18%

Percent of monthly donors retained by month

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	100%	92%	88%	86%	83%	80%	77%	74%	72%	69%	67%	64%	63%	60%	58%	56%	55%	53%	52%	51%	49%	48%	46%	46%
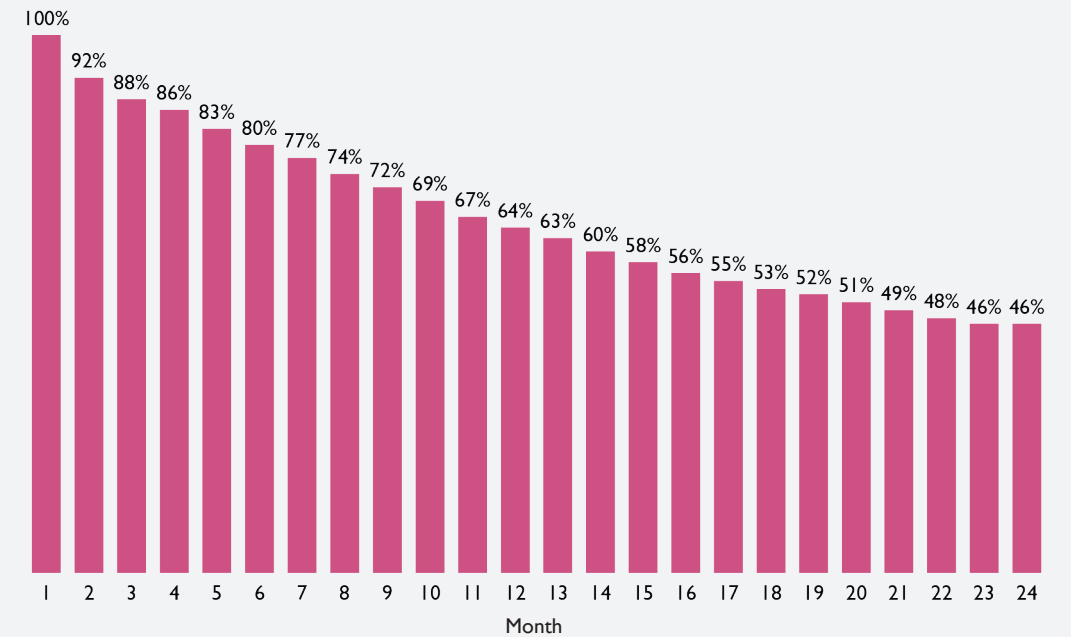
Today's Specials

Membership Metrics

While many nonprofit programs divide their small-dollar programs into the one-time/monthly donor binary explored in this section, there's a third category of giving that is especially important in the Public Media and Cultural sectors.

Membership programs include some of the qualities of both one-time giving (high initial average gifts) and monthly giving (a strong expectation of renewal, inclusion in a specialized group of donors) — like a half-sandwich-and-cup-of-soup combo meal. Membership often comes with a tote bag, year-long admission to a museum, or other tangible benefits. (For our purposes here, we included only the Public Media and Cultural sectors — partly to filter out nonprofits with purely symbolic membership programs, which may include a member card but no other benefits.)

For Public Media nonprofits, "membership" and "individual giving" are essentially interchangeable. These participants reported 100% of online revenue as membership giving, with a 5% decline from 2021. Membership accounted for 64% of online revenue for Cultural non-profits, with membership revenue growing by 9% in 2022, following 33% growth in 2021. That 33% increase was fueled at least in part by the re-opening of museums and other spaces after pandemic-driven shutdowns in 2020.

Membership as a percentage of total online revenue

Cultural
- 2021 — 65%
- 2022 — 64%

Public Media
- 2021 — 100%
- 2022 — 100%
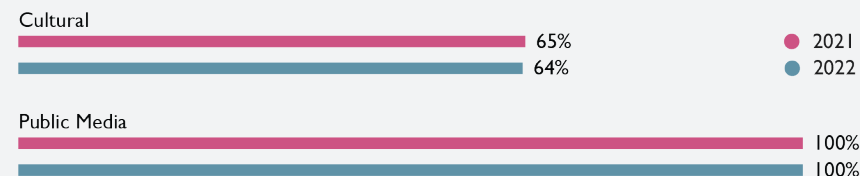
Change in membership revenue

Cultural
- 2020-21 — 33%
- 2021-22 — 9%

Public Media
- 2020-21 — 1%
- 2021-22 — -5%
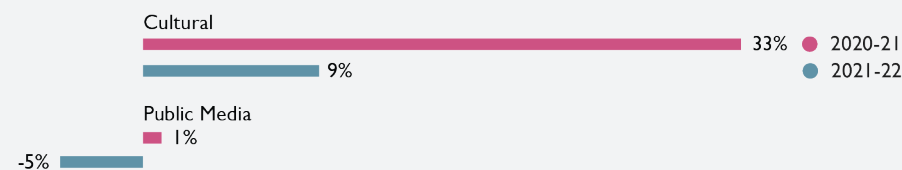
Membership & fundraising message rates
(only groups who send membership messages)

	Click-through Rate	Page Completion Rate	Response Rate	Unsubscribe Rate
Membership	1.0%	31%	0.19%	0.11%
Fundraising	0.37%	7.3%	0.03%	0.14%

For nonprofits with email programs that include both membership and non-membership fundraising, there were sharp differences in performance.

Membership messaging accrued a much higher average click-through rate and page completion rate, leading to a response rate six times larger than the response rate for non-membership fundraising (0.19%, compared to 0.03%). The offer of tangible benefits and membership status could have an impact here, but it's also worth remembering that nonprofits may be sending membership offers to a subset of their audiences that is more likely to give.

Email & Mobile Messaging

Quick Bites

- Email list sizes decreased by 2% in 2022, after 8% and 9% growth in the previous two years.

- Email revenue declined by 4%, the same decline reported in total online revenue.

- For every 1,000 fundraising messages sent, nonprofits raised $90. This marks a 15% decrease from 2021.

- Nonprofits sent an average of 60 email messages per subscriber in 2022, a 15% increase in volume from the previous year. Fundraising appeals made up about half of the total email volume.

- The average response rate for advocacy email was 1.31%, a 8% decline over the previous year.

- The average response rate for fundraising email was 0.09%, an 18% decline compared to 2021.

- Mobile messaging (a.k.a. text messaging or SMS/MMS) subscriber list size increased by 11%. Nonprofits had 236 mobile subscribers for every 1,000 email subscribers.

- On average, nonprofits sent 21 text messages per subscriber per year, a 28% increase in volume from 2021.

Tradition shows up in food in so many ways. From the well-seasoned cast iron skillet to the fine dishware that gets passed down from generation to generation. Even what we call our food — dressing or stuffing, anyone? — or our preference for ingredients, like using corn instead of flour for homemade tortillas, keep us connected to memories, histories, and people we adore.

Email and Mobile Messaging

A young apple tree might take six years or more before it begins bearing fruit. In that time it needs water, sunshine, and a bounty of nutrients. It must be tended and pruned and protected from pests. Skilled laborers care for the tree, harvest and pack and ship the fruit.

It is an enormous amount of work, largely unseen, but a healthy tree can stay productive for many, many years.

Your email and SMS program is an orchard, and it will not blossom without care. Success requires patience, attention, and a commitment to cultivating long-term relationships with supporters. Carelessness leads to decay and blight: bottom-of-the-barrel deliverability, crashing response rates, unsustainable churn.

Email list sizes decreased slightly in 2022 — nonprofits ended the year with 2% fewer subscribers than they began. This dip followed 8% growth in 2021, and 9% growth in 2020.

Mobile messaging data was provided by our friends at Upland Mobile Messaging (thanks Upland!).

#3 SNACK + DATA PAIRING RECOMMENDED BY BENCHMARKS PARTICIPANTS: *popcorn*

List growth

Legend:
- 2020-21
- 2021-22
- 2022-23

All
- 9%
- 8%
- -2%

Cultural
- 11%
- 13%
- 17%

Disaster/International Aid
- 10%
- 13%
- -3%

Environmental
- 0%
- 3%
- -2%

Health
- 21%
- 7%
- -2%

Hunger/Poverty
- 37%
- 6%
- 3%

Public Media
- 9%
- 8%
- -2%

Rights
- 2%
- 9%
- -3%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- 3%
- 20%
- -6%
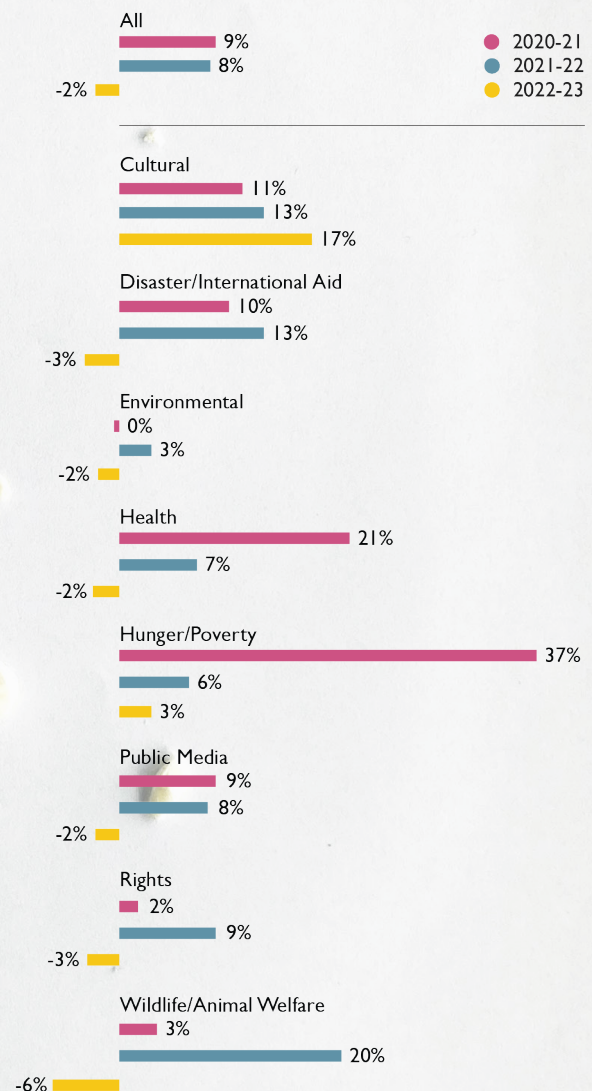
The net change in list size can give a rough sense of a program's health, but it's important to understand both where subscribers are being lost and how nonprofits are bringing in new email supporters.

Over the course of 2022, 9.1% of listmembers were lost due to users unsubscribing. Another 7.8% of email addresses became non-deliverable due to bouncing. (In addition, many nonprofits remove inactive subscribers, typically defined as those who have not engaged in some way over a set period of time. While this is an important ingredient in understanding your evolving list, the churn numbers we report don't reflect inactive removals, in part because it's a gray area. Nonprofits define "inactive" in a variety of ways, and inactive supporters can often be reactivated.)

Churn

Sector	Bounces	Unsubscribes
All	7.8%	9.1%
Cultural	2.2%	8.0%
Disaster/International Aid	7.3%	11.3%
Environmental	9.7%	9.1%
Health	11.4%	7.3%
Hunger/Poverty	13.6%	8.9%
Public Media	5.3%	4.7%
Rights	2.9%	10.3%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	8.0%	11.1%

and quizzes, offline-to-online recruitment, and countless other tactics. For some nonprofits, one source of new subscribers stood out as especially important: lead generation through paid digital advertising.

The ratio of ad-acquired leads to email list size at the start of the year was 0.09. In other words, a nonprofit that began 2022 with an email list of 100,000 addresses acquired 9,000 new leads via ads over the course of the year. See page 60 for more on the symbiotic relationship between email and digital ads.

Nonprofits sent an average of 60 email messages per subscriber in 2022, a 15% increase in volume from the previous year. Overall, about half of these messages were fundraising appeals — but both total volume and the balance of message type varied widely between sectors.

Public Media nonprofits, for example, sent an especially high number of newsletter messages — an average of

These numbers can be a tad upsetting. After all, you worked hard to acquire those names, and you want the biggest base of support possible! But unengaged, uninterested, inactive subscribers are a drain on an email program. They can increase costs, harm deliverability, and make it hard to discern the true outcome of testing. So think of churn as an exercise in pruning, cutting back to promote future growth.

That growth depends on bringing in fresh subscribers through acquisition. This can take many forms — advocacy campaigns, interactive engagements like surveys

Messages per year per subscriber

Sector	Fundraising	Advocacy	Newsletter	Engagement	Other
All	29	10	11	6	4
Cultural	27	5	10	5	6
Disaster/International Aid	57	7	9	19	6
Environmental	40	12	13	7	4
Health	28	2	11	3	3
Hunger/Poverty	27	1	6	7	2
Public Media	20		28	5	
Rights	36	24	10	14	4
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	46	12	11	7	11
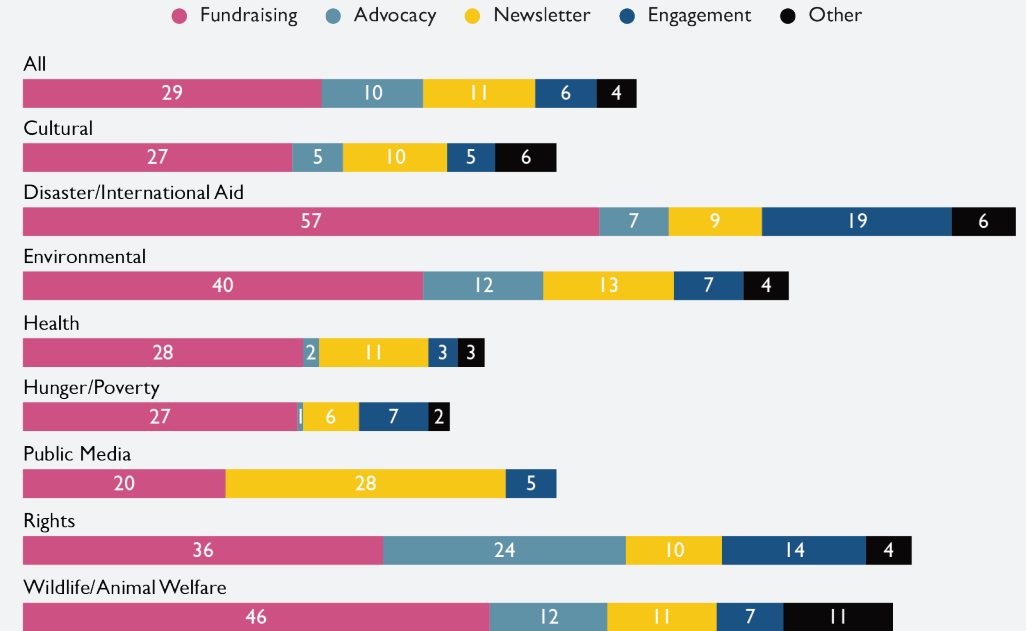
28 per subscriber. A subscriber signed up to a Rights nonprofit's email program could expect to receive 24 advocacy messages over the course of the year, more than double the overall average.

Disaster/International Aid nonprofits sent the highest number of messages — an average of 98 messages, with 57 of them being fundraising appeals. Fundraising in this sector tends to be driven by high-profile humanitarian crises, which in 2022 included flooding in Pakistan and millions of people in

Ukraine displaced by Russia's invasion.

It's worth noting that Disaster/International Aid organizations sent the highest volume not only of fundraising email, but also engagement messaging. This kind of messaging includes surveys, educational resources, and other content meant to strengthen the relationship between a nonprofit and its supporters. **When the scale of catastrophe demands a high-volume fundraising response that might overwhelm sup-**

porters, engagement content helps ensure the list remains fertile ground for fundraising.

Email revenue overall declined by 4% from the previous year — the same decline reported in total online revenue. But for Disaster/International Aid nonprofits, the average change was a 24% increase over 2021 email revenue. The high-profile humanitarian need, especially in response to the conflict in Ukraine, was likely a key driver here.

