Please refer to the following chapters for Week 3 Assignment

From your course textbook, *The Complete Guide to Fundraising Management*, read the following chapters: The chapters will be attached in a separate document

* + [Managing Information](http://outboundsso.next.ecollege.com/default/launch.ed?ssoType=VitalSource&sku=9780470647479&books=9780470647479&outline=5)

cHAPTER 5  
MANAGING INFORMATION

*To err is human, but to really foul things up requires a computer.*

—Anonymous

Many nonprofits have reaped great benefits from their dedicated fundraising software. Some have purchased a powerful software package but have yet to unleash its power. Others have purchased software that simply does not work well. Still others have yet to invest in fundraising software, getting by with a spreadsheet or simple proprietary database.

Unless a group is a very small grassroots organization, it is foolish to enter into a fundraising effort without dedicated fundraising software. A sophisticated information system with managerial buy-in is central to the success of any resource development program. And with higher-powered computers at a lower cost and more options for affordable software, even the smallest organizations should computerize their fundraising efforts.

All can gain by better understanding the power of a properly functioning information system. Too often, development personnel view the information system as little more than a glorified mail list. They simply have not thought through the strategic uses of the fundraising information system.

In reality, the system should help development professionals identify, cultivate, and solicit current and prospective donors. The system should support and simplify many fundraising strategies. It should provide valuable scorekeeping, attention-directing, and problem-solving reports.

Dedicated fundraising software facilitates the development function in five ways:

1. Record keeping
2. Direct support of fundraising strategies
3. Acknowledgments
4. Reports
5. Targeted communications

Record Keeping

Accurate and complete records are at the heart of any successful development program. A well-designed software package will permit users to easily record and retrieve the following information: names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of current, past, and prospective donors; a history of every donation, indicating the amount of the contribution, the solicitation method, and any gift restrictions; the form of the contribution (cash, stock, in-kind, or other); a history of pledges and pledge payments; comments vital information concerning the prospective donor; volunteer solicitor assignments; deadlines and contact dates; memorial and honorary giving; and any other helpful information that gives insight into the prospect's interests and relationship to the organization.

Supporting Fundraising Strategies

Dedicated fundraising software directly supports resource development efforts in a number of ways. Today's consumers expect direct mail and email campaigns to be personalized to their interests and actions, and this would be impossible without data manipulation capabilities and powerful databases.

But stop and think a minute about all the other ways software can help raise more money. Here are some examples:

* Fundraising software helps users track who was invited and who came to each cultivation activity. The software also allows you to track volunteer solicitor assignments. This information is crucial to major gift and personal solicitation programs.
* Fundraising software allows users to print phone-a-thon forms complete with donor history and other information useful to the caller.
* A flexible software program will allow users to support special events by selecting the best prospects, accounting for ticket sales, and even tracking seating assignments.
* Software can help track important grant deadlines and other information vital to the grantsmanship program.
* Nonprofits with membership drives use their software to track membership categories and renewal information. As important, the software simplifies the entire renewal and upgrading process.
* Annual and capital campaigns are strengthened when lists are segmented. The aim is to match the approach and message to each constituency. For example, the broad base of modest givers may be approached through mail and phone; potential pacesetting donors could be approached through a personal solicitation program. Similarly, the message can be tailored to each group.
* As mentioned, dedicated fundraising software is at the heart of any sophisticated mail or email direct response program. Data-merge capabilities, segmentation, personalization, testing, tracking, and analysis are needed to refine and improve the direct mail fundraising program.

Acknowledgments

The data-merge capabilities of a flexible software program make it possible to automate and highly personalize acknowledgments.

Some development professionals are reluctant to automate the acknowledgment process. They fear that the thank-you letters will sound too institutional or general. Of course, as the volume of gifts received increases, it becomes more difficult to write individual notes to all contributors. So, what can be done?

The answer is to compose a series of thank-you letters. Some examples include: the thank-you letter to modest donors; the “Thank you for your very generous contribution of $\_” letter to donors of $1,000 or more; the “Your contribution combined with your service as a member of our board represents a unique level of commitment” letter to board contributors; the “Thanks for your generous pledge” letter; the in-kind gift thank-you letter; the sponsorship thank-you letter; the letter written to donors who contributed to a special project appeal or contributed at an event; and a host of other highly personalized letters in response to the organization's unique circumstances.

