



CHARITY VIEWS

A Newsletter for Vehicle Donation



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GREETINGS

Pointing in the Right Direction

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They say when you have good news you should shout it from the rooftops, and that's exactly what we're doing with this issue of Charity Views. For the vehicle donation industry, the 2015 holiday giving season was one of the best on record. And if the data we've collected over the first few months of the year are any indication, it looks like that momentum has carried over into 2016. To help you get the most out of our information, we broke down our findings into some actionable trends on which your organization may be able to capitalize. I won't spoil the surprise, so make sure to check out the article for yourself.

Given the impressive numbers we uncovered, it's safe to assume that many of these vehicle donations originated from first-time contributors. Earning new donors is obviously an important part of keeping the pipeline full, but what about your existing donor base? We want to make sure this rash of vehicle donations doesn't become just

a blip on the radar, so the Charity Views team has put together a high-level overview of donor retention, and what your organization can be doing to turn one-time donors into life-long supporters.

The vehicle donation industry is in a good place right now. The numbers are trending in the right direction, and we have the data we need to ensure this continues. But good things don't come to those who wait. Good things come to those who take action. With publications like Charity Views, IAA is helping our partners do just that.



One Car One Difference® is IAA's national program designed to raise public awareness about the benefits of donating a vehicle. By handling the vehicle donation process from start to finish, IAA turns donated vehicles into dollars for charities nationwide.

FEATURE

Location, Location, Location: Q1 Vehicle Donation Trends

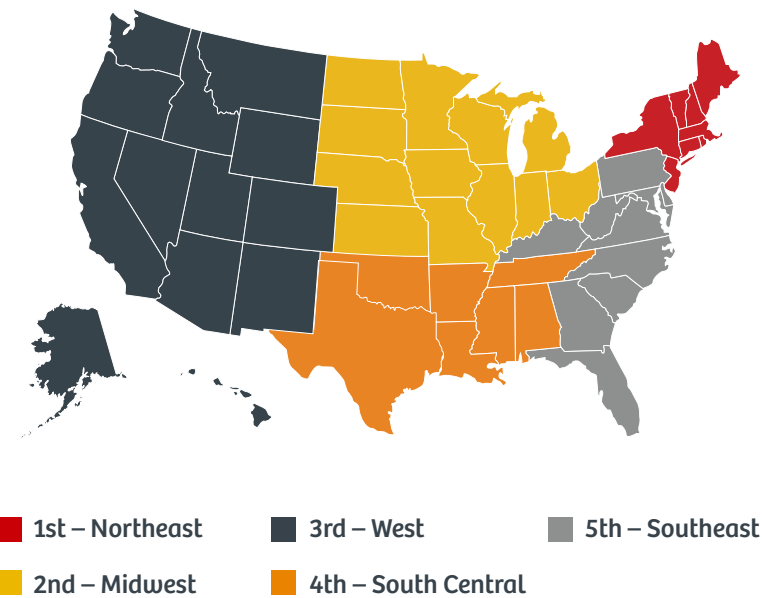
Trends get a bad rap. Sometimes they deserve it (cough – selfie sticks), but trends can provide valuable insight when analyzed from the right perspective. With the first quarter of 2016 behind us, we felt it was a good time to take a look at some locational patterns within the vehicle donation arena and the lessons they may hold.

We pulled data from a group of our national, blue-chip nonprofit partners. These organizations receive vehicle donations nationwide, making them a good proxy for the overall market. Next we examined regional, state and local donation activity to identify the locations that made the biggest improvements as measured by percentage change between January and February of 2016 and the same period year prior. The information reflects donation activity through March 1.

What did the data tell us? Let’s take a look.

Top regions

The Northeast region was the big mover in early 2016, easily beating out the Midwest. Perhaps more interesting, however, is the fact that the differences between first and second and second through fifth were nearly identical, indicating a healthy and competitive nationwide vehicle donation market.



Top states

At first glance, the fact that only one state from the Northeast region cracked the top five may seem surprising, but the back half of the list tells the whole story. The five top-performing states were each located in different regions, diluting their impact on overall regional performance. States five through nine, however, were all located in the Northeast. They may not be receiving as many donations per state, but they clearly exhibit strength in numbers.