Change in email revenue 2021 to 2022

- All: -4%
- Cultural: 2%
- Disaster/International Aid: 24%
- Environmental: -11%
- Health: -4%
- Hunger/Poverty: -24%
- Public Media: -34%
- Rights: -3%
- Wildlife/Animal Welfare: 13%
- Large: 8%
- Medium: -6%
- Small: -12%

Email revenue per 1,000 fundraising emails sent

- All: $90
- Cultural: $34
- Disaster/International Aid: $117
- Environmental: $56
- Health: $106
- Hunger/Poverty: $202
- Rights: $42
- Wildlife/Animal Welfare: $42
- Large: $117
- Medium: $72
- Small: $99
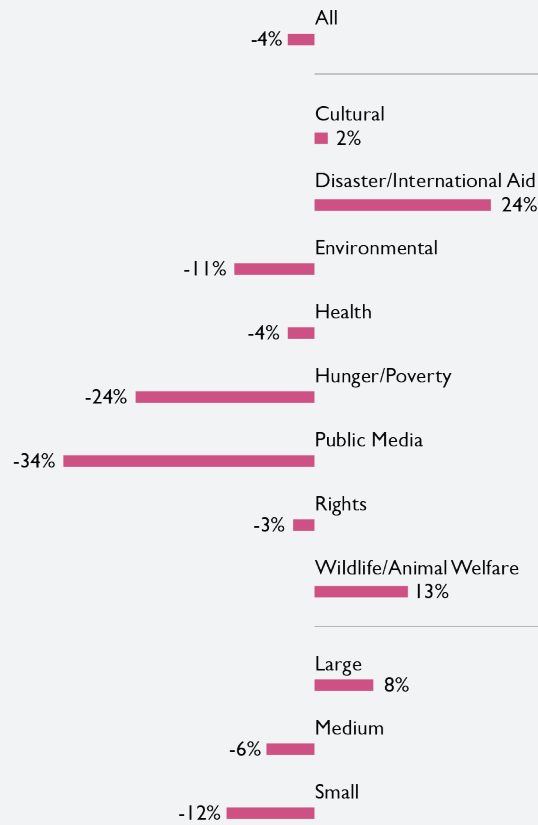
Change in email revenue per 1,000 fundraising emails sent 2021 to 2022

- All: -15%
- Cultural: -10%
- Disaster/International Aid: -3%
- Environmental: -19%
- Health: -19%
- Hunger/Poverty: -20%
- Rights: -16%
- Wildlife/Animal Welfare: -16%
- Large: -10%
- Medium: -22%
- Small: -4%
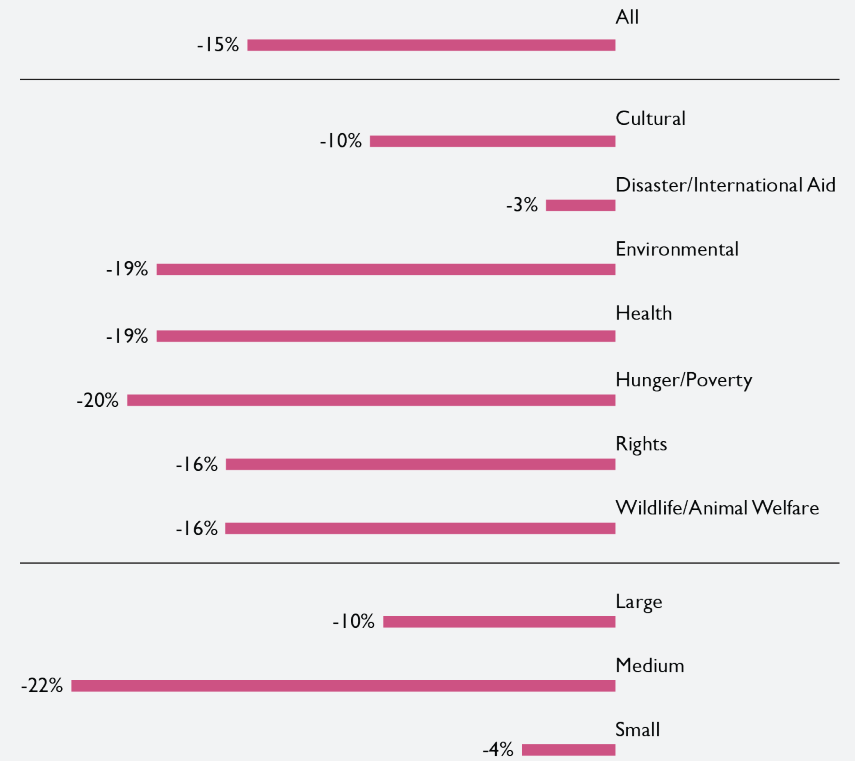
For every 1,000 fundraising emails sent, nonprofits reported average revenue of $90. **In other words, a single fundraising message landing in a single inbox generated 9 cents.** Average revenue per 1,000 fundraising emails declined by 15%, with a double-digit decline for every sector except Disaster/International Aid.

User behavior sits between the messages sent by nonprofits and the return they see (whether in dollars, signature petitions, shares, or other metrics). We saw declines in just about every trackable email metric, including click-through rates, page completion rates, and response rates.

Overall, the fundraising email response rate — the percentage of email recipients who completed a gift — was 0.09% in 2022. That's an 18% drop from 2021, and every sector saw a decline. For advocacy messages, the email response rate is 1.3% this year, an 8% decline.

Email messaging rates

	Click-through Rate		Page Completion Rate		Response Rate		Unsubscribe Rate	
Fundraising	0.54%	(-15%)	20%	(-3%)	0.09%	(-18%)	0.18%	(-12%)
Advocacy	2.1%	(-10%)	63%	(-5%)	1.3%	(-8%)	0.15%	(-7%)
Newsletter	1.1%	(-9%)					0.19%	(-5%)
Welcome Series	3.2%	(+24%)					1.0%	(+12%)
Engagement – Quiz	1.3%	(-9%)					0.15%	(+1%)
Engagement – Survey	2.1%	(-22%)					0.19%	(-12%)
Engagement – Vote	0.75%	(-24%)					0.13%	(+20%)
Event Invitation	1.3%	(-10%)					0.18%	(-14%)

Open Rates Shut Down

For years, we have dutifully reported on open rates as one of the building blocks of email metrics. And for years, we have just as dutifully encouraged readers to take those numbers with a grain of salt, as tracking opens was relatively unreliable.

As Apple's 2021 privacy changes created zillions of false opens, that grain of salt became a boulder, a mountain, a continent. This time around, our average reported open rate was a whopping 34%.

That number is a lie, and lies do not belong in Benchmarks.

You may still find benefit in tracking opens for your own email program, and if you can separate real human opens from illusory machine opens, this can be a useful metric. But as far as Benchmarks is concerned, open rates are 86ed.

Taken all together, 2022 saw nonprofits sending more email, but those email messages reached slightly smaller audiences and raised less per recipient than in the previous year. **And yet, despite these challenges, email still accounted for 14% of all online revenue.**

As nonprofits work to maintain and build email programs, many are also expanding efforts in other channels, including mobile messaging (a.k.a. text messaging or SMS/MMS). The scale of these mobile messaging programs is typically not as large as email programs, which have

had more time to grow for most nonprofits. **For every 1,000 email subscribers, nonprofits had 236 mobile messaging subscribers.** But while email list size declined in 2022, the average number of mobile subscribers increased by 11%.

Share of online revenue from email

All
- 2021: 15%
- 2022: 14%

Legend: ● 2021 ● 2022

Cultural
- 2021: 28%
- 2022: 33%

Disaster/International Aid
- 2021: 11%
- 2022: 9%

Environmental
- 2021: 20%
- 2022: 20%

Health
- 2021: 12%
- 2022: 11%

Hunger/Poverty
- 2021: 8%
- 2022: 10%

Public Media
- 2021: 13%
- 2022: 6%

Rights
- 2021: 14%
- 2022: 18%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- 2021: 17%
- 2022: 17%

Large
- 2021: 11%
- 2022: 11%

Medium
- 2021: 16%
- 2022: 16%

Small
- 2021: 18%
- 2022: 17%
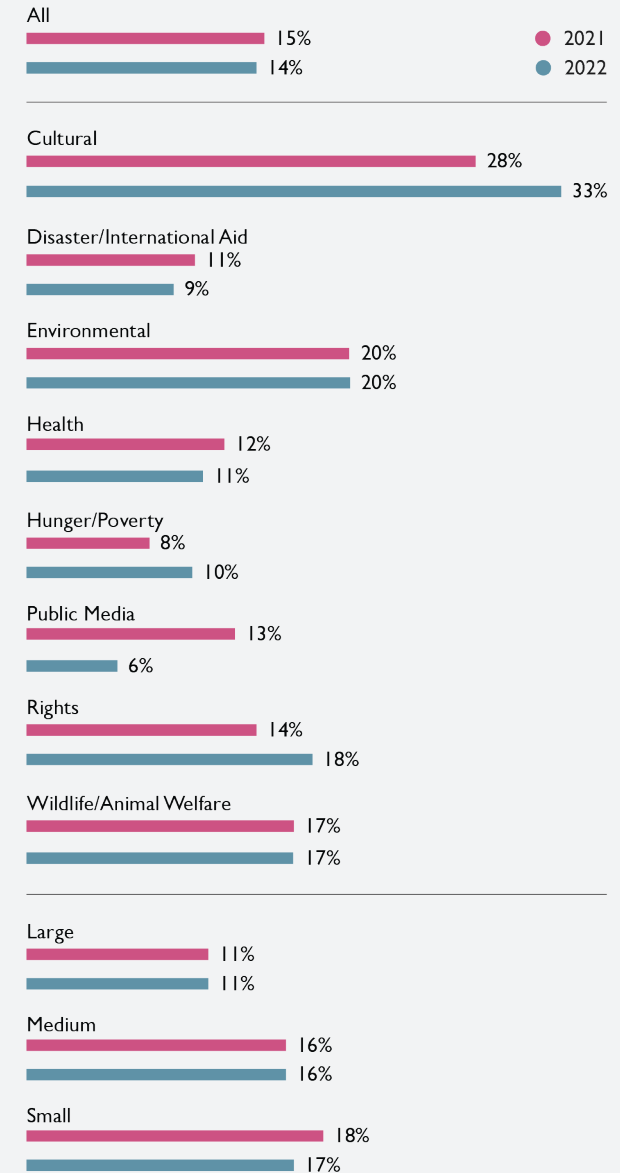
The frequency of messaging was also lower for mobile messaging programs. Nonprofits with mobile programs sent an average of

21 messages per subscriber in 2022. At the 75th percentile, nonprofits sent 37 messages per subscriber.

Mobile messages per month per subscriber

Fundraising	3.0
Advocacy	9.7
Electoral	3.6
Event	2.8
Other	2.2

0.0   5.0   10.0   15.0

Change in mobile messages per year 2021 to 2022

Total	28%
Fundraising	29%
Advocacy	12%
Electoral	127%
Event	9%
Other	-14%
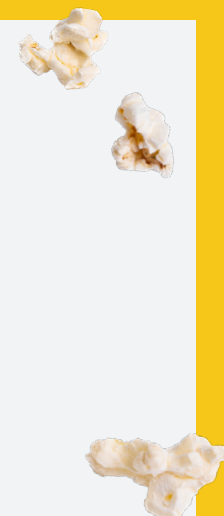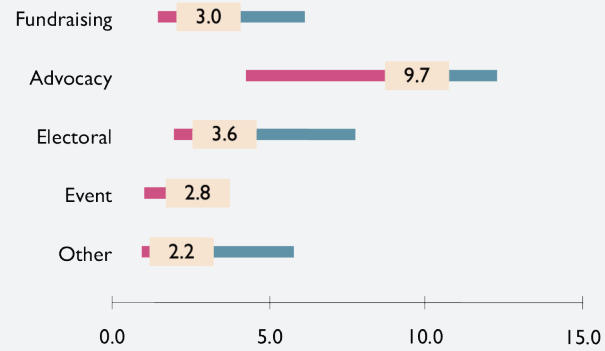
(Note that while our data set includes electoral messaging, none of our participants are themselves candidates or official political party entities. So if it felt like you personally got WAY MORE than this messaging volume blowing up your cell phone last year, especially at the height of election season — it was probably not coming from the nonprofits sending an average of 3.6 electoral messages per year.)

Just as different crops have ideal planting seasons, the volume of mobile messaging changes with the times. Mobile messaging spiked in November and December, which are also busy months for email programs as nonprofits look to leverage Giving Tuesday and end-of-year giving deadlines.

Similarly, an election year is bound to generate more electoral messaging than an off-cycle year, and that's exactly what we saw in 2022. Electoral messaging increased by 127% from the previous year, while overall mobile messaging volume increased by 28%.

Voltaire said that we must cultivate our garden, and while he was mostly not talking about digital messaging channels, it's good advice. The care and maintenance of a nonprofit messaging program is an ongoing and complicated endeavor. It takes resources to acquire new subscribers, and even more to nurture those relationships through engaging, relevant messaging. Successful direct response programs will be responsive to changes in the world around us and attentive to what matters most to supporters.

Mobile messages per subscriber per month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2.1	1.6	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.4	2.1	1.6	3.5	2.5

Email messaging rates by type and sector

	Click-through Rate			Page Completion Rate		Response Rate		Unsubscribe Rate			
	Advocacy	Fundraising	Newsletter	Advocacy	Fundraising	Advocacy	Fundraising	All	Advocacy	Fundraising	Newsletter
All	2.1%	0.54%	1.1%	63%	20%	1.3%	0.09%	0.19%	0.15%	0.18%	0.19%
Cultural	—	0.27%	0.92%	—	7.3%	—	0.03%	0.20%	—	0.15%	0.16%
Disaster/International Aid	1.2%	0.68%	1.3%	55%	31%	0.49%	0.13%	0.21%	0.16%	0.19%	0.20%
Environmental	2.5%	0.54%	1.8%	70%	11%	1.5%	0.07%	0.18%	0.14%	0.17%	0.14%
Health	—	0.62%	1.4%	—	25%	—	0.10%	0.24%	—	0.26%	0.25%
Hunger/Poverty	1.7%	0.67%	0.81%	51%	27%	0.68%	0.15%	0.18%	0.17%	0.18%	0.19%
Public Media	—	0.40%	1.3%	—	—	—	—	0.09%	—	0.23%	0.08%
Rights	1.8%	0.39%	0.57%	56%	17%	0.77%	0.06%	0.16%	0.15%	0.17%	0.17%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	2.8%	0.42%	1.0%	86%	18%	2.6%	0.08%	0.16%	0.12%	0.16%	0.13%

Change in fundraising response rate 2021 to 2022
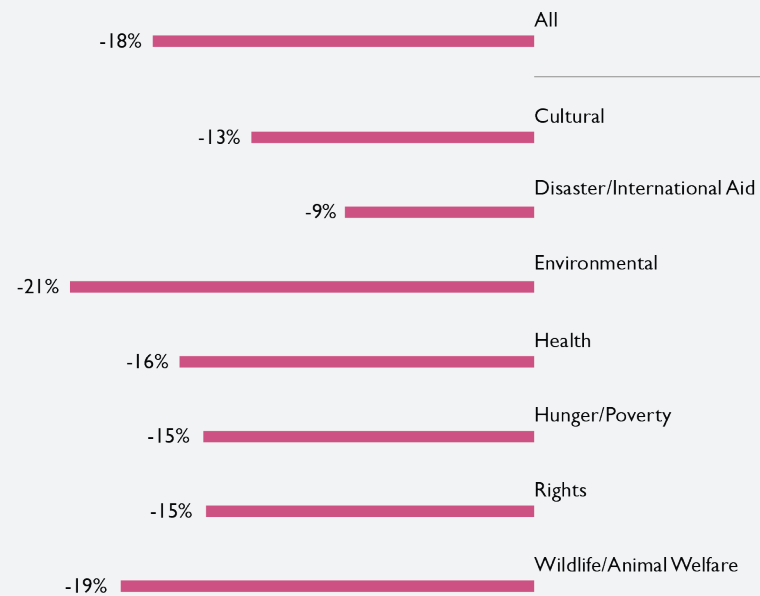
All	-18%
Cultural	-13%
Disaster/International Aid	-9%
Environmental	-21%
Health	-16%
Hunger/Poverty	-15%
Rights	-15%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	-19%

Messages per subscriber per month by type

Legend: ● Fundraising ● Advocacy ● Newsletter ● Engagement

Messages per month per subscriber

Category	Value
All	5.6
Cultural	5.5
Disaster/International Aid	8.0
Environmental	7.7
Health	3.3
Hunger/Poverty	4.1
Public Media	5.2
Rights	6.0
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	6.9
Large	7.0
Medium	6.7
Small	3.4

(x-axis: 0.0 – 5.0 – 10.0)
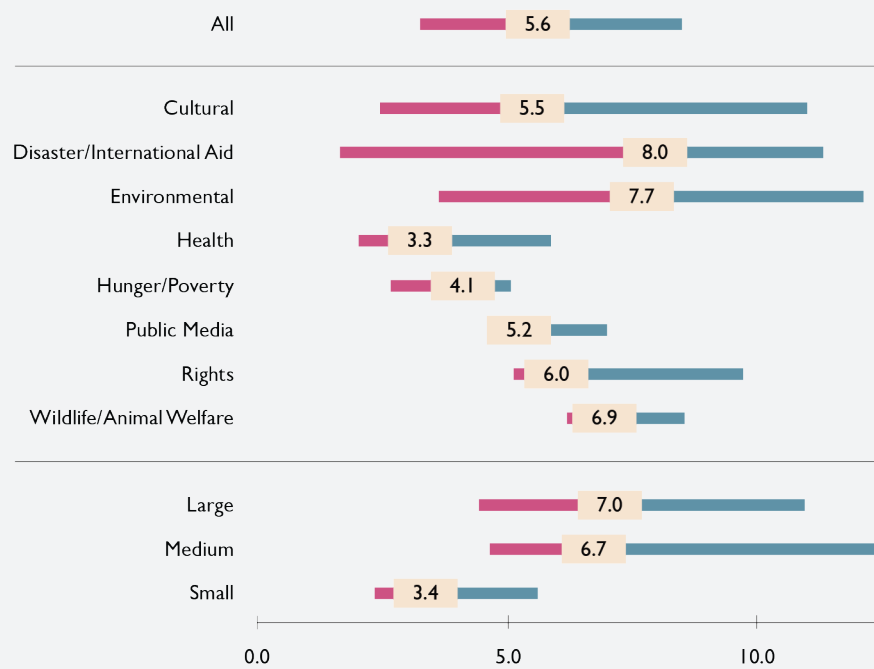
Messages per subscriber per month

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
All	3.2	3.6	4.3	4.2	3.2	4.3	3.0	4.2	4.0	3.9	6.5	8.3
Cultural	3.1	3.3	2.6	2.9	1.0	8.2	1.0	3.7	2.6	2.0	5.6	6.6
Disaster/International Aid	3.4	4.7	6.4	5.4	4.6	5.2	3.2	6.6	4.6	5.2	7.3	11.2
Environmental	3.5	5.4	5.4	5.4	4.5	4.5	5.1	5.8	4.7	5.4	10.5	10.7
Health	1.3	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.8	2.7	1.1	1.7	1.8	1.8	5.6	5.1
Hunger/Poverty	2.4	2.0	2.2	1.7	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.9	2.9	6.1	5.6
Public Media	4.5	4.2	7.0	4.3	4.4	5.7	3.7	4.7	4.1	4.9	6.6	7.3
Rights	3.8	2.9	7.7	4.5	3.7	6.0	3.4	5.3	4.4	5.0	7.9	13.0
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	5.2	5.6	6.5	6.5	7.1	6.1	6.4	6.0	5.0	6.3	8.7	13.6

Change in email messages per year 2021 to 2022

Category	Value
Total	15%
Advocacy	5%
Fundraising	16%
Newsletter	6%
Engagement	11%
Other	24%

Mobile subscribers per 1,000 email subscribers

236

Mobile list growth 2021 to 2022

+11%
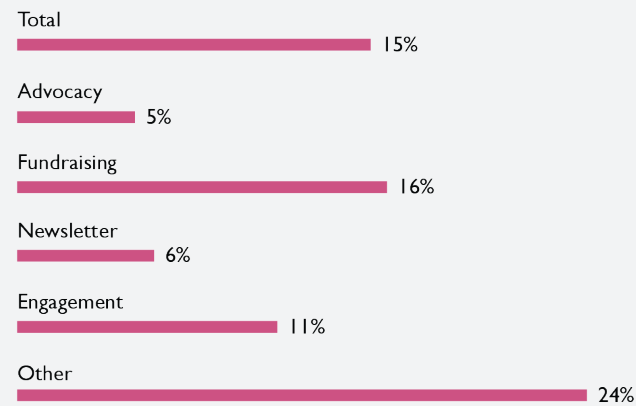
Mobile messaging statistics

	Response Rate		Unsubscribe Rate	
Mobile Fundraising	—	—	0.75%	(-1%)
Mobile Advocacy Click Messages	—	—	0.70%	(-5%)
Mobile Advocacy Call Messages	1.46%	(-6%)	0.51%	(-10%)

Salsa Macha

Salsa macha is a rich, nutty salsa that sits sort of at the opposite end of the spectrum from a fresh and vibrant pico de gallo. It originated in Veracruz, which is not the part of Mexico that my family is mostly from. So the downside is, I don't have an old family recipe passed down from my abuelita to share with you. But the upside is, we're not going to worry too much about adhering to a traditionalist approach here and can feel free to experiment a bit.