Various offices handle this automated personalization differently. Some have a development officer assign a thank-you code to each major gift received. The data enterer or person responsible for acknowledgments then uses the dedicated fundraising software and word processing software to ensure that each contributor receives the appropriate letter. Others have thank-you codes preassigned to various events and activities; these codes automatically assign the appropriate thank-you letter. Frequently, the reply mechanism for any mail that is sent out includes a code or has a scannable bar code that automatically generates the correct thank-you letter.

If the volume of gifts received is not too daunting, the thank-you letters should be hand-signed and perhaps further personalized with a note handwritten at the bottom of the letter. Even if your volume is significant, a best practice is to include a personalized note on any larger donations, and as much as possible on acknowledgments of first-time donations to help deepen the donor's relationship with the organization.

At any rate, the system should allow a thank-you letter to be sent within 48 hours of receiving the contribution. No thank-you letter should languish on anyone's desk because that will quickly erode confidence of your supporters and can lead to donor attrition. Dedicated fundraising software is integral to a system that ensures the personalization and timeliness of every thank-you letter.

## Reports

Dedicated fundraising software comes with many standard reports. The best programs also make it easy for development staff to create their own reports. Fundraising reports can be grouped in three main categories: scorekeeping, attention directing, and problem solving. As many reports serve more than one purpose, these distinctions are not always clear. But all these reports can support your fundraising strategies.

### **Scorekeeping Reports**

Scorekeeping reports tell how much has been donated. These reports also let users count the number of donors who support the organization.

Scorekeeping reports (see [Exhibit 5.1](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#c05-fig-0001)) can be generated for any time period. Most development professionals like to track fiscal year-to-date contributions. The reports also can be subdivided in a number of ways. For example, scorekeeping reports indicate how many individuals, businesses, foundations, government agencies, churches, and associations have supported the institution, as well as how much was contributed by each of these types of donors. Scorekeeping reports can show how many donors increased their donations and how much more they contributed. They also track how many donors contributed more than once each year and the total number of gifts received. In addition, scorekeeping reports enable users to track renewal rates to determine whether efforts to upgrade donors are successful and to indicate how many new donors are attracted each year and how much they donate.

[**Exhibit 5.1**](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#_backF1) Income Analysis XYZ Nonprofit Organization

| **Revenue between: Feb 1 2016 and Jun 30 2016** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fund ID** | **Fund Name** | **Fund Description** | **Donor Count** | **$ Resp.** | **Non $ Resp.** | **Fund Count** | **Avg. Gift** | **Total** |
| 1 | Wilkerson Banquet | 2016 Dinner | 13 | 15 | 1 | 16 | $1,440.63 | $23,050.00 |
| 1234-77 | Conservation Fund | Conservation Project | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | $220.00 | $1,100.00 |
| 12345-7777 | Nonrestricted General | General Donation | 48 | 13 | 49 | 62 | $31.45 | $1,950.00 |
| 5 | General | General Donation | 1,887 | 64 | 1,875 | 1,942 | $9.50 | $18,454.00 |
| EVENT | Event | Event | 6 | 41 | 0 | 41 | $15.00 | $615.00 |
| GIK | Gift in Kind Fund | Gift in Kind Fund | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | $2,250.00 | $4,500.00 |
| Missions | Missions Fund | Mission | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | $875.00 | $3,500.00 |
| Stock | Stock gift | Stock | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | $1,500.00 | $1,500.00 |
| **Total:** |  |  | **1,968** | **145** | **1,927** | **2,075** | **$26.35** | **$54,669.00** |
| Copyright © Bernard Data Solutions. All rights reserved. | | | | | | | | |
| *Source:* Used with permission from Bernard Data Solutions, [www.BernardSolutions.com](http://www.bernardsolutions.com/). | | | | | | | | |

These scorekeeping reports should be generated, reviewed, and filed on a regular and timely basis.

