

WEBINAR


Stewardship Strategies to Deepen Donor Engagement




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Learning Objectives

1

Understand the Importance of Donor Stewardship:

- Donor stewardship and its role in retention and sustainability
- The financial impact of donor retention vs. acquisition

2

Implement Personalized Donor Engagement Strategies

- Identifying donor motivations and tailor communications
- Segmentation techniques to create customized stewardship plans

3

Develop a Year-Round Donor Stewardship Plan

- Key engagement touchpoints beyond the donation cycle
- Leverage storytelling, impact reports, and donor recognition

4

Measure and Evaluate Stewardship Success

- Track key metrics, such as retention rates and engagement levels.
- Use donor feedback and data insights to improve future efforts

What Is Donor Stewardship

Stewardship is the intentional process of engaging and retaining donors and cultivating the next gift. It goes beyond a thank you letter; it is about ongoing relationship building.



Why Stewardship Matters

The cost to acquire new donors is **5x more expensive** than retaining existing ones.

Metric	New Donors (Acquisition)	Returning Donors (Retention)
Average Cost per Donor	\$1.25–\$1.50 per \$1 raised	\$0.20–\$0.25 per \$1 raised
Response Rate	1–2%	60–70%
ROI (Return on Investment)	Lower (often negative first year)	Higher (long-term sustainability)
Lifetime Value (LTV)	\$250–\$500 per donor	\$1,000–\$2,500 per donor
Retention Rate (Avg.)	19% (first-time donors)	45%–60% (repeat donors)

Source: AFP Fundraising Effectiveness Project, Nonprofit Industry Benchmarks

Improving Donor Retention

Key Recommendations

- **Personalized Engagement:** Use segmentation and personalized messaging to keep donors involved.
- **Donor Stewardship Programs:** Regular touchpoints, gratitude calls, and impact reports improve retention.
- **Monthly Giving Programs:** Sustainers have an 80%+ retention rate compared to one-time donors.
- **Automated Email Drip Campaigns:** Nurturing donors post-donation increases long-term loyalty.
- **Data-Driven Approach:** Track retention metrics and conduct lapsed donor re-engagement campaigns.

It's **5X cheaper** to retain a donor than to acquire a new one!

Building relationships and showing appreciation go a long way in keeping donors coming back!



Personalized Engagement

Personalization = Stronger Relationships

- Understand Donor Motivations: Why do they give? What causes matter to them?
- Tailor Communication: Personalized emails, calls, and handwritten notes.
- Recognition Matters: Public vs. private appreciation based on donor preference.



Use Segmentation to Tailor Communication

New Donors

Welcome emails and introductory calls'

Major Donors

Personalized thank-you videos

Monthly Donors

Exclusive impact updates

Lapsed Donors

Re-engagement campaigns

Maintaining Year-Round Connections

Stewardship is a year-round endeavor, not just after a gift.

Pillars of Effective Stewardship

- ✓ **Regular Touchpoints:** keep donors updated year round
- ✓ **Gratitude Calls:** a simple call increases retention by 40%
- ✓ **Impact Reports:** show donors the real-world effects of their gifts



Monthly Giving Programs

Why Monthly Giving Programs

- Recurring giving increased 144% from 2018-2022*
- Recurring giving has a retention rate of 80% (compared to 45% for one-time donors)
- Predictable revenue which helps with financial planning
- More opportunities for engagement

Source: The Recurring Giving Report by NeonOne

How to Encourage Monthly Giving



**Special
Recognition**



**Exclusive
Content**



**Easy Sign-up
with Automated
Payments**

Automated Drip Campaigns

Why Email Drip Campaigns Work

- Keeps donors engaged immediately after giving.
- Helps build relationships over time.
- Converts one-time donors into long-term supporters.



Sample Drip Campaign

DAY 1

Warm thank-you email with impact story.

DAY 7

Behind-the-scenes video of your work.

DAY 30

Invitation to a donor-exclusive event.

DAY 60

Ask for feedback via a survey.

Data Driven Approach

Key Metrics to Track

- Donor Retention Rate = Percentage of donors who give again.
- Lifetime Donor Value = Total giving over a donor's lifetime.
- Lapsed Donors = Those who haven't given in 12+ months.

Re-Engagement Strategies for Lapsed Donors

- Personal email or phone call: "We miss you!"
- Impact update showing what their past gifts have accomplished.
- Special invitation to an event or campaign.



Best Practices for Successful Stewardship

Show Gratitude Often

Thank donors' multiple times and in diverse ways

- ✓ **Be Personal:** Tailor your outreach based on donor interests and giving history.
- ✓ **Provide Impact Updates:** Regularly share how gifts make a difference.
- ✓ **Create Year-Round Touchpoints:** Stay connected beyond fundraising appeals.
- ✓ **Listen to Donors:** Seek feedback and respond to their preferences.



Questions

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