The main variables are how spicy you want it (which you can scale up or down based on the amount and type of chiles) and how chunky/crunchy you want it (which you control with the final blender step).

I find it easiest to build the salsa in a two-cup pyrex measuring cup, and use an immersion blender for the mixing.

ingredients

½ a medium onion, thinly sliced (Right off the bat here we have strayed pretty far from tradition. You can skip step 1 and omit the onions if you like, but frying onions in the microwave is a fun magic trick I stole from this Serious Eats[1] post and I recommend it.)

1 cup peanut oil or other neutral oil (Some people use olive oil, but I feel like it competes too much with the other flavors. But you do you!)

~ 15 dried chiles de árbol (This will be spicy! Feel free to dial this way back if you like — it will still be delicious.)

1-2 chile guajillo and/or chile ancho and/or chile pasilla (Or whatever other dried chiles you want, the point is to add a bit of sweetness and complexity to balance the sharp heat of the chiles de árbol.)

2 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly smashed with the side of your knife (lol my dad would be so mad, he hates when I add garlic to salsas.)

2/3 cup peanuts (Or use other nuts! I've been happy with cashews, and sesame seeds are pretty common. Allergy warnings, of course.)

Salt

Step 1 | Put the onion and oil in your glass measuring cup, stir the onions with chopsticks or a fork to break the slices apart. Microwave on high for 5 minutes, stir it up again. Then keep microwaving for 30-60 seconds at a time until the onions are a pale golden brown. Strain out the onions and spread them on a plate or baking tray lined with paper towels to drain. Reserve the oil for later.

Step 2 | Toast the peanuts in a stainless steel pan over low heat until lightly browned and toasty, like 3 minutes or so. Set them aside.

Step 3 | Rinse the chiles, and remove the stems from the chiles de árbol. (For big chiles like anchos, it's usually easier to toast them first and then use kitchen shears to cut out the stem and seed pod).

Step 4 | Wipe out the pan, turn the heat up to medium, and toast the chiles. The chiles de árbol will be done pretty quick, just a couple minutes — grab them out of the pan with tongs as they get dark and shiny and then set them aside. The bigger chiles like anchos take a little longer, but that's okay we are not in a hurry.

Step 5 | Once all the chiles are out of the pan, pour the oil into the pan over medium heat. While the oil is heating, peel your garlic cloves and give them a light smash with the side of your knife. Then drop them into the oil for a minute or so, until they start to brown and things smell nice and garlicky.

Step 6 | Combine the chiles, garlic, and oil in your large glass measuring cup. The still-hot oil will make the chiles sizzle in a fun and exciting way.

Step 7 | Use an immersion blender to blend the chiles, garlic, and oil until they're as smooth as they are going to get. Remember our onions from step 1? Add those in, along with the peanuts, and pulse until you like the consistency. The goal is a rich base with crunchy, chewy bits adding texture and excitement.

Step 8 | You'll probably want to add salt, and you may also want adjust the flavor with vinegar (apple cider or rice wine) and/or MSG powder. Add some cumin if you want to make my dad even more mad than we already did with the garlic.

Step 9 | You're done! Pour the salsa into a jar or two. It will tend to separate like all-natural peanut butter, so stir before using and store in the fridge to help prevent that separation. Eat it with chips, or put it on eggs, noodles, hot dogs, literally any food that you might want to enjoy while reading Benchmarks.

▷ WATCH at mrbenchmarks.com/foodies

Food for Thought

Senior Creative Director (and Benchmarks author!) WILL VALVERDE chats about one-time and monthly giving while making this delicious **Salsa Macha**.

[1] www.seriouseats.com/fry-garlic-shallots-in-microwave

Quick Bites

- Nonprofit digital ads spend increased by 28% in 2022, with nonprofits reinvesting $0.11 in digital ads for every dollar of online revenue.

- Direct fundraising accounted for 56% of all ad spending. Branding, awareness, and education ads made up 26% of spending, and nonprofits spend 15% of ad budgets on lead generation.

- Ad-driven lead generation was an important source of email subscribers. For every 100,000 email subscribers at the start of 2022, nonprofits acquired 9,000 new subscribers via ads.

- The average cost per click (CPC) for search ads was $3.63; for social media ads, the average CPC was $4.55.

- Search advertising had the lowest cost per donation at $47 and highest return on ad spend (ROAS) at $2.75.

- When relying on Google Grants, nonprofits reported a "cost" per donation of $1,208 and a ROAS of $0.07. (Which is to say: the results for Google Grants ads are significantly weaker than for paid search on the whole. We put the "cost" in quotes here because the Grant program means no one actually pays those amounts.)

- View-through revenue (revenue from donors who made a donation from seeing, but not clicking on, an ad) accounted for 26% of all giving sourced to digital ads.

Digital Ads

Have you ever meandered around the grocery store a little bit longer than usual, imagination wild, searching for a new ingredient to try? It can be scary to dive into food experiments. As data people, we know when there are a lot of variables, things can sometimes go awry. But even in failure, there's always cereal as a backup.

Digital Ads

Television ads for kids' cereals used to end with an extraordinary claim: these Sugar-Crusted Double Marshmallow Chocoroos™ are *part of a balanced breakfast!* And they'd show a bowl of wondrously dyed cereal next to a glass of orange juice, a glass of milk, four slices of buttered toast, fruit salad, three eggs over medium, a short stack of pancakes, and another glass of orange juice, somehow?

The obvious takeaway is that you should probably not take nutritional advice from the makers of Gooey Frooty Gobsmacks™. But the harder truth is that it's extremely difficult for people to agree on what actually constitutes balanced nutrition. Different tastes, restrictions, priorities, allergies, nutritional needs, cultural expectations, and more lead to infinite variation on what we mean when we say "balanced."

That same holds true when we're deciding how to allocate resources, investments, and objectives in a digital ads campaign. The challenge isn't so much that a given platform or audience is good or bad, any more than High Fructose Happy Flakes® are healthy or unhealthy on their own. It's about

Investment in digital advertising divided by total online revenue

Category	Value
All	$0.11
Cultural	$0.15
Disaster/International Aid	$0.10
Environmental	$0.12
Health	$0.18
Hunger/Poverty	$0.04
Public Media	$0.04
Rights	$0.13
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	$0.17
Large	$0.10
Medium	$0.14
Small	$0.11
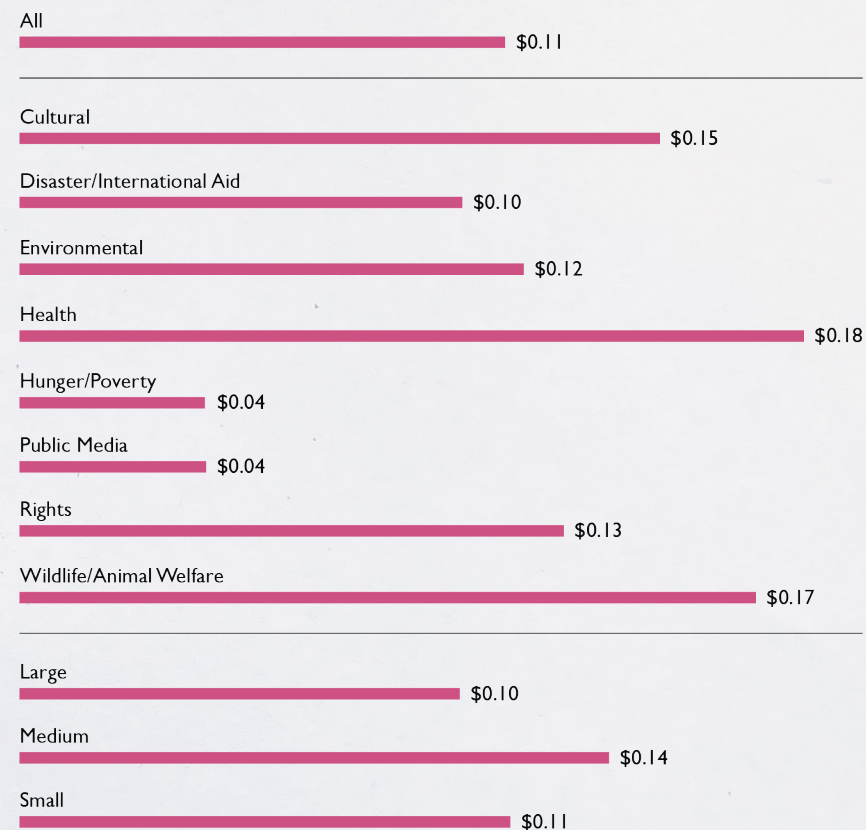
For a nonprofit who saw online revenue of $1m, they spent an average of $110,000 in digital advertising.

building that balanced diet that moves your program forward. Now let's get ~~cereal~~ serious and take a look at how nonprofits struck that balance in 2022.

The first decision a nonprofit needs to make is the size of the digital ads budget ("zero" is an option, but not a good one — we'll see in a moment how important advertising is to a thriving digital program). **Last year, nonprofits reinvested $0.11 in digital ads for every dollar raised online.** That means that a nonprofit that raised $1,000,000 through online channels in 2022 would have spent $110,000 on digital ad placements. This spending represents an increase of 28% over 2021 digital ads investments, and we see significant variation in both the level of investment and the year-over-year change between sectors.

Change in investment in digital advertising 2021 to 2022

All — 28%

Cultural — -17%

Disaster/International Aid — 89%

Environmental — 4%

Health — 35%

Hunger/Poverty — 29%

Public Media — 34%

Rights — 9%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare — 24%

Large — 30%

Medium — 29%

Small — 17%
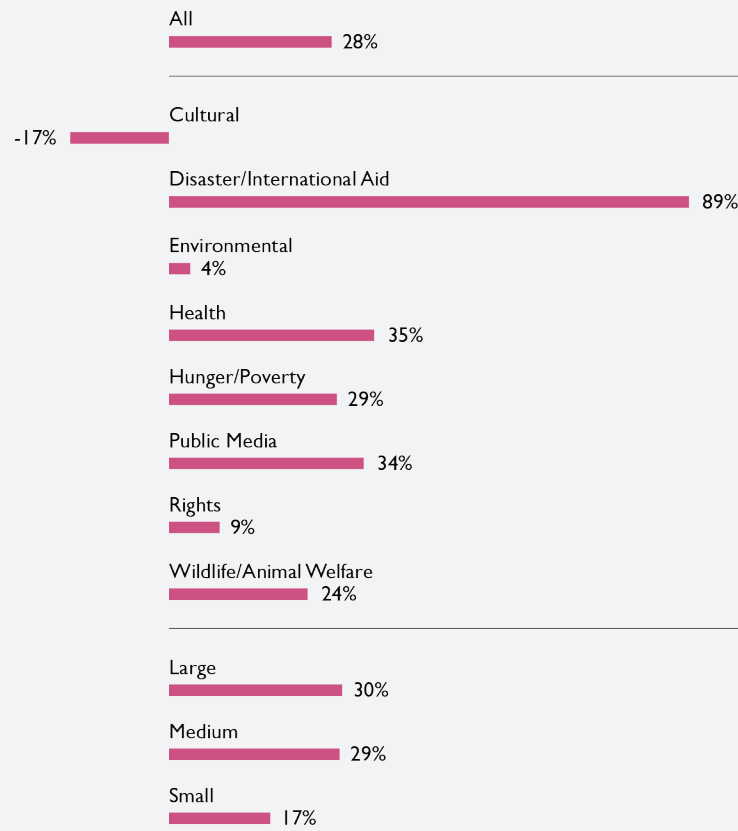
Percent of digital advertising budget by goal

	All	Large	Medium	Small
Branding, Awareness, or Education	26%	29%	15%	7%
Direct Fundraising	56%	56%	58%	54%
Lead Generation	15%	13%	23%	22%
Other	3%	3%	4%	16%

Cultural nonprofits were the only sector that reported a decline from 2021 digital ads spending. Meanwhile, Disaster/International Aid increased digital ad spending by a whopping 89% over the previous year, with emergency response efforts in Ukraine likely the driving force.

It's worth noting that despite the increased investment in advertising for Disaster/International Aid nonprofits, the ratio of spending to revenue was $0.10 per dollar — just about the overall average for all nonprofits. That suggests that the growth in ad spending kept pace with an increase in revenue, and that despite the increased investment there may still have been room for effective additional advertising efforts for Disaster/International Aid nonprofits.

Now that we have a sense of the scale of ads spending by nonprofits, let's dig into how they distributed that investment.

The largest portion of ad budgets was devoted to direct fundraising. Overall, 56% of ad spending went to direct fundraising, and the range by nonprofit size was relatively small.

Large nonprofits (those with annual online revenue over $3MM) spent 56% of ad budgets on fundraising; Medium nonprofits (with annual online revenue between $500k and $3MM) had the largest portion of digital fundraising, at 58%; and Small nonprofits (with annual online revenue under $500k) reported spending 54% of ad budgets on fundraising.

Looking beyond fundraising, nonprofits of different sizes expressed different priorities through spending. Large nonprofits spent just 13% of budgets on lead generation, and instead emphasized fundraising and branding, awareness, or education ads (29% of all spending). Acquiring new subscribers ate up a greater shared of spending for Small (22%) and Medium (23%) nonprofits.

Those differences in spending reflect variation in strategy, goals, and opportunities. Now let's take a closer look at how nonprofits distributed ad budgets by channel, specifically for fundraising advertising.

Percent of direct fundraising budget by channel

	All	Large	Medium	Small
Display	22%	19%	35%	48%
Search	35%	35%	31%	32%
Meta	36%	38%	24%	20%
Twitter	0%	0%	0%	0%
TikTok	0%	0%	0%	0%
Video	5%	5%	2%	0%
Other	3%	3%	7%	0%

Nonprofits of all sizes spent about a third of fundraising ad budgets on search. It appears that there is broad agreement that search is an important part of a balanced fundraising ad diet no matter who you are, with essential vitamins and minerals. We'll see some of the reasons for that when we review return on ad spend.

Beyond search, we see a greater divergence by group size. Large nonprofits invested more in Meta, while Small nonprofits prioritized display. As privacy changes by Apple and the deprecation of cookies continue to affect the digital ads landscape, Meta has been challenging for everyone. It may be that Small nonprofits felt these challenges more strongly than Large nonprofits, and scaled back accordingly. While Twitter and TikTok

were not significant channels for fundraising advertising, Large nonprofits did spend $5 of every $100 on video. Larger budgets can open up possibilities in emerging channels, or those with uncertain return or high costs of entry. As nonprofits continue to seek new audiences, we may see greater investments in these other channels in the coming years.

We've examined the balance of ad spending by goal and by channel. We can also think about ads budgets as a binary split between prospecting (acquiring new supporters) and retargeting (reaching existing ones). **Overall, nonprofits devoted a greater share of budgets to reaching prospects than existing supporters. For every dollar spent on retargeting, they spent $1.19 on prospecting.**

Now that we have a better understanding of the choices nonprofits made, we can explore performance, starting with return on ad spend (ROAS) for fundraising advertising.