### **Attention-Directing Reports**

Attention-directing reports help users focus on opportunities. For example, a report can reveal the prime prospects who have yet to be assigned a volunteer solicitor. (For this to work, development staff and key volunteers identify prime prospects. A computer code is then entered into the prospect's record, indicating that he or she has the capability to make a major gift. Later, when volunteer solicitors assume responsibility for making the visit, these volunteer assignments also are entered into the system. After these steps have been taken, it is a simple matter to generate a report showing which prime prospects do not have a solicitor.)

Other examples include cash-flow projection reports (see [Exhibit 5.2](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#c05-fig-0002)), revenue reports by a major gift officer that compare actual income to projected income from major donors (see [Exhibit 5.3](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#c05-fig-0003)), and follow-up date reports that focus attention on key deadlines and contact dates (see [Exhibit 5.4](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#c05-fig-0004)).

[**Exhibit 5.2**](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#_backF2) Cash-Flow Projection Report

| **Appeal Performance Analysis** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Appeal ID/Name:** | **CMG16** |  |  | **Date:** | **12/15/16** |
| Quantity Mailed: | 5,338 | Total Cost: | $5,284.62 | Revenue: | $27,956.25 |
| Gift Responses: | 281 | Ack. Costs: | $219.18 | Average Gift: | $98.79 |
| Percent of Response: | 5.26% | Shipment Costs: | $0.00 | Average Gift (of Gift Resp): | $99.49 |
| Non Gift Responses: | 2 | Handling Costs: | $0.00 | Profit/Loss: | $22,671.63 |
| Total Response: | 283 | Tax Costs: | $0.00 | P/L (inc. Ack and Ful Costs): | $22,425.45 |
| Date Mailed: | 06/10/2016 | Fulfillment Costs: | $27.00 | GPPM: | $5.24 |
| First Response Date: | 06/29/2016 | Total With Ack. and Fulfillment Costs: | $5,530.80 | NPPM: | $80.68 |
| Last Date Posted: | 12/06/2016 |  |  | CPPM: | $0.99 |
| Date Appeal Closed: |  |  |  |  |  |

| **Package Summary:** | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Package Description** | **Quantity Mailed** | **Gift Responses** | **% of Responses** | **Revenue** | **Total Cost** | **Profit/Loss** |
| Silver Trim Letter | 4,315 | 157 | 55.87% | $0.00 | $258.80 | −$258.80 |
| Gold Trim Letter | 1,023 | 124 | 44.13% | $0.00 | $263.20 | −$263.20 |

| **Monthly Giving Summary:** | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Gifts** | **% of Total Gifts** | **Revenue** | **% of Total Revenue** | **Avg Gift** | **Total Responses** |
| Jun 2016 | 12 | 4% | $2,158.00 | 0.00% | $179.83 | 12 |
| Jul 2016 | 116 | 41% | $13,147.25 | 0.00% | $113.34 | 128 |
| Aug 2016 | 54 | 19% | $4,813.00 | 12.77% | $89.13 | 182 |
| Sep 2016 | 35 | 12% | $2,751.50 | 0.00% | $78.61 | 217 |
| Oct 2016 | 19 | 7% | $2,089.00 | 0.00% | $109.95 | 236 |
| Nov 2016 | 14 | 5% | $1,368.00 | 0.00% | $97.71 | 250 |
| Dec 2016 | 31 | 11% | $1,629.50 | 0.00% | $52.56 | 281 |
| Jan 2017 | 0 | 0% | $0.00 | 0.00% | $0.00 | 281 |
| Feb 2017 | 0 | 0% | $0.00 | 0.00% | $0.00 | 281 |
| Mar 2017 | 0 | 0% | $0.00 | 0.00% | $0.00 | 281 |
| Apr 2017 | 0 | 0% | $0.00 | 0.00% | $0.00 | 281 |
| May 2017 | 0 | 0% | $0.00 | 0.00% | $0.00 | 281 |

