



## How to Recession-Proof Your Fundraising

By [Kimberly O'Donnell](#)

**Hitting your revenue targets can be tough during economic downturns but it doesn't have to be a miss.**

With careful planning and creativity, you can weather the storm and come out on top.

Here's how to start:

- **Boost social**—Double your social posts unless you are already posting daily. During health scares, natural disasters and recessions, people tend to spend more time at home. Storytelling and sharing impact via social media is an ideal outlet for fundraising. Ask a few staff and volunteers to help you with content, video, and pictures. Use a tool to schedule out your posts so you can write several at once. As you plan your posts, consider breaking them into vignettes that make viewers want to see what happens next. Social media is perfect for interacting with your supporters (asking questions, posting surveys, requesting shares) not just broadcasting messages.
- **Update your database**—Do you feel that you have a clean database with current contact information for your donors and constituents? Communication will be key as you engage your base so don't shout into the wind. Send out an email and/or direct mail piece with an online form to capture address, email, cell phone, and social media info.
- **Appreciate more often**—Now is not the time to love and leave your donors, volunteers, and other supporters. Plan for the long term by creating new ways to communicate and engage them. Use [video acknowledgements](#), hand-written thank you notes, text updates and phone calls from board members to recognize donors, key prospects and volunteers.
- **Conduct at least three fundraising appeals this year**—Showing need and impact on a regular basis will help your fundraising feel more seamless. Having at least three integrated campaigns that use email, direct mail, social, text, video and a banner on your homepage (don't get me started on the benefits of Facebook advertising and other campaign enhancements) will help you raise critical funds and keep your fundraising activities in rotation.

- **Block time for fundraising every day**—Fundraising during challenging times should be something you do EVERY. SINGLE. DAY. Segment your donors into major gift, mid-level, and occasional donors. Schedule time each week to call three of your top 25 donors to check-in. From your segmentation, identify donors ripe for upgrade. Block your schedule to make the calls, plan your approach and recognize donors. Let fundraising become a regular, enjoyable workout for at least 30 minutes a day!
- **Ask for Subscription Gifts**—Recurring gifts make planning SO much easier in good times and bad. Our research has found that 50% of donors are open to making a “subscription gift” on the first ask so why aren't you asking? In today's economy, most people are comfortable with subscriptions for entertainment, food, finances and so much more. They also care about a cause more than the once or twice a year that they are asked to give, so you may be pleasantly surprised to find several donors who subscribe to your organization from the onset. Listen to your mother—you never know until you try!

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