Digital advertising: ROAS

	Display	Search	Meta	Twitter	Video
All	$0.33	$2.75	$0.50	$0.41	$0.13
Cultural	—	$3.75	$0.32	—	—
Disaster/International Aid	$0.12	$4.96	$0.66	$0.87	$0.13
Environmental	$0.08	$1.97	$0.30	—	—
Health	$0.60	$3.14	$0.51	—	$0.06
Hunger/Poverty	$0.96	$4.84	$1.07	—	$2.51
Public Media	—	$6.77	$0.21	—	—
Rights	$0.26	$1.61	$0.17	—	—
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	$0.21	$1.51	$0.52	—	$0.27
Large	$0.65	$3.24	$0.71	$0.39	$0.17
Medium	$0.28	$2.10	$0.27	$0.42	$0.02
Small	$0.21	$2.79	$0.58	—	—

Remember how nonprofits of every size devoted a third of all spending to search? Well, **nonprofits of every size and across all sectors also saw the highest ROAS of any channel with search advertising.** This makes sense: search spend tends to be focused on the brand, and you can bet that the people Googling 'donate to [nonprofit]' are some of the best people you can spend money to reach!

An immediate question arises: if search has such a high ROAS compared to other channels, why didn't nonprofits devote even more resources to this channel?

Why isn't the whole program just search? Why can't you have pizza in the morning, pizza in the evening, and pizza at suppertime?

The problem is, of course, that the search audience is finite. Once a nonprofit has hit a spend level high enough to reach most or all users with relevant queries, they'll need to look elsewhere to continue to expand their audience.

Meta had the next-highest ROAS overall, but we saw huge variance between sectors. For Hunger/Poverty nonprofits, the Meta return was $1.07 for every

dollar spent. For Rights nonprofits, the ROAS was just $0.17. The wide range we see may be due to the overall uncertainty in targeting on Meta due to new privacy settings for Apple and Google. As cookies are deprecated and users become more difficult to track, nonprofits will need to experiment more in their tactics and targeting, and we can expect less consistent results.

While search advertising was a relatively level playing field, Large nonprofits appeared to have a distinct advantage in other channels. For display advertising, Large nonprofits reported a ROAS of $0.65, compared to $0.28 for Medium and $0.21 for Small nonprofits.

This makes sense if we think about display performance

as being primarily driven by establishing and aggressively reinforcing a nonprofit's brand. **The bigger or more prominent your brand is to begin with, the more effective display will tend to be.** This doesn't mean that Small nonprofits shouldn't invest in display — quite the opposite! — it just means that they have more of an uphill battle.

The changes in online privacy protections are affecting more than ad performance; they are also making it more challenging for nonprofits to assess their programs. **We found that view-through revenue accounted for 26% of the total ads return — but this number should be taken with a grain of salt, and likely under-**

counts the impact of advertising.

View-through revenue is tracked in a variety of ways, but most methods require third-party cookies, which are blocked (or partially blocked) on some browsers already and will be fully blocked on the largest browser (Chrome) starting in 2024. Successful display and video advertising in particular depends on view-through revenue, so these changes will make it more difficult to measure the full value of these channels.

For the next couple years, nonprofits should expect continuing challenges in measuring and optimizing display and video (not to mention emerging channels like podcasts and connected TV, which we group under

"Other" in this study). As is often the case, there will probably be an advantage for nonprofits that are able to make early investments in testing.

All of the above findings are based on paid placements, but many nonprofits include Google Grants as part of their digital advertising mix. These campaigns are run with ad credits; we're presenting them in terms of "dollars spent" for consistency's sake, but just remember that those dollars are not actually coming from nonprofit budgets.

Google Grant ads are not nearly as effective as paid advertising. The ROAS for these campaigns is just $0.07 overall. In comparison, the average ROAS for paid search was $2.75, a whopping 39 times higher. Even though Google Grant placements are free, the net return is still significantly lower than paid search.

There are a few reasons why paid search outperforms Google Grant ads by such a wide margin, but mostly they boil down to the fact that Google wants it that way.

Google imposes restrictions on Grant ads, including a spend cap of $10k per month (below what many nonprofits need to capture all searches for their brand terms) and a cost-per-click cap of $2 (well below our average search CPC of $3.63). These restrictions limit nonprofits' ability to capture the high-value traffic that drives up ROAS in paid campaigns, and may create a self-fulfilling prophecy: nonprofits know that Grant lacks the flexibility of paid accounts, so they choose to move their most important campaigns into a paid account.

Perhaps most notable, Google displays Grant ads below paid ads. If two nonprofits are bidding on the same term, ads from a paid account will always appear above the one bidding from a Grant. Users tend to engage with the first search results they are served, which makes paid ads much more likely to capture the click and eventual donation.

None of this is to say that Google Grants are not worth including as part of the overall advertising mix for nonprofits. For example, nonprofits saw 431 site visits for every $1k in Grant spend. **If an nonprofit were to spend their full $10k budget every month, that would be the equivalent of 51,720 additional site visits in a year.** Those visits can generate email signups, petition signatures, and volunteer recruitment, or help meet any number of important goals.

Google grants: ROAS

All
$0.07

Cultural
$0.75

Disaster/International Aid
$0.08

Environmental
$0.13

Health
$0.06

Hunger/Poverty
$0.05

Rights
$0.04

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
$0.06

Large
$0.07

Medium
$0.08
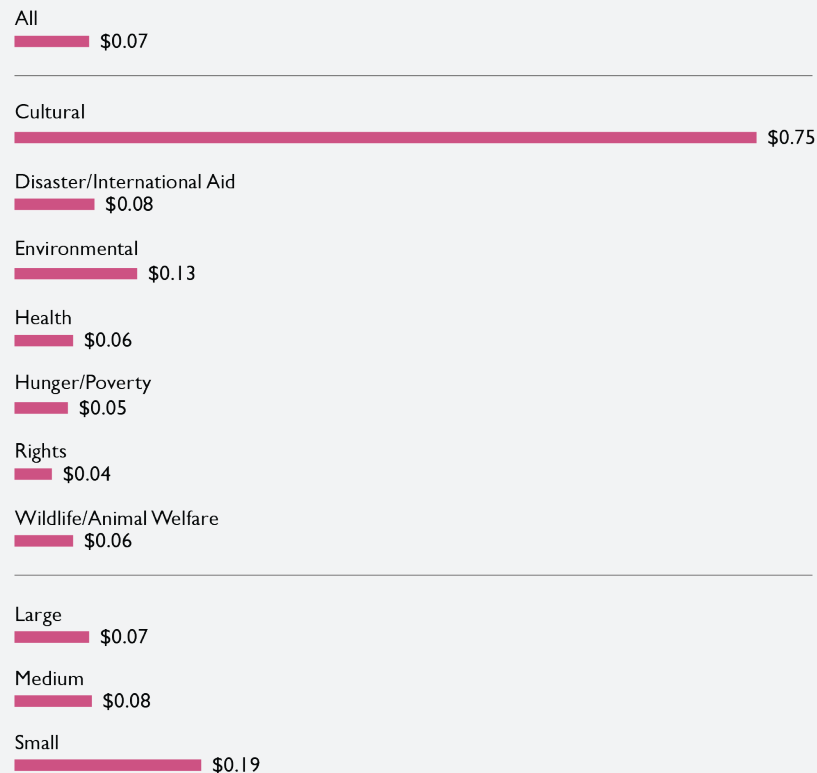
Small
$0.19

Google grants visits per $1,000 spent

All
431

Cultural
701

Disaster/International Aid
232

Environmental
411

Health
525

Hunger/Poverty
270

Public Media
544

Rights
374

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
494

Large
481

Medium
493
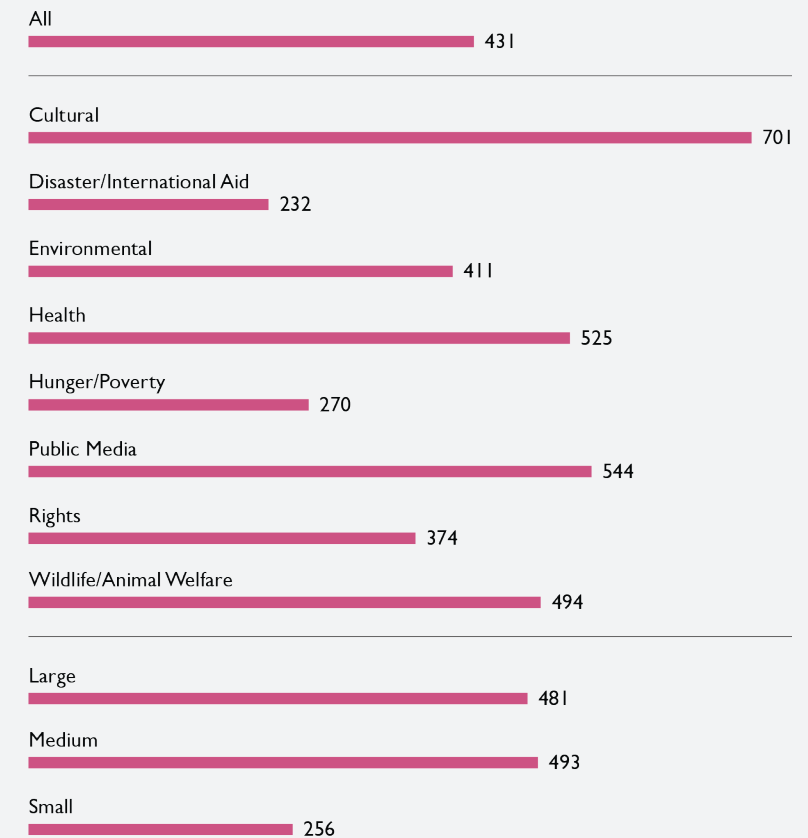
Small
256

As we've seen, a balanced ads diet includes lead generation in addition to direct fundraising — and Small nonprofits in particular tended to prioritize lead generation in their budgets. While these ads aren't intended to generate an immediate return, they are critical to building a growing base of support.

We're taking a fresh approach to measuring the impact of lead generation advertising this year by measuring the ratio of ads-acquired leads email list size at the start of the year.

Here's what that means: if the median nonprofit had 100,000 email subscribers at the beginning of the year, they acquired 9,000 new leads via ads over the course of 2022. When we understand how important a growing list is to a healthy email program, and how difficult list growth is (overall, email list size declined slightly last year), that is an enormously consequential result.

We explore what this all means in more detail in our Tasting Menu section (page 6), but the takeaway is clear. Ads and email programs are deeply intertwined, and ignoring one can severely damage the other.

Cost per lead varied widely by nonprofit sector, and even more so by platform.

Cost per digital advertising lead by platform

	Meta	TikTok	Google/Youtube	Other
All	$4.39	$12.60	$9.45	$1.78
Disaster/International Aid	$3.85	—	—	$1.46
Environmental	$4.38	—	$9.45	$1.61
Health	$7.75	—	$38.57	$17.13
Hunger/Poverty	$9.90	—	—	$3.05
Public Media	$4.65	—	—	—
Rights	$3.24	—	$32.12	$4.61
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	$2.62	—	$1.43	—
Large	$4.89	—	$6.05	$2.05
Medium	$3.34	—	$28.22	$1.68
Small	$4.71	—	$61.79	$3.46

Ratio of ad-acquired leads to start of year email list size

All	0.09
Disaster/International Aid	0.15
Environmental	0.08
Health	0.05
Hunger/Poverty	0.12
Public Media	0.01
Rights	0.28
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	0.16
Large	0.08
Medium	0.09
Small	0.13
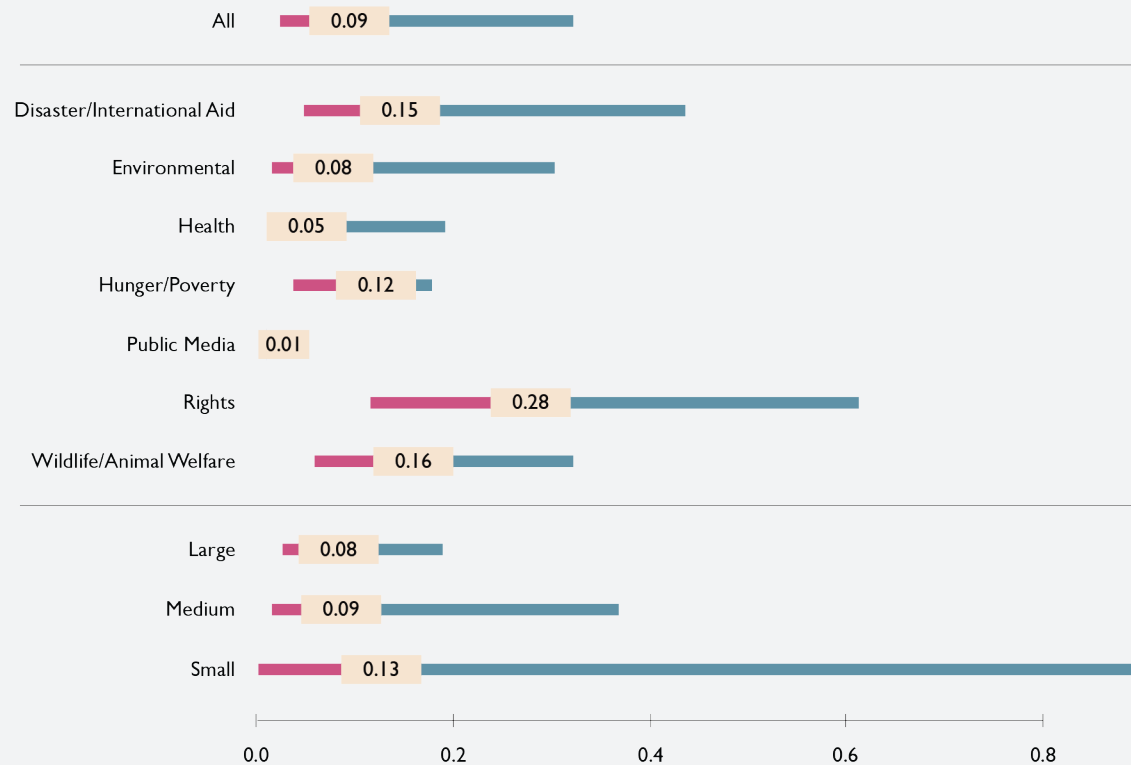
Meta generated leads at the lowest cost, with an average cost per lead of $4.39. While Large nonprofits reported more favorable results across many of our ads metrics, that did not hold true here. Medium ($3.34 CPL) and Small ($4.71 CPL) both had lower costs than Large nonprofits ($4.89 CPL).

Adoption of other channels for lead acquisition is not nearly as widespread as for Meta, and costs per lead were generally higher. Part of this may reflect the relative immaturity of the platforms, and the challenges of optimizing content. Nonprofits that are able to experiment with TikTok and YouTube may gain an edge in optimization, and may be willing to pay a premium for leads that represent younger, more diverse, or otherwise distinct supporter audiences.

Not every nonprofit will be able to make these investments. Some will choose to prioritize direct fundraising, while others invest in raising their brand profile. Nonprofits will need to think holistically about their digital programs, and how email, ads, and other channels can be mutually reinforcing. The distribution of time and resources will change as channels emerge, mature, and decline.

It's complicated, of course it is. But it's all part of a balanced breakfast.