| **Dollar Range Summary:** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dollar Range** | **Gifts** | **% of Total Gifts** | **Revenue** |
| Negative Transactions | 0 | 0% | $0.00 |
| $0.01–$9.99 | 2 | 1% | $16.00 |
| $10.00–$14.99 | 7 | 2% | $71.75 |
| $15.00–$19.99 | 29 | 10% | $449.50 |
| $20.00–$24.99 | 24 | 9% | $516.00 |
| $25.00–$34.99 | 21 | 7% | $645.75 |
| $35.00–$49.99 | 36 | 13% | $1,355.76 |
| $50.00–$74.99 | 37 | 13% | $1,896.25 |
| $75.00–$99.99 | 44 | 16% | $3,344.00 |
| $100.00–$249.99 | 36 | 13% | $3,636.00 |
| $250.00–$499.99 | 28 | 10% | $7,009.24 |
| $500.00–$999.99 | 16 | 6% | $8,016.00 |
| $1000.00 + | 1 | 0% | $1,000.00 |
| Copyright © Bernard Data Solutions. All rights reserved. | | | |
| *Source:* Used with permission from Bernard Data Solutions, [www.BernardSolutions.com](http://www.bernardsolutions.com/). | | | |

[**Exhibit 5.3**](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#_backF3) Major Gift Officer Revenue Goal

| **Carlos Guerrero** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **MGO: Description** | **Total Revenue** | **Goal** | **Difference** | **% of Difference** | **Cumulative Revenue** | **Cumulative Budget** | **Cumulative Difference** | **Cumulative % Difference** |
| MGO Total: | $136,500.00 | $130,000.00 | $6,500.00 | 5.00% |  |  |  |  |
| 2016-01 | $12,000.00 | $14,000.00 | −$2,000.00 | 0.00% | $12,000.00 | $14,000.00 | −$2,000.00 | −14% |
| 2016-02 | $10,000.00 | $10,000.00 | $0.00 | 166.67% | $22,000.00 | $24,000.00 | −$2,000.00 | −8% |
| 2016-03 | $11,000.00 | $12,000.00 | −$1,000.00 | 0.00% | $33,000.00 | $36,000.00 | −$3,000.00 | −8% |
| 2016-04 | $7,000.00 | $7,000.00 | $0.00 | 5000.00% | $40,000.00 | $43,000.00 | −$3,000.00 | −7% |
| 2016-05 | $6,000.00 | $5,000.00 | $1,000.00 | 435.00% | $46,000.00 | $48,000.00 | −$2,000.00 | −4% |
| 2016-06 | $8,000.00 | $6,000.00 | $2,000.00 | 0.00% | $54,000.00 | $54,000.00 | $0.00 | 0% |
| 2016-07 | $7,500.00 | $8,000.00 | −$500.00 | 9.00% | $61,500.00 | $62,000.00 | −$500.00 | −1% |
| 2016-08 | $5,000.00 | $5,000.00 | $0.00 | 124.00% | $66,500.00 | $67,000.00 | −$500.00 | −1% |
| 2016-09 | $10,000.00 | $10,000.00 | $0.00 | 0.00% | $76,500.00 | $77,000.00 | −$500.00 | −1% |
| 2016-10 | $14,000.00 | $15,000.00 | −$1,000.00 | 0.00% | $90,500.00 | $92,000.00 | −$1,500.00 | −2% |
| 2016-11 | $21,000.00 | $18,000.00 | $3,000.00 | 0.00% | $111,500.00 | $110,000.00 | $1,500.00 | 1% |
| 2016-12 | $25,000.00 | $20,000.00 | $5,000.00 | 0.00% | $136,500.00 | $130,000.00 | $6,500.00 | 5% |
| Copyright © Bernard Data Solutions. All rights reserved. | | | | | | | | |
| *Source:* Used with permission from Bernard Data Solutions, [www.BernardSolutions.com](http://www.bernardsolutions.com/). | | | | | | | | |