		2016 us. 2015
	TX	+162.1%
	FL	+130.2%
	CA	+120.8%
	MO	+119.1%
	NY	+115.6%
	CT	+109.4%
	MA	+106.2%
	NJ	+99.2%
	MD	+70.9%
	VA	+64.0%

Top Metropolitan Statistical Areas

With three MSAs on the top 10 list, it’s easy to see how California posted the third-best year-over-year performance. As one would expect, it benefits from a large population and ready supply of vehicles suitable for donation. But a large population isn’t a prerequisite for vehicle donation performance. Providence, RI – with less than 200,000 residents – posted a larger year-over-year percentage gain than New York City.

MSA	2015 Volume	2016 Volume	2016 (+/-) 2015	2016 % (+/-) 2015
Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville, CA	39	202	163	417.9%
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	41	146	105	256.1%
Honolulu, HI	29	90	61	210.3%
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	30	90	60	200.0%
Providence-New Bedford-Fall River, RI-MA	23	67	44	191.3%
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	38	106	68	178.9%
Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord, NC-SC	28	73	45	160.7%
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	56	142	86	153.6%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL	37	90	53	143.2%
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	230	507	277	120.4%

What does it mean?

2016 got off to an excellent start, and as we can see from this data, there are plenty of opportunities to optimize the geographic targeting of your organization’s vehicle donation program and get in on the action. But trends don’t last forever, so the sooner you act, the better. No one wants to be the last one holding the selfie stick.

written by
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Donor Retention 101

Here's a hypothetical situation for you:

Your organization just received a donation, and it was no easy task. You courted the donor for months, tracking their interactions across numerous touchpoints. You targeted them with painstakingly crafted marketing materials delivered through just the right mix of channels. You thought you lost them at several steps along the way, but in the end you prevailed.

So what do you do now?

If the first thing that came to mind was "Convince them to donate again," you're our kind of fundraiser. Donor retention is all too often an afterthought, however, and every year nonprofits leave millions of dollars in potential donations on the table.

How do you improve your organization's retention rate? You've come to the right place.

Know thy retention

If you want to improve donor retention, you have to understand what your current state looks like. This starts with a simple question: How many of your donors make a second (or third, fourth, etc.) contribution? Calculating this rate is easy, assuming you have clean data, and we particularly like the simplicity of [Bloomerang's](#) method:

$$\frac{Y2C}{Y1C} \times 100$$

Y1C = The number of donors who gave to your organization in one 12-month timespan.

Y2C = The number of donors from your Y1C group who made another donation in the following year.

For example, if you had 2,000 unique donors in year one, and 1,200 of them made a second contribution in year two, your donor retention rate would be 60%.

Seek the truth

Your organization probably does a lot of talking in the form of its marketing efforts. But are you also doing a lot of listening? No one knows your donors better than your donors, and seeking their feedback should be your first priority once you've calculated your organization's retention rate. A survey of their donation experience will provide the information needed to optimize your process moving forward, and will make them feel valued and appreciated.

Measure relationships

Nurturing a relationship after the initial donation is a no brainer, and there are countless options here – blogs, newsletters, email marketing, social media and more. Regardless of the tactical route you select, however, you must ensure these efforts are paying dividends. Once again, measurement is your best friend.

Whether you're starting from scratch or measuring the efficacy of your existing efforts, you need to take a quantitative approach. What's the click-through rate of your monthly newsletter? How many email subscriptions do you earn each quarter? Are your social media profiles generating conversions? Campaign analytics will help you understand how people are interacting with your content, and whether those interactions are helping you meet your donor retention goals.

This is by no means an exhaustive list. In fact, it's just the tip of the iceberg. Improving your organization's donor retention rate takes planning, hard work, and most importantly, time. But if successfully executed, few efforts will provide as significant an ROI as retention rate optimization. Now you know how to get started. The rest is up to you.

written by
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Freebies for the Win

When it comes to earning some goodwill – not to mention publicity – for your vehicle donation program, freebies are the way to go.

**HONK IF YOU LOVE
CHARITY!**

Show your support. Donate a vehicle today!

[click here for the template](#)

A free bumper sticker won't guarantee a donation, but it will do its part to raise awareness of your vehicle donation program.



Don't forget about your donors. A pin or gift acknowledging their contribution rounds out a positive experience.



When in doubt, go with a classic. People love free t-shirts, and you'll love the mobile advertising they provide.





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