Digital advertising: cost per donation

	Display	Search	Meta	Twitter	Video
All	$217	$47	$126	$202	$305
Cultural	—	$45	$164	—	—
Disaster/International Aid	$215	$29	$96	$121	$514
Environmental	$274	$77	$142	—	—
Health	$227	$41	$156	—	$361
Hunger/Poverty	$163	$35	$112	—	$58
Public Media	—	$16	$469	—	—
Rights	$279	$119	$199	—	—
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	$152	$40	$70	—	$99
Large	$170	$35	$94	$155	$273
Medium	$333	$60	$181	$248	$2,038
Small	$441	$64	$38	—	—

Cost per digital advertising lead

All
$3.41

Disaster/International Aid
$2.50

Environmental
$3.45

Health
$5.08

Hunger/Poverty
$7.85

Public Media
$4.65

Rights
$2.71

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
$1.78

Large
$3.16

Medium
$2.84

Small
$5.14

Website visitors per $1 spent in fundraising display ads

All
36

Disaster/International Aid
11

Environmental
37

Health
40

Hunger/Poverty
13

Public Media
102

Rights
217

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
128

Large
34

Medium
37

Small
68
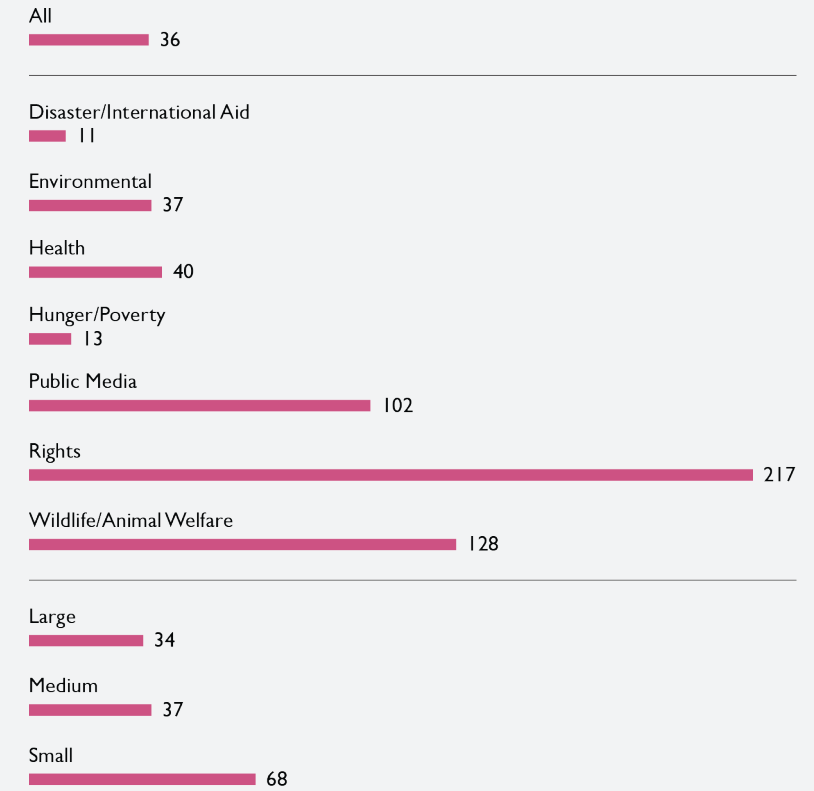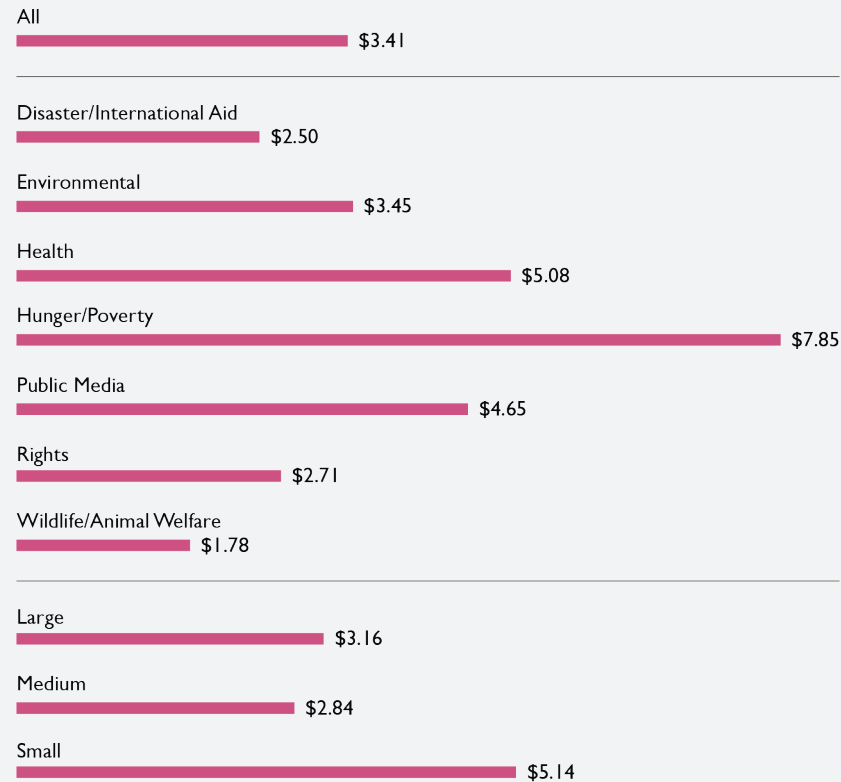
Cost per thousand impressions (CPM) by channel

Display
$1.54

Social
$14.00

Video
$7.45
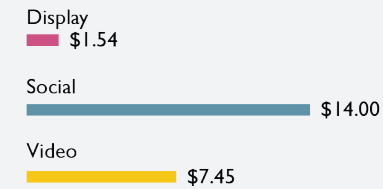
Cost per click (CPC) by channel

Search
$3.63

Social
$4.55

Video
$2.35
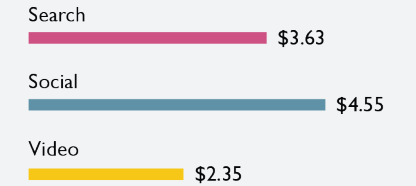
For every dollar a group spends on retargeting, they spent

$1.29

to reach prospects in 2021

For every dollar a group spends on retargeting, they spent

$1.19

to reach prospects in 2022

Google grants: cost per donation

All — $1,208

Disaster/International Aid — $2,041

Environmental — $497

Health — $868

Hunger/Poverty — $1,451

Rights — $5,354

Wildlife/Animal Welfare — $3,077

Large — $902

Medium — $1,261

Small — $3,171
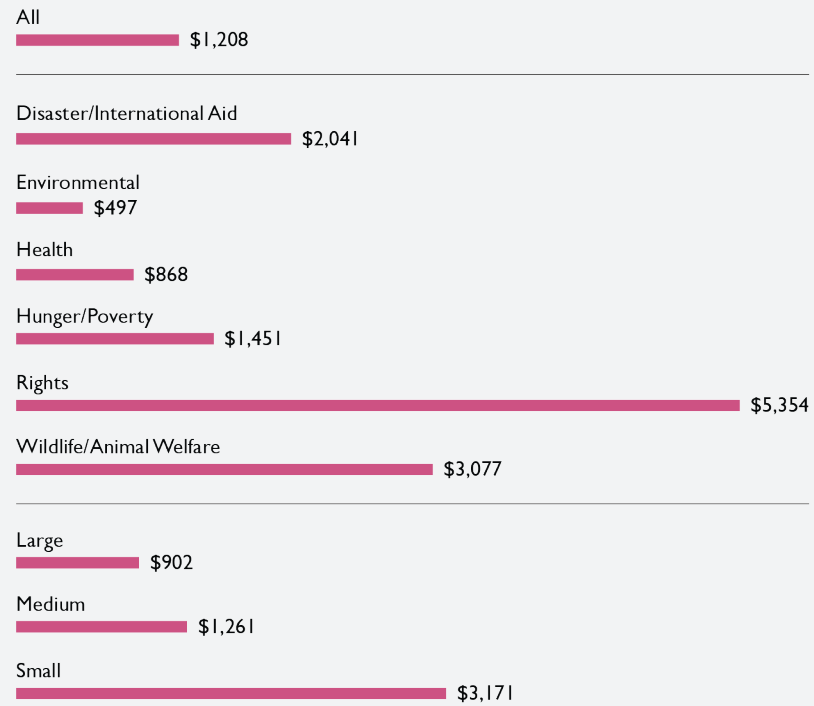
26%

Share of digital ads revenue from view-through revenue

Percent of budget spent in each month

● Display   ● Social   ● Video   ● Search

Jan 7% · Feb 7% · Mar 8% · Apr 7% · May 9% · Jun 8% · Jul 6% · Aug 6% · Sep 8% · Oct 5% · Nov 8% · Dec 20%
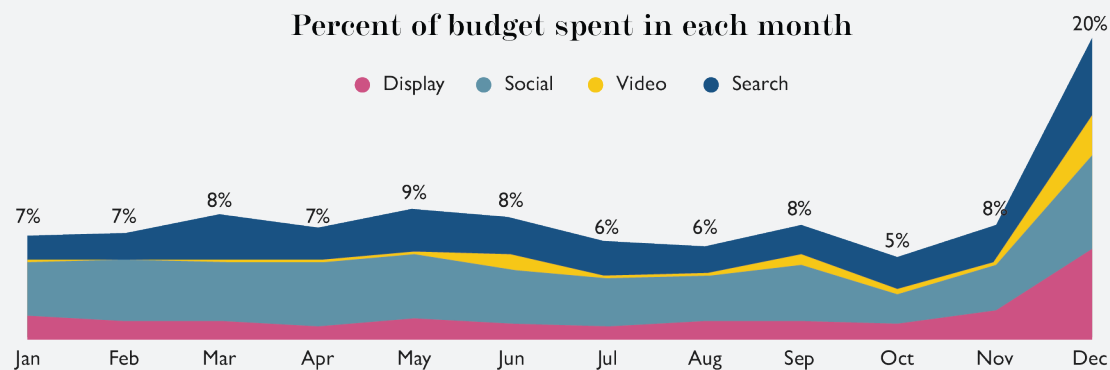
▷ WATCH at mrbenchmarks.com/foodies

Food for Thought

Media Director SARAH COUGHLON bakes **Spelt, Rye, and Whole Wheat Sourdough Bread** and chats about lead gen for ads.

ingredients

Levain
27g white flour
27g whole spelt flour
55g water
55g ripe sourdough starter

Autolyse
493g white flour
233g whole spelt flour
208g whole wheat flour
52g whole rye flour
726g water

Mix (final dough)
104g water
20g fine sea salt
164g ripe levain

Step 1 | In a small bowl or jar, mix the Levain ingredients. Cover the jar and keep it at a warm temperature for 3 hours.

Step 2 | In a mixing bowl, add the autolyse ingredients until no dry bits remain. Cover the bowl and let rest for 1 hour.

Step 3 | Add the salt and levain to the top of the dough in autolyse, and use a splash of water to moisten. With wet hands, mix thoroughly. Add the remaining water if the dough feels cohesive and it can handle the rest. Next, knead the dough for a few minutes using either the slap and fold technique or folds in the bowl. For this dough, I kneaded for about 5 minutes until the dough smoothed and became elastic. Transfer the dough back to the bowl or to a container for bulk fermentation and cover.

Step 4 | This dough will require 3 sets of stretches and folds during bulk fermentation. After the first 30 minutes, wet your hands, grab one side of the dough, and lift it up and over to the other side. Rotate the bowl 180 degrees and repeat. Then rotate the bowl a quarter turn and stretch and fold that side. Rotate the bowl 180 degrees again and finish with a stretch and fold on the last side. The dough should be neatly folded up in the bowl. Cover and repeat these folds every 30 minutes for a total of 3 sets of stretches and folds. Then let the dough rest, covered, for the remainder of bulk fermentation.

Step 5 | Use water and a wet hand or lightly flour your work surface (whichever you prefer) and scrape out your dough. Using your bench knife, divide the dough in half. Lightly shape each half into a round shape. Let the dough rest for 20 minutes, uncovered.

Step 6 | Lightly flour the top of your preshaped rounds and using floured hands, shape the dough into an oval (batard) shape, then place the dough in proofing baskets, seam side up.

Step 7 | Cover proofing baskets with reusable plastic and seal. Then, place both baskets into the refrigerator and proof overnight.

Step 8 | Preheat your oven with a baking surface inside to 450°F (230°C). When the oven is preheated, remove your dough from the fridge, score it, and transfer it to the preheated baking surface. Bake for 20 minutes with steam. After this time, vent the steam in the oven and continue to bake for 35 minutes longer. When done, the internal temperature should be around 204°F (95°C). Let the loaves cool for 3 to 4 hours on a wire rack before slicing.

Adapted from a recipe by Maurizio Leo

Social Media

Quick Bites

- For every 1,000 email addresses, nonprofits had an average of 685 Facebook fans, 208 Twitter followers, and 160 Instagram followers. Nearly all nonprofits reported an active presence on these platforms.

- TikTok was an active platform for 30% of nonprofits. These participants had an average of 4 TikTok followers for every 1,000 email addresses.

- Among the three most commonly used platforms, Instagram audiences grew at the fastest rate. Nonprofits had 10% more Instagram followers in 2022 than in 2021, while Facebook fans increased by 4%. Twitter audience sizes held flat for the year.

- Facebook posts reached 53 users on average for every 1,000 followers a nonprofit had. Twitter posts reached 47 users per 1,000 followers, and Instagram posts reached 65 users per 1,000 followers.

- Revenue from Facebook declined by 34% overall, but surged by 99% for nonprofits in the Disaster/International Aid sector. Facebook giving accounted for 1.1% of all online revenue.

- The average Facebook Fundraiser generated 4 gifts, with an average gift of $34.

Some of our favorite pastries, like eclairs, call for eggs to be handled in multiple ways to create interesting texture and structure. They are also tricky to manage. Add eggs to dough that's too hot, and they'll cook. And, like changes to the algorithm on a social platform you think you've figured out, it's a totally frustrating experience.

Social Media

Anyone who has ever attended a rambunctious Thanksgiving gathering, debated whether a hot dog is a sandwich, or spent five minutes on M+R's internal #feelingsonfood Slack channel knows: nothing simultaneously brings people together and sparks furious argument quite like food. Well, maybe one thing: social media.

Each platform is a potluck that hosts a different-but-often-overlapping audience, and employs a fickle algorithm that elevates some content while squashing other posts. Nonprofits choose which of these dinner parties to join, and try their best to earn a seat at the table.

Three social media platforms enjoyed near-universal adoption from nonprofits in 2022: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

There was also widespread presence on LinkedIn (82%) and YouTube (74%). The only other social media platform used by a substantial number of Benchmarks participants was TikTok — 30% of nonprofits reported being active on that platform in 2022.

(As a reminder, this edition of Benchmarks covers 2022, which means that Twitter's acquisition by Elon Musk, and the fallout from the leeeeeeeeeengthy series of dubious/strange/unethical/childish/counterproductive/unpalatable/offensive/outlandish choices made since then mostly falls outside of our data set. It also means that any migration to the cornucopia of new platforms vying to be the new Twitter will not be reflected here.)

Percentage of nonprofits using social media platforms

Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	LinkedIn	YouTube	TikTok	Snapchat
99%	95%	95%	82%	74%	30%	2%
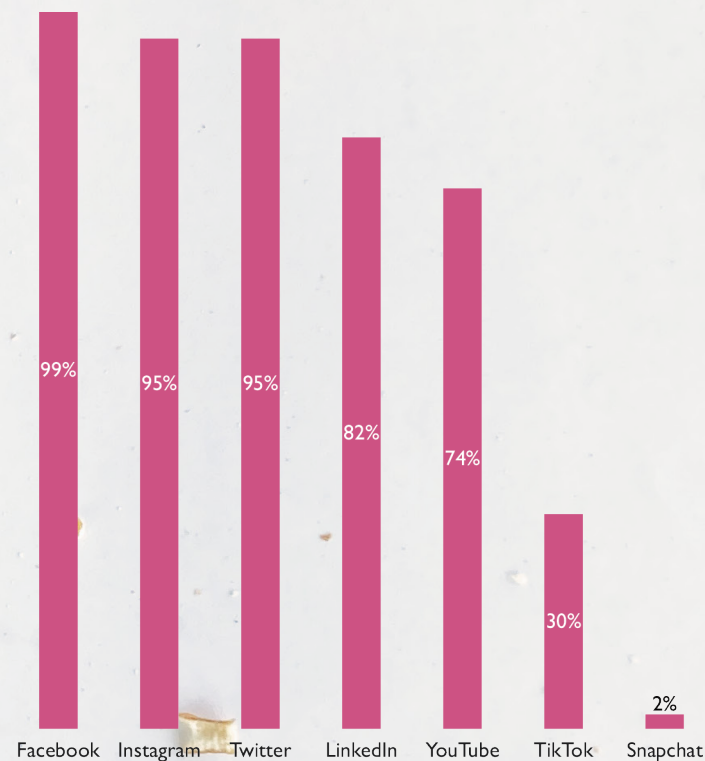
Nonprofits tended to have more fans on Facebook than followers on other platforms. For every 1,000 email subscribers, nonprofits had 685 Facebook fans, 208 Twitter followers, and 160 Instagram followers. Unsurprisingly for a relatively new platform, nonprofits had the smallest audiences on TikTok — just 4 followers for every 1,000 email subscribers.