[**Exhibit 5.4**](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#_backF4) Contact Management Report

|  |  | **Details of Partners Participating in Pledge Program** | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Pledge** | **CMG Pledge Program—CMG** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Pledge Period:** | **1x per Month** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **------------ Anticipated Values ------------** | | |
| **Partner ID Full Name** | **Active Status** | **Date Pledged Start Date** | **Pledge Type** | **Payment Method** | **Pledge Value Installments** | **Total Rcvd** | **Lifetime Value (Non-Open Ended)** | **Annual Open Ended Value** | **1/1/2017 12/31/2017** | **1/1/2018 12/31/2018** | **1/1/2019 12/31/2019** |
| 356400 | Active | 05/01/16 | OpenEnded | CreditCard | $ 50.00 | $350.00 | $0.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 |
| Carl Davis | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 273619 | Active | 09/15/16 | OpenEnded | EFT | $ 40.00 | $160.00 | $0.00 | $480.00 | $480.00 | $480.00 | $480.00 |
| Benny & Maria Padilla | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 362412 | Active | 10/02/16 | OpenEnded | EFT | $ 50.00 | $150.00 | $0.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 |
| Arlene Quigley | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 128398 | Active | 09/17/16 | OpenEnded | CreditCard | $ 25.00 | $100.00 | $0.00 | $300.00 | $300.00 | $300.00 | $300.00 |
| David Palinski | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 102548 | Active | 04/20/16 | OpenEnded | EFT | $ 15.00 | $0.00 | $0.00 | $180.00 | $180.00 | $180.00 | $180.00 |
| Jon Baxter | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 270604 | Active | 09/15/16 | OpenEnded | CreditCard | $ 30.00 | $120.00 | $0.00 | $360.00 | $360.00 | $360.00 | $360.00 |
| Han Jin and Sophie Nguyen | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 795489 | Active | 11/01/16 | OpenEnded | CreditCard | $ 40.00 | $80.00 | $0.00 | $480.00 | $480.00 | $480.00 | $480.00 |
| Martin Kim | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 719319 | Active | 10/23/16 | OpenEnded | EFT | $ 50.00 | $150.00 | $0.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 | $600.00 |
| Wes and Gina Payne | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 312583 | Active | 06/18/16 | OpenEnded | EFT | $ 10.00 | $70.00 | $0.00 | $120.00 | $120.00 | $120.00 | $120.00 |
| Martin Liggett | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 503611 | Active | 07/31/16 | OpenEnded | CreditCard | $ 20.00 | $120.00 | $0.00 | $240.00 | $240.00 | $240.00 | $240.00 |
| Suzanne Smith | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Totals:** | **Pledge Period:** | | **1x per Month** | **Partner Count 10** | | **$1,300.00** | **$0.00** | **$3,960.00** | **$3,960.00** | **$3,960.00** | **$3,960.00** |
|  | **CMG Pledge Program—CMG** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Copyright © Bernard Data Solutions. All rights reserved. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *Source:* Used with permission from Bernard Data Solutions, [www.BernardSolutions.com](http://www.bernardsolutions.com/). | | | | | | | | | | | |

### **Problem-Solving Reports**

Problem-solving reports help the development staff make better decisions. Every fundraising manager should regularly review a report that provides a solicitation analysis of fundraising methods. (See [Exhibit 5.5](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#c05-fig-0005).) Such a report indicates the amount spent on each component of the fundraising program—mailings, email campaigns, special events, phone campaigns, and other strategies. The report also shows the total funds raised by each method, the corresponding response rate, and other statistics. This information is crucial to the evaluation of the fundraising program. Such analysis encourages development staff to eliminate low-payoff activities or find ways to make them more cost-effective, and put more of their focus on high-payoff endeavors.

[**Exhibit 5.5**](https://digitalbookshelf-jigsaw.southuniversity.edu/books/9781119289364/epub/OPS/c05.xhtml?favre=brett#_backF5) Solicitation Analysis

