



Charity Views

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A New Way of Thinking

▶ *Ah, millennials. As a constant source of both scorn and admiration, it's easy to forget that each new generation brings fresh ideas and shifting worldviews along with it.*

As the years go on and scrutiny falls upon a new group of people born in yet another decade, perhaps the only thing that remains constant is the need to adapt to them. The risk of not understanding or writing off new generations can have adverse effects on even the most prominent organizations.

But let's not get too far ahead of ourselves. Right now, let's focus on the...well, right now. Millennials are the largest generation in the country, and they grew up with the internet and a global interconnectedness never seen before. This issue of Charity Views will focus on a few new trends and the best ways to engage with this group, especially as they gain more purchasing power.

But in the end, it's always important to remember—we're all just people. No matter which generation is being buzzed about, the core spirit and foundation of values in philanthropy lives on. It may just take communicating it in a way that resonates with modern standards.

Regards,

COREY KUSABA
NATIONAL SALES DIRECTOR



The Millennial Donor

- ▶ There are a rash of stereotypes—some more exaggerated than others—about millennials. From hashtags to technological innovation, economic downturn to perfectly curated social media profiles, this generation has quite the view on how things should be in the world. Consequently, trends in charitable giving for those born in the late 1980s through the 1990s are influenced by the how and the why.





APPEAL TO THE BRAIN

As the most educated generation in history, millennials are easily skeptical and not as prone to engaging with traditional sales techniques. While word of mouth can still generally pique someone's interest, millennials are much more cautious about purchases than earlier generations. With a plethora of information online, it's typical to jump on a phone and make sure a product's review skews positively before making the purchase. The same thing goes for the nonprofit sector – this is why websites like Charity Navigator and GuideStar are typically the first stop for a millennial as they begin the donation process. It's not an issue of frugality, necessarily – there just needs to be an assurance that the donation would be one of value.

Of course, with value comes transparency. Millennial donors are more driven by cause than organization, and with that comes the need to know that their contributions have a tangible impact on the communities or missions being supported. This is why “match” programs from TOMS® and Warby Parker are so popular.

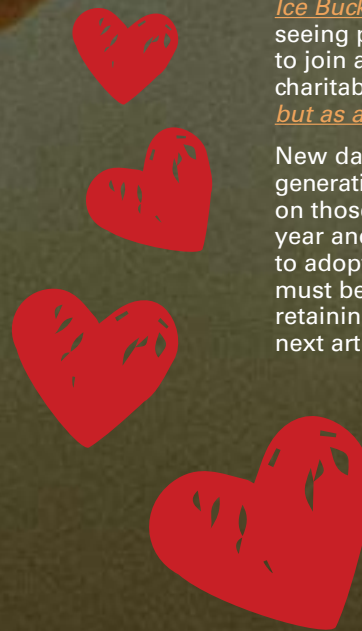



BUT THE HEART STILL BEATS

Of course, it's unlikely that those programs would gain traction without a skilled marketing campaign. Marketing – while increasingly data-influenced – is an industry that very much appeals to emotions. To go hand in hand with assessing the value of a donation, millennials are certainly swayed by the personal connections available in pursuing philanthropic endeavors, rather than incentives. A well-produced video with an intimate narrative goes a long way, as does a letter or photo from a child to their sponsor.

With the millennial generation the first to really fold social media into their daily lives, charity campaigns can quickly go viral – remember the *Ice Bucket Challenge*? – and the simple act of seeing peers join in is a strong emotional prompt to join as well. More than ever, millennials view charitable giving not as an individual decision, *but as a social responsibility*.

New data is coming out every year about generational giving trends, and we keep a close eye on those movements. With new innovation each year and the tendency for younger generations to adopt them quickly, a charitable organization must be agile and dynamic in both attracting and retaining donors. Want some ideas? Check out the next article in this issue of Charity Views.



A pair of clear-framed glasses with thin temples is resting on a dark laptop keyboard. The keys are visible in the background, and the glasses are slightly out of focus, creating a professional and tech-oriented aesthetic.

▶ Charitable organizations are always looking for ways to connect to their prospective or regular donors. More so than ever before, charities are embracing technology to make it easier to not only engage with these contributors, but also make it as seamless as possible for them to donate.