For every 1,000 email subscribers, groups have…

Legend:
- ● Facebook fans
- ● Instagram followers
- ● Twitter followers
- ● TikTok followers

All
- Facebook fans: 685
- Instagram followers: 160
- Twitter followers: 208
- TikTok followers: 4

Disaster/International Aid
- Facebook fans: 564
- Instagram followers: 137
- Twitter followers: 299
- TikTok followers: 0

Environmental
- Facebook fans: 818
- Instagram followers: 322
- Twitter followers: 349
- TikTok followers: 3

Health
- Facebook fans: 334
- Instagram followers: 104
- Twitter followers: 128
- TikTok followers: 5

Hunger/Poverty
- Facebook fans: 395
- Instagram followers: 108
- Twitter followers: 117
- TikTok followers: 1

Public Media
- Facebook fans: 463
- Instagram followers: 78
- Twitter followers: 292

Rights
- Facebook fans: 2,196
- Instagram followers: 418
- Twitter followers: 800
- TikTok followers: 30

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- Facebook fans: 1,230
- Instagram followers: 209
- Twitter followers: 112
- TikTok followers: 51

Change in fans/followers 2021 to 2022

Legend:
- ● Facebook
- ● Instagram
- ● Twitter

All
- Facebook: 4%
- Instagram: 10%
- Twitter: 0%

Cultural
- Facebook: 3%
- Instagram: 6%
- Twitter: 0%

Disaster/International Aid
- Facebook: 4%
- Instagram: 16%
- Twitter: 3%

Environmental
- Facebook: 4%
- Instagram: 9%
- Twitter: 1%

Health
- Facebook: 4%
- Instagram: 8%
- Twitter: 3%

Hunger/Poverty
- Facebook: 7%
- Instagram: 8%
- Twitter: 0%

Rights
- Facebook: 3%
- Instagram: 16%
- Twitter: 0%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- Facebook: 7%
- Instagram: 6%
- Twitter: -1%

Although Instagram audiences were smaller than Facebook or Twitter, they grew at the fastest rate. Nonprofits had 10% more Instagram followers in 2022 than in 2021, while Facebook fans increased by 4%. Twitter audience sizes were flat year-over-year, which really makes you wonder why someone would want to spend $44 billion over there. *(ooooh, burn!)*

Of course, growing an audience is just the beginning — the real goal is to serve content and drive engagement. Instagram posts had much higher reach relative to a nonprofit's follower count.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Reach per post per 1,000 followers

● Facebook ● Instagram ● Twitter

Overall Score
- Facebook: 53
- Instagram: 65
- Twitter: 47

Post
- Facebook: 53
- Instagram: 115

Story
- Facebook: 7
- Instagram: 12

Photo
- Facebook: 52
- Instagram: 115

Link
- Facebook: 50

Video
- Facebook: 38
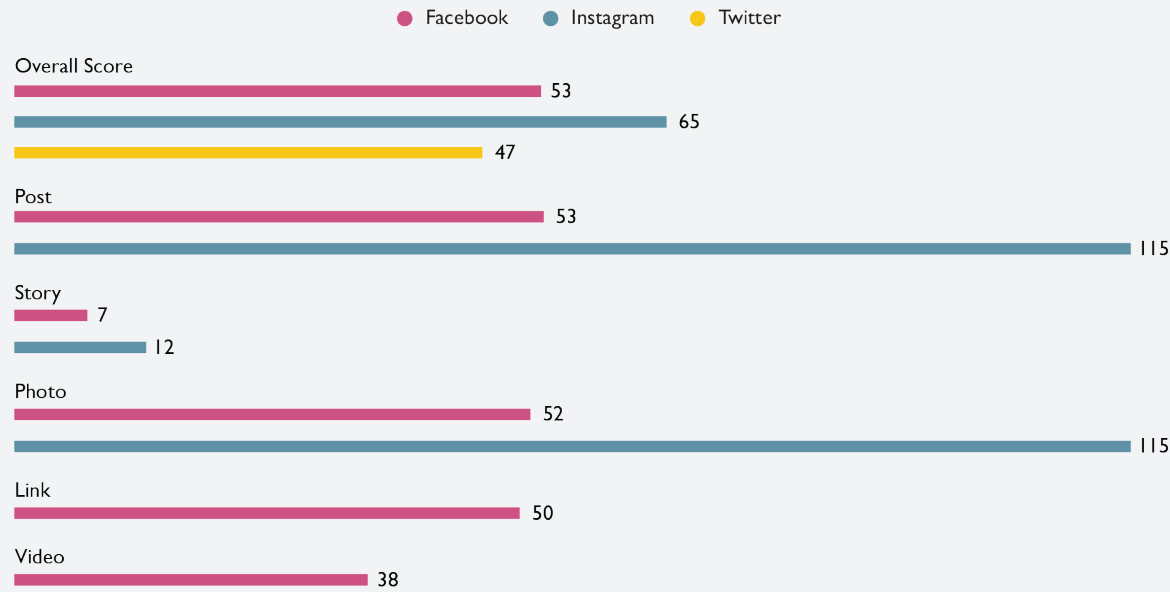
Instagram posts had an average reach of 65 for every 1,000 followers a nonprofit had. That means that a nonprofit with 500,000 Instagram fans could expect any given post to be seen by 32,500 users. If they had the same number of followers on Facebook, that post would be seen by 26,500 users.

Reach is determined by a variety of factors — the size of a nonprofit's follower base, the type of content (story content had much lower reach than photos,

for example), the ever-inscrutable and ever-changing algorithms of each platform, and user engagement. Think of social media content as tapas or banchan — small plates meant to be shared. The tastier they are, the more people are likely to pass them around.

Nonprofits posted most frequently on Twitter, with 1.6 posts per day. Facebook posts came an average of once per day, and 0.8 posts per day on Instagram. As with many of these metrics,

TikTok trails far behind, with 0.1 posts per day among nonprofits active on that platform.

Public Media nonprofits were by far the most frequent posters on Facebook (3.7 posts per day) and Twitter (5.1 posts per day). Wildlife/Animal Welfare nonprofits posted an average of 0.3 TikToks per day — still well below the frequency of other platforms, but we appreciate the cute animal videos and thank them for their service.

Posts per day

● Facebook ● Instagram ● Twitter ● TikTok

All
- Facebook: 1.0
- Instagram: 0.8
- Twitter: 1.6
- TikTok: 0.1

Cultural
- Facebook: 1.0
- Instagram: 0.8
- Twitter: 1.5
- TikTok: 0.2

Disaster/International Aid
- Facebook: 1.2
- Instagram: 0.5
- Twitter: 1.9
- TikTok: 0.1

Environmental
- Facebook: 0.8
- Instagram: 0.7
- Twitter: 1.6
- TikTok: 0.1

Health
- Facebook: 0.9
- Instagram: 1.1
- Twitter: 1.3
- TikTok: 0.1

Hunger/Poverty
- Facebook: 0.8
- Instagram: 0.8
- Twitter: 0.6
- TikTok: 0.0

Public Media
- Facebook: 3.7
- Instagram: 0.6
- Twitter: 5.1

Rights
- Facebook: 1.4
- Instagram: 0.8
- Twitter: 2.2
- TikTok: 0.2

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- Facebook: 1.3
- TikTok: 0.3

Types of Facebook posts

- Link
- Photo
- Video
- Other

	All	Cultural	Disaster/International Aid	Education	Environmental	Health	Hunger/Poverty	Public Media	Rights	Wildlife/Animal Welfare
Other	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	6%	0%	2%
Video	5%	15%	12%	1%	3%	12%	1%	1%	5%	10%
Photo	24%	10%	31%	28%	18%	44%	22%	4%	23%	56%
Link	71%	75%	56%	70%	79%	42%	76%	90%	72%	32%

Share of online revenue from Facebook

- 2021
- 2022

All
- 2021: 1.4%
- 2022: 1.1%

Disaster/International Aid
- 2021: 0.5%
- 2022: 0.4%

Environmental
- 2021: 0.8%
- 2022: 0.4%

Health
- 2021: 8.1%
- 2022: 4.1%

Hunger/Poverty
- 2021: 1.3%
- 2022: 0.7%

Rights
- 2021: 3.4%
- 2022: 2.8%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
- 2021: 1.8%
- 2022: 3.1%

Facebook posts from Wildlife/Animal Welfare nonprofits were also more likely to be photo posts — 56% of posts in this sector included photos, more than twice the overall average of 24%. Public Media nonprofits heavily emphasized links, with 90% of all Facebook posts falling into this category.

The social media data we've looked at so far measures what nonprofits are doing,

and how audiences are responding. Now, let's examine what supporters themselves are bringing to the table with Facebook Fundraisers.

Overall, 1.1% of online revenue was derived from Facebook (this isn't exclusively from Facebook Fundraisers, but the overwhelming majority of this giving is through user-generated Facebook Fundraisers, so it's okay to think of it that way).

Not only did the share of online revenue from Facebook decline from 2021 levels — the absolute amount raised was lower for most nonprofit types. The exception was the Disaster/International Aid sector, where Facebook revenue just about doubled from the previous year.

Change in amount raised on Facebook

- All: -34%
- Disaster/International Aid: 99%
- Environmental: -66%
- Health: -41%
- Hunger/Poverty: -54%
- Rights: -14%
- Wildlife/Animal Welfare: -14%

Change in number of Facebook Fundraisers per organization

All
-27%

Disaster/International Aid
27%

Environmental
-50%

Health
-23%

Hunger/Poverty
-48%

Rights
-20%

Wildlife/Animal Welfare
-17%

Average number of gifts to a Facebook Fundraiser

All — 4.0

Cultural — 3.0

Disaster/International Aid — 4.0

Environmental — 4.0

Health — 5.0

Hunger/Poverty — 5.0

Rights — 4.5

Wildlife/Animal Welfare — 5.0

0.0   2.0   4.0   6.0   8.0   10.0

As with so much of the standout 2022 results for nonprofits in this issue area, the most likely driver here was the conflict in Ukraine. In response to the invasion and escalating violence, people chose to show solidarity in a variety of ways, from yellow-and-blue profile filters to starting Facebook Fundraisers in support of direct relief efforts.

Those individual decisions to start Fundraiser efforts are the most important factor determining Facebook revenue. That revenue decreased because, outside of the Disaster/International Aid sector, users started fewer Facebook Fundraisers than in 2021.

The average performance of Facebook Fundraisers was fairly consistent across sectors, with the median Fundraiser effort generating 4 donations. Some users were able to drive more donations — the colored bars in this chart show the range from the 25th percentile to the 75th percentile.

The average gift made to a Facebook Fundraisers campaign was $34, with most sectors clustered closely around that average. The lowest Fundraisers average gift was in the Health sector

($26), and the highest was in the Disaster/International Aid sector ($38).

These results are consistent with what we've reported in every Benchmarks that has included Facebook Fundraisers — the results of each individual Fundraiser campaign tend to be fairly modest. A handful of gifts, about thirty bucks each. The biggest difference — the biggest opportunity — lies in the number of people who are inspired to take a moment or two to dedicate themselves to a cause, and ask the people who care about them to join in.

Facebook Fundraisers average gift

All — $34

Cultural — $34

Disaster/International Aid — $38

Environmental — $34

Health — $26

Hunger/Poverty — $34

Rights — $34

Wildlife/Animal Welfare — $30
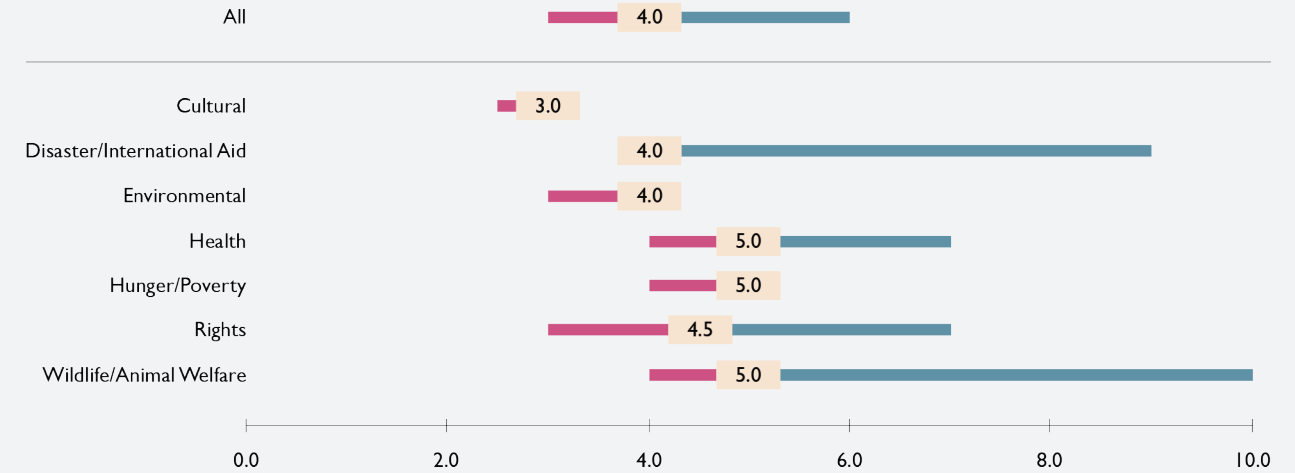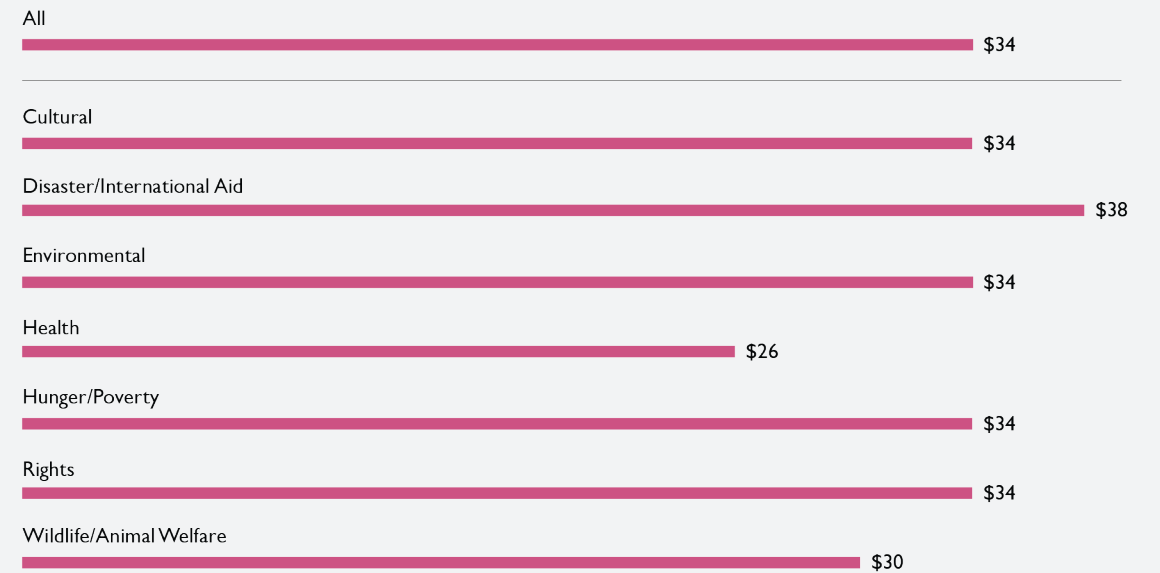
Call it potluck, call it stone soup — when we invite enough people in, it matters less whether each individual contribution is substantial on its own. What's important is how it all comes together.
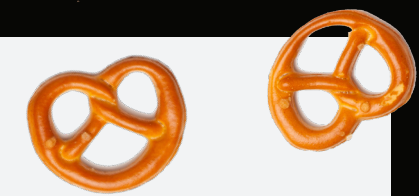
Change in total post reach 2021 to 2022

Instagram	-17%
Facebook overall	-23%
Facebook link	-11%
Facebook photo	4%
Facebook video	-28%
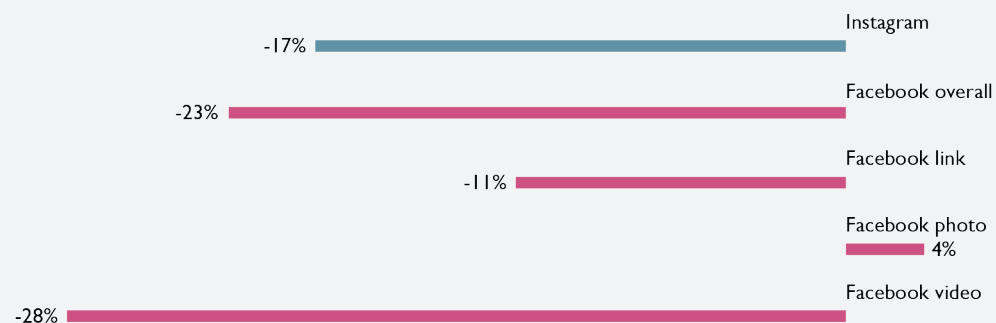
Percent of Facebook revenue raised in each month

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
All	7%	7%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	8%	6%
Cultural	0%	3%	3%	1%	4%	7%	7%	5%	9%	10%	18%	7%
Disaster/International Aid	5%	7%	9%	5%	3%	5%	4%	3%	4%	1%	2%	3%
Environmental	7%	4%	1%	5%	2%	5%	4%	4%	1%	2%	9%	4%
Health	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%	7%	6%	6%	5%	7%	8%	6%
Hunger/Poverty	7%	6%	4%	5%	3%	3%	4%	11%	4%	6%	9%	9%
Rights	6%	7%	15%	7%	6%	8%	8%	7%	5%	5%	5%	6%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	13%	9%	9%	5%	5%	4%	6%	4%	3%	4%	8%	6%

Twitter engagement per post per 1,000 followers

Twitter Like Score	0.36
Twitter Retweet Score	0.13
Twitter Reply Score	0.02

Score calculated as average post engagement, divided by the number of followers an organization has, times 1,000. Meant to represent activity relative to the size of an organization's following.

drinks

▷ WATCH at mrbenchmarks.com/foodies

Food for Thought

Social Media Account Supervisor FERENC KOSZORUS chats about social media strategy while whipping up a **Power Breakfast Smoothie**.

ingredients

1 cup raw spinach

1 cup blueberries

1 banana

1/2 avocado

2 scoops plant protein powder

1/3 cup rolled oats

1 tsp chia seeds

1 tsp cacao powder

1 tsp turmeric powder

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp almond butter

Step 1 | Throw all the ingredients in a blender cup with water.

Step 2 | Blend and enjoy!

Website Performance

Quick Bites

- The majority of nonprofit website traffic came from users on mobile devices (including both phones and tablets). Mobile users represented 57% of all visits, with 43% of traffic from users on desktop devices.

- Users on desktop devices made up the majority of donation transactions (64%) and revenue (75%).

- The average gift made on desktop devices was $194; for mobile users, the average gift was $94.

- Organic traffic (website traffic generated by unpaid search results) comprised 38% of all nonprofit website visits in 2022.

- Overall, 0.23% of organic website visitors made a donation, generating an average of $0.77 per visitor.

The design of this collage was inspired by multi-dimensional shoe-box dioramas, so there's a mix of black and white and color photography to create depth. Thematically, harvest is such an important part of the food process and farms are complex environments. So many things need to happen for a good harvest to take place.

Website Performance

Menu design is all about anticipating what a diner might want, and balancing that against what a restaurant wants to serve. At one extreme you have the prix fixe menu, or better yet, omakase — absolving the consumer of making difficult decisions, trusting in the chef to know what's best.

At the other end of the spectrum is the Cheesecake Factory approach: a phone-book sized tome featuring every kind of cuisine imaginable, and some that are better left unimagined.