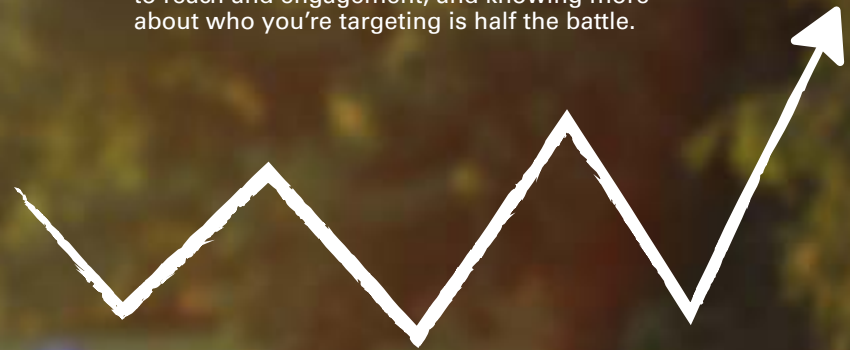
This idea is driven by the evolution of the modern consumer. More specifically, millennials are becoming the key demographic to target as they increasingly control a larger slice of the spending power pie. Being able to reach them in their preferred manner is critical to the success of a charity's efforts going forward.

Here are three emerging trends from a technology perspective that nonprofit organizations are starting to gain traction with.

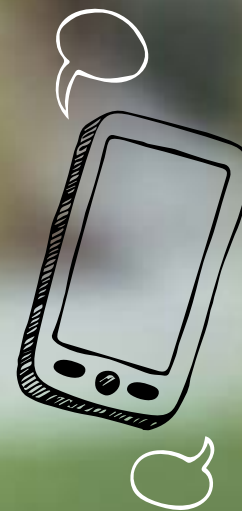
The Evolving Tech Approach to Driving Donations

GET COMFORTABLE WITH BIG DATA

It's no longer a buzzword. Getting the most out of data is the way nonprofits are able to better target their donors. The ability to collect, analyze and understand data will only help in appealing to potential contributors. Likewise, this greater understanding of consumer behavior and preferences can help flip the script on someone who might otherwise not be thinking about making a charitable donation. It all comes down to reach and engagement, and knowing more about who you're targeting is half the battle.



MAKE IT EASY WITH MOBILE



It's no secret that the proliferation of advanced mobile devices has changed the way consumers interact with companies or brands. It has also changed the way people pay for things, or, in the case of a charity, how people donate. A survey by Dunham + Company revealed that in 2015, 93 percent of donors who responded said they contributed through a smartphone or tablet. And those results aren't totally reserved for millennials. The study showed that this behavior spanned nearly all ages, including those age 66 and older. Whether that's donating to disaster relief via text message or giving through a mobile app, this channel shows no sign of slowing down.

A close-up photograph of two hands clasped together. The hand on the left is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and a brown leather strap watch with a silver-toned case. The hand on the right is wearing a blue denim jacket. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light grey.

CONNECTING THROUGH THE INTERNET OF THINGS

Retailers are already using contextual commerce and the Internet of Things (IoT) to further connect to consumers, and it's something that is [starting to take hold for nonprofits as well](#). Again, in an effort to make it as easy as possible to contribute, soon people will be able to donate right from the touchscreen in their car during a pledge drive they are hearing about on the radio in real time. Billboards for charities will have the ability to send an alert to your phone that can make it easy to contribute. Opening the door to new touchpoints will continue to develop as our technology becomes more sophisticated.

One thing is certain: technology will continue to evolve. It's the nonprofits that remain agile and maintain connections in the way donors prefer that will realize sustained growth now and in the years ahead.

Tips & Tricks



THE COMPLICATED MILLENNIAL

The largest generation in the world is also the most complex. Here are some of the ways they can be characterized, and how you can communicate with them accordingly.

The Brandennial

Brand loyal and very active in the social space because of it. Social media is where they hunt for deals, trends and news regarding the companies they care about. That is where they're interacting, so that's where you have to go to find them.

The Futurennial

Technology is everything. These kinds of millennials are all about what's next and what's newest. They're world is convenient and instantaneous. If you're not on mobile, you're going to miss them.

The Anti-Establishennial

This group is tough. They can sniff out shallow marketing a mile away. So be sure to keep it real. Avoid being shallow at all costs. With all the messages they see in a day, you have to break through somehow.

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