The menu of options on nonprofit websites typically falls in between — aiming for clear navigation while emphasizing certain choices. You can donate, take action, explore issues, make a gift, buy tickets, DONATE, volunteer, discover resources, search job openings, become a monthly donor, ask a question, donate….

A core challenge is optimizing the webpage so that visitors can easily find what they are hungry for, and so that nonprofits can draw attention to those site elements they most want to prioritize. To do that, it helps to know where visitors are coming from, and how they are experiencing the site.

The average nonprofit website saw 38% of its visitors arrive via organic search results. In this context, "organic" means the user entered a search term and clicked on a result that was not a paid ad.

At the high end, organic traffic accounted for nearly half of all visits to websites for Cultural and Public Media nonprofits. For Cultural nonprofits, this may be due to users who are able to search for specific and relevant terms; if you Google the name of your local science museum, there's an excellent chance that the top results will lead you right there. Public Media may benefit from this sort of thing as well, for users who search for their local station's call sign — but they also generate visits through reporting, news updates, interviews, performances, and other content.

This range only scratches the surface of the possible motivations that drive organic traffic, and it shows how variable the relationship between a visitor and nonprofit can be. There's a big difference between someone searching for their local public media station because they were reminded to donate during the pledge drive on their morning commute, and someone who happened to click on a link to a news article.

On average, just 0.23% of organic visitors make a donation, generating an average of $0.77 per visitor. Of those visitors who make it to a website's main donation page, 19% complete a gift.

#6 SNACK + DATA PAIRING RECOMMENDED BY BENCHMARKS PARTICIPANTS: Cheez-Its

Organic traffic volume as percent of overall traffic

All	38%
Cultural	49%
Disaster/International Aid	37%
Environmental	44%
Health	34%
Hunger/Poverty	32%
Public Media	48%
Rights	45%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	34%
Large	40%
Medium	35%
Small	39%

Main donation page conversion rate

All — 19%
Cultural — 12%
Disaster/International Aid — 21%
Environmental — 22%
Health — 24%
Hunger/Poverty — 30%
Public Media — 9%
Rights — 11%
Wildlife/Animal Welfare — 15%
Large — 19%
Medium — 18%
Small — 25%

their mobile devices — and that is (or should be) an urgent priority for nonprofits.

In 2022, users on mobile devices (including both phones and tablets) accounted for 57% of nonprofit website traffic. However, these visits generated just 36% of donation transactions and 25% of revenue. Which is to say: mobile users are less likely to give than desktop users, and when they do donate, the average gift size is significantly lower.

Percentage of nonprofits accepting payment types on main donation page

PayPal — 74%
Bank Account/EFT — 55%
Apple Pay — 33%
Google Pay — 24%

Given the large volume of traffic, and the small percentage of visitors who donate, there is significant potential for nonprofits to increase revenue by improving the conversion rate of site visitors. Some of this work is done by optimizing the site as a whole — how visitors are encouraged to make a gift. And some of it

happens on the donation page itself — the images, copy, case for giving, user flow, and other elements.

We asked Benchmarks participants which payment platforms they accept (beyond the standard credit card options, and the non-standard-but-very-cool giant suitcase full of solid gold bars). The

most popular alternative was PayPal, with 74% of participants accepting payments through that platform.

Other tools — including Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Venmo — have not been adopted as widely. At least, not yet. Many of these tools are intended to make transactions easier for users on

Website share by device

● Desktop   ● Mobile and Tablet

Traffic
43% (+5%) | 57% (-3%)

Transaction
64% (-7%) | 36% (+10%)

Revenue
75% (-3%) | 25% (+6%)

In previous Benchmarks reports, we also broke out tablet, but this year we have combined mobile & tablet users.

Website main donation page conversion rate

5%
Desktop

2%
Mobile

Average gift by device

$196
Desktop

$94
Mobile

We know that the majority of website visitors, regardless of how they arrive on the site or what device they are using, will not make a donation. That doesn't mean that their engagement is not valuable, either for themselves or the nonprofit.

But for nonprofits who can find ways to increase conversion rates among organic visitors — and especially that portion of visitors using mobile devices — a potential feast awaits.

Homepage load time (seconds)

● Desktop
● Mobile

Category	Desktop	Mobile
All	2.32	2.24
Cultural	2.70	2.53
Disaster/International Aid	2.16	2.32
Environmental	2.29	2.14
Health	2.31	2.39
Hunger/Poverty	2.89	2.34
Public Media	1.60	1.49
Rights	2.48	2.14
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	2.07	2.39
Large	2.44	2.34
Medium	2.11	2.11
Small	2.52	2.41
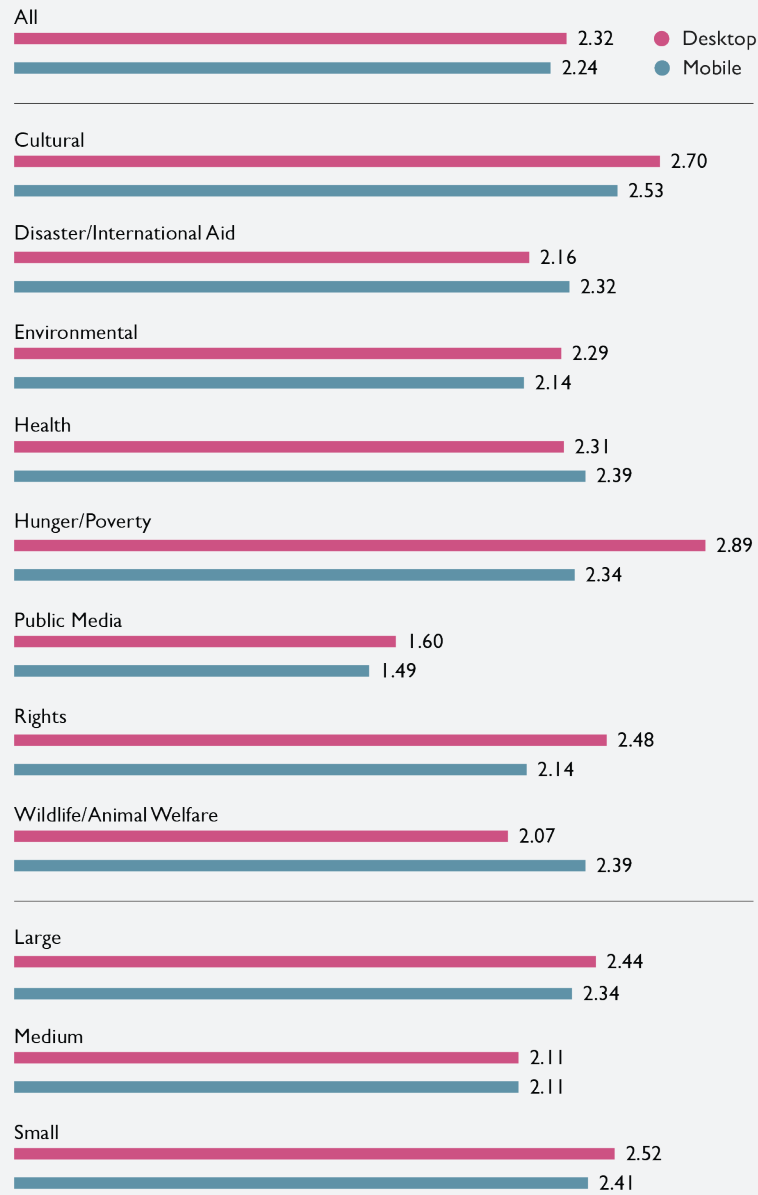
Donation page load time (seconds)

● Desktop
● Mobile

Category	Desktop	Mobile
All	1.95	1.98
Cultural	2.45	3.02
Disaster/International Aid	1.88	1.85
Environmental	2.16	2.35
Health	2.03	2.32
Hunger/Poverty	2.33	2.06
Public Media	1.83	1.56
Rights	1.49	1.67
Wildlife/Animal Welfare	1.52	1.49
Large	1.95	2.04
Medium	2.00	2.02
Small	1.91	2.01
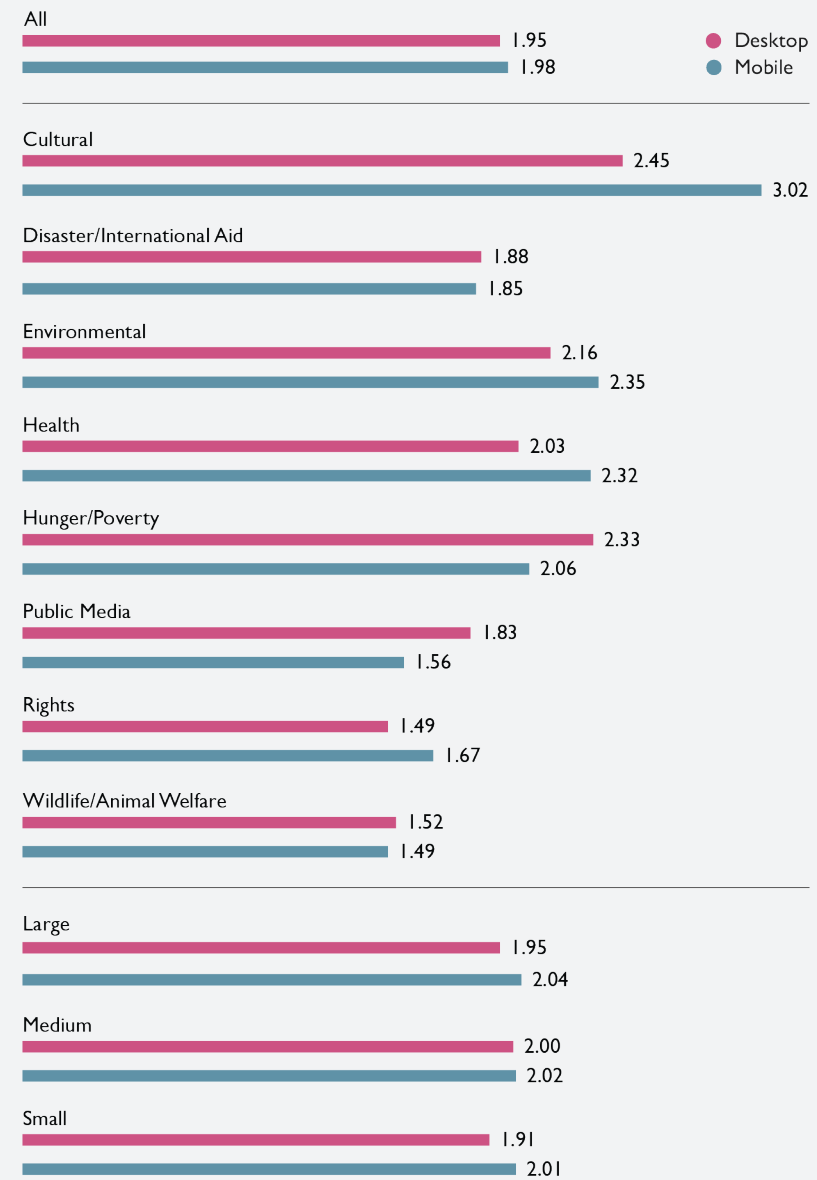
Website revenue per visitor from organic sources

$0.77

Percent of organic website visitors who make a donation

0.23%

Desserts

Participants

Action Against Hunger · ASH Action on Smoking & Health · Advancement Project · ACTNOW! Afterschool for Children and Teens · Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank · Ending Hunger · Alliance for the Great Lakes · alzheimer's association

ACLU · American Friends Service Committee · American Heart Association · American Lung Association · American Museum of Natural History · American Red Cross · Amnesty International · Amnesty International

anera · Animal Place · AnimalsAsia · Art Fund · Arts Alliance IL · ASPCA · RMHC Atlanta · BC Cancer Foundation

BCSPCA · Blood cancer UK · Blood:Water · Boys & Girls Clubs of America · British Red Cross · Brooke Action for Working Horses and Donkeys · California Academy of Sciences · Canadian Red Cross Croix-Rouge Canadienne

Care and Share · Central Park Conservancy · Centrepoint · Child Poverty Action Group · children's hospice South West · Children's Hospital Los Angeles · The Children's Society · christian aid

ClientEarth · cmmb · Colorado Headwaters Land Trust · colorectal cancer alliance · CWA · CFBNJ Community Foodbank of New Jersey · clf · Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

David Suzuki Foundation · Dementia UK · digital moment · DogsTrust · ecojustice · edreports · Embarc · equality federation

Evelina London Children's Charity · Feeding America · Feeding South Dakota · Food & Water Watch · Food Bank of Eastern Michigan · Food Bank Northeast Louisiana · Food Bank of the Rockies · Food Finders Food Bank, Inc.

Why does chocolate in the shape of a pine tree, a robin's egg, or a heart taste better than chocolate in the shape of a square? There's joy in the things that are familiar and dually novel to us. Like m&ms in popcorn, lavender in ice coffee, or goat cheese in ice cream.

FÒS FEMINISTA | FIGHTING BLINDNESS FOUNDATION | FOUNTAIN HOUSE | FREEDOM FROM TORTURE EMPOWERING SURVIVORS REBUILDING LIVES | Friends Committee on National Legislation | Friends of the Earth | GLAD LEGAL ADVOCATES & DEFENDERS for the LGBTQ Community | GLOBAL FUND FOR WOMEN

GOD'S PANTRY FOOD BANK | GOLDEN STATE OPPORTUNITY | Good Shepherd FOOD BANK OF MAINE | GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL CHARITY | GREAT PLAINS FOOD BANK | GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY | Greater Cleveland Food Bank | GREATER LANSING foodbank

Greater Pittsburgh community food bank | GREENPEACE | Guide Dogs for the Blind | Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust | Guy's Cancer Charity | Health Equity International St. Boniface Hospital | HELP for HEROES | HIAS

HOPE AND HOMES FOR CHILDREN | HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN | HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL | ifaw | Indspire Indigenous education, Canada's future | IDRC · CRDI Canada | IJM | INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

ISLAMIC RELIEF | IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA | JDRF | KAWC 88.9 FM Yuma / Parker 94.7 FM KOFA | Kidney Research UK | KIND KIDS IN NEED OF DEFENSE | 88.5 knkx connects | kpbs

KQED | Langley Memorial HOSPITAL FOUNDATION | LCV Our Earth Is Worth Fighting For | LIBERTY | LOUISVILLE PUBLIC MEDIA | MAG saves lives builds futures | Maggie's Everyone's home of cancer care | MARCH OF DIMES

Marie Curie | MARYLAND FOOD BANK UNTIL HUNGER ENDS | Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center | MERCY CORPS | MONO LAKE COMMITTEE | Monterey Bay Aquarium | MOVEON | MDA Muscular Dystrophy Association

Museum of Science | Mystic River WATERSHED ASSOCIATION | Audubon | National Deaf Children's Society | NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC | NNEDV NATIONAL NETWORK TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE | National Trust for Historic Preservation | NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER | Natural Resources Council of Maine Protecting the Nature of Maine | NATURE CONSERVANCY CANADA CONSERVATION DE LA NATURE CANADA | Nebraska Public Media PBS NPR | NPH NORTHERN CALIFORNIA | NRDC ACTION FUND | NRDC | OCEANA

OPERATION KINDNESS | OREGON FOOD BANK FEEDING AMERICA | OVERTON PARK CONSERVANCY | OXFAM | PATHFINDER | People For the American Way | PeTA | PHILABUNDANCE Driving hunger from our communities

Philip Hayden Foundation | Planned Parenthood Act. No matter what. Planned Parenthood Action Fund | Planned Parenthood Care. No matter what. | POGO PROJECT ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT | Project Open Hand meals with love | PUGET SOUNDKEEPER | RAÍCES | rails-to-trails conservancy

RAINFOREST TRUST | rare | RedRover | Refuge For women and children. Against domestic violence. | REGIONAL FOOD BANK OF OKLAHOMA | REPRIEVE | ReSurge International | RIGHT TO PLAY

Rise for Animals. | RIVERKEEPER NY's clean water advocate | Ronald McDonald House Charities Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana | Room to Read | SAMARITANS | San Antonio FOOD BANK SERVING SOUTHWEST TEXAS | SAN FRANCISCO AIDS FOUNDATION | Sands Serving bereaved families. Supporting bereaved families.

Save the Children | SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK of MIDDLE TENNESSEE Feeding Hope | SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK | sense | NO KID HUNGRY | SHELTER | SIERRA CLUB | Sightsavers

SmileTrain | Special Olympics | STAND UP AMERICA | TEENAGE CANCER TRUST | the eve appeal | THE FOOD BANK OF CENTRAL LOUISIANA | FOOD BANK of Contra Costa & Solano | THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

IWRC INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE REHABILITATION COUNCIL | The Leprosy Mission | THE SALVATION ARMY | TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND | The Wilderness Society | The Wilderness Society Action Fund | TEP | TRUE PATRIOT LOVE

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency United Kingdom for UNHCR | UNION GOSPEL MISSION Feeding hope. Changing lives. | Union of Concerned Scientists Science for a healthy planet and safer world | USA for UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | WALKING WITH THE WOUNDED Supporting Those Who Served | STEM | WASHINGTON TRAILS ASSOCIATION

WETA | Wildlife Conservation Society | WIN WITHOUT WAR | WNET NEW YORK PUBLIC MEDIA | WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL | WORLD ANIMAL PROTECTION | WFP World Food Program USA wfpusa.org | World Vision Hope and a future for all children

WWF | Wyoming Outdoor Council

Participants

Cultural

American Museum of Natural History
Art Fund
Arts Alliance Illinois
California Academy of Sciences
Central Park Conservancy
Monterey Bay Aquarium
Museum of Science
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Disaster/International Aid

Action Against Hunger USA
American Red Cross
Anera
British Red Cross
Canadian Red Cross
Christian Aid
CMMB - Healthier Lives Worldwide
Health Equity International
HIAS
Hope and Homes for Children
International Development Research
   Centre (IDRC)
International Justice Mission
International Rescue Committee
Islamic Relief UK
MAG (Mines Advisory Group)
Mercy Corps
Oxfam America

Oxfam GB
Philip Hayden Foundation
Right To Play
Save the Children
Save the Children UK
Sightsavers
The Leprosy Mission
UK for UNHCR
USA for UNHCR
Women for Women International UK
World Food Program USA
World Vision UK

Environmental

Alliance for the Great Lakes
ClientEarth
Colorado Headwaters Land Trust
Conservation Law Foundation
David Suzuki Foundation
Ecojustice Canada
Food & Water Watch
Friends of the Earth
Greenpeace Canada
Greenpeace USA
Izaak Walton League of America
League of Conservation Voters
Mono Lake Committee
Mystic River Watershed Association
National Audubon Society
National Geographic Society

Natural Resources Council of Maine
Natural Resources Defense Council
Nature Conservancy of Canada
NRDC Action Fund
Oceana
Overton Park Conservancy
Puget Soundkeeper
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Rainforest Trust
Rare
Riverkeeper
Sierra Club
The Trust for Public Land
The Wilderness Society
The Wilderness Society Action Fund
Union of Concerned Scientists
Washington Trails Association
Wildlife Conservation Society
World Wildlife Fund
Wyoming Outdoor Council

Health

Action on Smoking and Health
Alzheimer's Association
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities
BC Cancer Foundation
Blood Cancer UK
Blood:Water
Children's Hospice South West

Children's Hospital Los Angeles
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
Dementia UK
Evelina London Children's Charity
Foundation Fighting Blindness
Fountain House
Great Ormond Street Hospital
   Children's Charity
Guy's & St Thomas' Charity
Guy's Cancer Charity
JDRF
Kidney Research UK
Langley Memorial Hospital Foundation
Maggie's
March of Dimes
Marie Curie
Muscular Dystrophy Association
Project Open Hand
ReSurge International
Ronald McDonald House Charities of
   Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana
Samaritans
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
Sands
Sense
Smile Train UK
Special Olympics
Teenage Cancer Trust
The Eve Appeal

Thank you!

Hunger/Poverty

Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank
All Faiths Food Bank
Care and Share Food Bank
Centrepoint
Child Poverty Action Group
Community Food Bank of New Jersey
Feeding America
Feeding South Dakota
Food Bank of Eastern Michigan
Food Bank of Northeast Louisiana
Food Bank of the Rockies
Food Finders Food Bank
God's Pantry Food Bank, Inc.
Golden State Opportunity
Good Shepherd Food Bank
Great Plains Food Bank
Greater Chicago Food Depository
Greater Cleveland Food Bank
Greater Lansing Food Bank
Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
Maryland Food Bank
Oregon Food Bank
Philabundance
Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma
San Antonio Food Bank
Second Harvest Food Bank of
   Middle Tennessee
Second Harvest Food Bank of
   Northeast Tennessee
Share Our Strength

Shelter
The Food Bank of Central Louisiana
The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
Union Gospel Mission (Vancouver)

Public Media

KAWC
KNKX
KPBS Public Media
KQED
Louisville Public Media
Nebraska Public Media
WETA
WNET

Rights

Advancement Project
American Civil Liberties Union
Amnesty International UK
Amnesty International USA
Equality Federation
Fòs Feminista
Freedom from Torture
GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)
Global Fund for Women
Human Rights Campaign
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Liberty
National Network to End Domestic
   Violence (NNEDV)

National Women's Law Center
Pathfinder International
Planned Parenthood Action Fund
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
RAICES
Refuge
Reprieve
Stand Up America
Trans Empowerment Project

Wildlife/Animal Welfare

Animal Place
Animals Asia UK
ASPCA
BC SPCA
Dogs Trust
Humane Society International
IFAW UK
International Fund for Animal Welfare
National Wildlife Federation
Operation Kindness
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
RedRover
Rise for Animals
The Brooke
The Humane Society of the United States
The International Wildlife Rehabilitation
   Council
World Animal Protection

Other

Afterschool for Children and Teens Now
   (ACT Now) Coalition
American Friends Service Committee
Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Children's Society
Communications Workers of America
Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
Digital Moment (formerly Kids Code Jeunesse)
EdReports
Embarc
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Guide Dogs for the Blind
Help for Heroes
Indspire
MoveOn
National Deaf Children's Society
Non-Profit Housing Association of
   Northern California
People For the American Way
Project On Government Oversight
Room to Read
The Salvation Army
True Patriot Love Foundation
UJA Federation of New York
Walking With The Wounded
Washington STEM
Win Without War

Glossary

Advocacy Message
An email or SMS message that asks recipients to sign an online petition, send an email to a decision-maker, or take a similar online action. For the purposes of this Study, advocacy email does not include higher-bar actions like making a phone call or attending an event, largely because tracking offline response is inconsistent across organizations. Advocacy email rates were calculated from advocacy emails with a simple action sent to either the full file or a random sample of the full file.

Biscuits
Hi, UK friends! See: COOKIES.

Click-Through Rate
Calculated as the number of people who clicked on any trackable link in an email or text message divided by the number of delivered emails or text messages. People who clicked multiple times in one email were only counted once. In other words, if a subscriber clicked on every link in a message 10 times, this was counted the same as if the subscriber had clicked once on a single link.

Cookies
A chunk of data placed on a user's computer by a web browser, which can be used to authenticate, track, or customize the user's experience. Chrome, Safari, and other browsers have recently made changes to limit tracking cookies, which can make it more difficult for nonprofits to target users based on their browsing history. This change is described as cookies being "deprecated," and is similar to the experience of when you reach into the jar for a snickerdoodle and all that's left is a scattering of stale crumbs. You might say that tracking cookies... have crumbled. 😎

Deliverable Emails
Only the emails that were delivered, not including the emails that are considered inactive or emails that were sent and bounced. "Delivered" email messages may land in a user's inbox, spam folder, promotions tab, or custom folder.

Device Type, Desktop
We use the definitions provided by Google Analytics to separate traffic data by device type. The "desktop" category includes any desktop or laptop computer with a screen larger than 7" in diagonal.

Device Type, Mobile
We use the definitions provided by Google Analytics to separate traffic data by device type. Mobile devices are hand-held devices that include a phone or a tablet.

Digital Organizing
Recruiting, engaging and organizing members, activists, and/or volunteers toward advocacy outcomes.

Fans, Facebook
People who "like" a nonprofit's Facebook Fan page.

Followers, Instagram
People who subscribe to see posts from a nonprofit's Instagram account.

Followers, TikTok
People who follow a nonprofit's TikTok account.

Followers, Twitter
People who subscribe to receive the tweets from a nonprofit's Twitter account.

Full File
All of an organization's deliverable email addresses, not including unsubscribed email addresses or email addresses to which an organization no longer sends email messages.

Fundraising Message
An email or SMS message that only asks for a donation, as opposed to an email newsletter, which might ask for a donation and include other links. For the purposes of this Study, fundraising email only includes one-time donation asks; it does not include monthly gift asks. Fundraising email rates were calculated from all fundraising emails, regardless of whether the email went to the full file, a random sample of the file, or a targeted portion of the file.

Google Grants
A distinct Google Ads account where nonprofits can buy up to $10,000/mo in search ads using free credits. Subject to restrictions (such as caps on certain bidding strategies): think of it as a giant coupon with a lot of fine print!

Influencers
Social media influencers are people who have an established presence on one or more social media platforms, with a reputation for being knowledgeable about a certain topic. Influencers regularly post content around that topic for their established, engaged follower base. These audiences, ranging from thousands to millions, follow influencers for their authentic views on their area of expertise.

List Churn
Calculated as the number of subscribers who became unreachable in a 12-month period divided by the sum of the number of deliverable email addresses at the end of that period plus the number of subscribers who became unreachable during that period. Study participants were required to track the number of subscribers who became unreachable each month to account for subscribers both joining and leaving an email list during the 12-month period who would otherwise go uncounted.

Monthly Gift

A donation where the donor signs up once to donate on a regular schedule, typically by pledging a regular gift amount on a credit card each month. Also known as a sustaining gift.

Newsletter, Email

An email with multiple links or asks, which can include fundraising or advocacy asks. Email newsletter rates were calculated from all email newsletters, regardless of whether the newsletter went to the full file, a random sample of the file, or a targeted portion of the file.

Newtons

Not cookies — they are fruit and cake. See also: COOKIES.

Online Retention, New Donor

Of the donors that made their first-ever online gift in the previous calendar year, the percent that made an online gift in the current calendar year. Note that we count someone as "new" in 2022 if they have no online donations reported between the start of 2018 and the end of 2021.

Online Retention, Prior Donor

Of the donors that made an online gift in the previous calendar year that wasn't their first online gift, the percent that made an online gift in the current calendar year.

Open Rate

Calculated as the number of HTML email messages opened divided by the number of delivered emails. Email messages that bounce are not included. In 2021, Apple made changes to how opens can be tracked on its devices, effectively breaking open tracking in many systems. As a result we're no longer reporting out a Benchmark open rate (sorry!).

Organic

"Organic Traffic" includes website visits generated by unpaid search results. "Organic Produce" is food that has been certified as abiding by certain government restrictions, typically meaning it is free of additives, GMO crops, or synthetic pesticides. "Organ? Ick!" is how some people respond when presented with haggis, menudo, or chitterlings. They simply can't stomach it! These same people also tend to misspell "offal," instead writing "awful." They refuse to just hold their tongue and go a lung with it. Imagine the utter gall. The sheer cheek! They have a heart time adopting a liver let live attitude. All kidneying aside, they reject the very concept of brain food. Help please I can't stop.

Page Completion Rate

Calculated as the number of people who completed a form divided by the number of people who clicked on the link to get to that form. For the purposes of this Study, it was not always possible to use the number of people who clicked on a link to a specific form, so we used the number of unique clicks in the message.

Percentile

The percentage of observed values below the named data point. 25% of the observations are below the 25th percentile; 75% of the observations are below the 75th percentile. The values between the 25th percentile and the 75th percentile are the middle 50% of the observed values and represent the normal range of values.

Peer-to-Peer Text Messaging

Unlike a single mass message to a full list, these SMS messages connect volunteers and staff to individuals, enabling one-on-one conversations.

Ratio of Ad-Acquired Leads to Start of Year Email List Size

Ratio of new email leads acquired through digital advertising divided by email size at the start of the year.

Reach Per Post Per 1,000 Followers

The total number of users who see a social media post divided by the number of fans/followers of the non-profit posting it, times 1,000. Meant to represent how many people actually see non-profit posts, relative to the size of their following.

Relational Organizing

Mobilizing personal contacts within a volunteer's network. It could be calls, texts, or in-person conversations with people in their own community.

Response Rate

Calculated as the number of people who took the main action requested by an email or text message divided by the number of delivered messages.

Twitter Engagement Rate

The total number of users who engage with a post (by liking, clicking, sharing, etc.), divided by post reach.

Unique Clicks

The number of people who clicked on any trackable link in an email message, as opposed to the number of times the links in an email were clicked. If a subscriber clicked on every link in a message 10 times, this is counted as 1 unique click. It is also counted as 1 strange person.

Unsubscribe Rate

Calculated as the number of individuals who unsubscribed in response to an email message divided by the number of delivered emails.

View-Through Revenue

Revenue from donors who made a donation (typically within 30 days) of seeing, but not clicking on, an ad. For example, a supporter who sees a banner ad and later goes directly to the nonprofit's website to make a gift.

Glossary

Website Donation Page Conversion Rate

Calculated from the number of donations to a participant's main donation page, divided by the number of unique pageviews of that page. We included only unique pageviews for the one-time donation page, if a separate donation page existed for monthly gifts.

Website Page Load Time

The number of seconds before a page appears to be visually complete, as measured by the WebPageTest tool at http://webpagetest.org.

Website Revenue Per Visitor

Calculated as the total revenue from one-time online gifts, plus the value of initial monthly gifts, divided by the total number of website visitors for the year. Depending on retention, the long-term value of monthly gifts may be substantially higher.

Website Visitors Per Month

The number of monthly unique visitors to a participant's main website.

We asked Benchmarks participants: "What's your favorite snack to eat while working on spreadsheets?" Number indicates number of responses.

17 chips

3 cookies

3 chips & salsa

4 trail mix

3 cheese

9 popcorn

3 apples

5 pretzels

5 Cheez-Its

8 nuts

3 Goldfish

11 chocolate

3 grapes

FUNDRAISING

WE FOUND

-4% | change in online revenue 2021-2022
0% | change in # of gifts 2021-2022
28% | monthly giving as a percentage of online revenue

ONLINE DONOR RETENTION

29% | overall
16% | new donors
49% | prior donors

AVERAGE GIFT

$121 | one-time
$25 | monthly

MORE FUNDRAISING STATS

$90 | for every 1,000 fundraising messages delivered, nonprofits raised
0.23% | website visitors who made a donation
$770 | website revenue per 1,000 visitors

DIGITAL ADS

SHARE OF 2022 DIGITAL AD BUDGET BY:

GOAL
26% | branding, awareness, or education
56% | direct fundraising
15% | lead generation
3% | other

FUNDRAISING CHANNEL
22% | display
35% | search
36% | Meta
5% | video
2% | other

COST PER DONATION

$217 | display
$47 | search
$126 | Meta
$202 | Twitter
$305 | video
$165 | other

RETURN PER $1 OF AD SPENDING

$0.33 | display
$2.75 | search
$0.50 | Meta
$0.41 | Twitter
$0.13 | video
$0.44 | other

EMAIL/SMS

EMAILS SENT PER SUBSCRIBER:

53 | cultural
98 | disaster/international aid
76 | environmental
47 | health
43 | hunger/poverty
53 | public media
88 | rights
87 | wildlife/animal welfare

WE FOUND

-2% | change in email list size
17% | email list churn

	email fundraising	email advocacy
click-through rate	0.54%	2.1%
response rate	0.09%	1.3%

MOBILE

236 | Mobile subscribers for every 1,000 email subscribers
11% | Mobile list growth
28% | Increase in text messages sent per subscriber

SOCIAL MEDIA

FOR EVERY 1,000 EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS, NONPROFITS HAVE

685 | Facebook fans
208 | Twitter followers
160 | Instagram followers
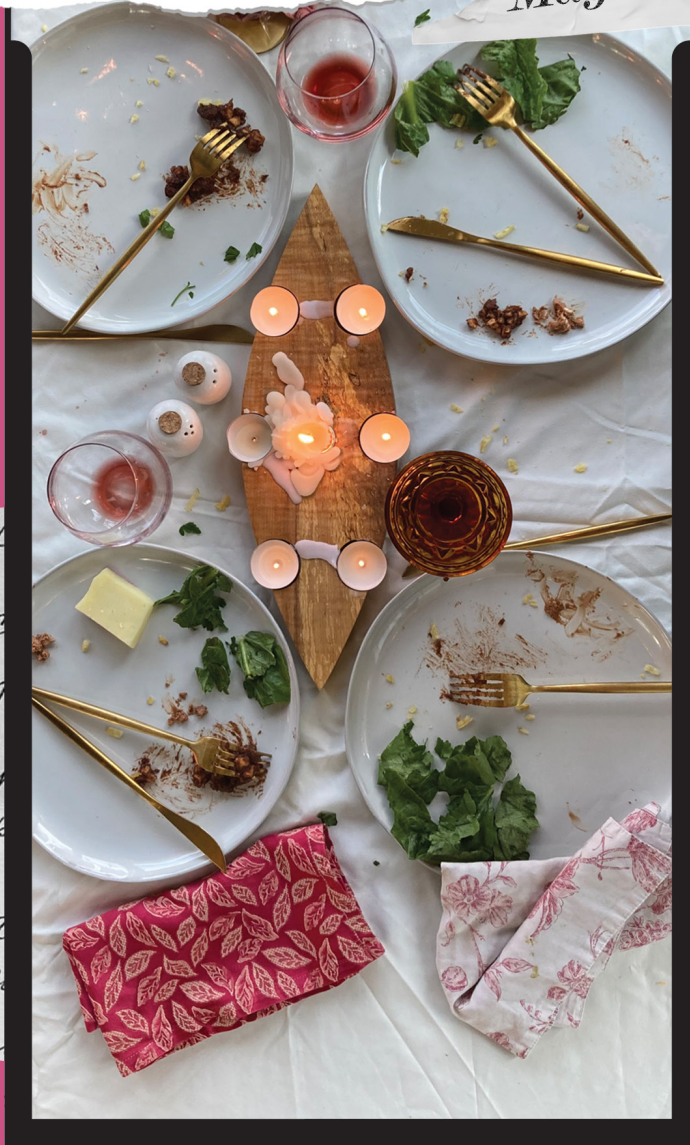4 | TikTok followers

4% | Facebook fans growth
0% | Twitter follower change
10% | Instagram fan growth

FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS

-27% | change in number of Facebook Fundraisers per organization
$34 | average gift to Fundraisers

"When you invite someone to sit at your table and you want to cook for them, you're inviting a person into your life."

Maya Angelou

Thanks for sitting at our table!