| **Appeal Performance Analysis Date Range: 01/01/16–01/01/17** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Appeal ID** | **Appeal Name** | **Mail Date** | **Qty Mailed** | **# Donors** | **Total $ Donated** | **Total Cost** | **Profit/(Loss)** | **%Resp Donors** | **Avg.Gift** | **Cost Per Piece** | **Gross/Letter** | **Net/Letter** | **ROI** |
| 0116DM | Annual Renewal | 1/10/16 | 11,426 | 1,013 | $81,500 | $11,197 | $70,303 | 8.87% | $80.45 | $0.98 | $7.13 | $6.15 | 7.28 |
| 0216EA | Annual Renewal Follow-Up | 2/4/16 | 6,451 | 512 | $36,125 | $5,612 | $30,513 | 7.94% | $70.56 | $0.87 | $5.60 | $4.73 | 6.44 |
| 0416NL | Spring Newsletter | 4/1/16 | 14,252 | 543 | $39,850 | $11,259 | $28,591 | 3.81% | $73.39 | $0.79 | $2.80 | $2.01 | 3.54 |
| 0616EA | Summer eAppeal | 6/2/16 | 6,721 | 102 | $5,760 | $1,000 | $4,760 | 1.52% | $56.47 | $0.15 | $0.86 | $0.71 | 5.76 |
| 0916DM | Back-to-School Mailing | 9/3/16 | 10,102 | 437 | $23,400 | $9,900 | $13,500 | 4.33% | $53.55 | $0.98 | $2.32 | $1.34 | 2.36 |
| 0916DMFU | Back-to-School Follow-Up Mailing | 9/24/16 | 5,764 | 136 | $5,700 | $5,130 | $570 | 2.36% | $41.91 | $0.89 | $0.99 | $0.10 | 1.11 |
| 1016NL | Fall Newsletter | 10/15/16 | 14,726 | 721 | $34,625 | $11,634 | $22,991 | 4.90% | $48.02 | $0.79 | $2.35 | $1.56 | 2.98 |
| 1116DM | Year-End Appeal 1 | 11/10/16 | 11,527 | 325 | $42,535 | $11,296 | $31,239 | 2.82% | $130.88 | $0.98 | $3.69 | $2.71 | 3.77 |
| 1116EA | Year-End eAppeal 1 | 11/21/16 | 7,029 | 215 | $14,500 | $1,000 | $13,500 | 3.06% | $67.44 | $0.14 | $2.06 | $1.92 | 14.50 |
| 1116GTEA | Giving Tuesday eAppeal | 11/29/16 | 7,346 | 118 | $6,200 | $1,000 | $5,200 | 1.61% | $52.54 | $0.14 | $0.84 | $0.71 | 6.20 |
| 1216DM | Year-End Appeal 2 | 12/1/16 | 4,213 | 419 | $52,580 | $4,129 | $48,451 | 9.95% | $125.49 | $0.98 | $12.48 | $11.50 | 12.74 |
| 1216EA | Year-End eAppeal 2 | 12/15/16 | 6,425 | 511 | $47,825 | $1,000 | $46,825 | 7.95% | $93.59 | $0.16 | $7.44 | $7.29 | 47.83 |
| 1216EA2 | Year-End eAppeal 3 | 12/29/16 | 7,031 | 421 | $30,215 | $1,000 | $29,215 | 5.99% | $71.77 | $0.14 | $4.30 | $4.16 | 30.22 |
|  |  | **Grand Total:** | **113,013** | **5,473** | **$420,815** | **$75,158** | **$345,657** | **4.84%** | **$76.89** | **$0.67** | **$3.72** | **$3.06** | **5.60** |
| Copyright © Bernard Data Solutions. All rights reserved. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *Source:* Used with permission from Bernard Data Solutions, [www.BernardSolutions.com](http://www.bernardsolutions.com/). | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## Targeted Communications

Most nonprofits have the ability to generate personalized letters. However, this is most powerful when you integrate thoughtful marketing practices into your development programs.

Sophisticated software allows the segmentation of lists in a seemingly infinite variety of ways. Rather than limiting fundraising programs to mass-mail campaigns, more personal contact can focus on projects the donor has shown an interest in and a greater number of highly personalized communications can be encouraged. For example, gracious follow-up letters can be written to the 20 or 30 people who came to recent cultivation activities. Letters can be sent to people when their last gift was a year ago, encouraging them to renew their support. Emails or letters can congratulate donors on milestones in their giving—either based on longevity of support or the cumulative total they have donated. Personalized letters can be written to civic leaders to begin to establish a relationship with them. Alternatively, you might consider helping a board member send personalized fundraising letters to the 25 or so friends

## The System

Whether fundraising professionals are contemplating a software purchase or lease, or seeking to unleash the power of their current system, an examination of fundraising strategies is crucial to their success. A well-designed fundraising system can support and enhance a comprehensive approach to resource development.

Simply put, decide how you wish to raise funds, then obtain software and design your system to support the most cost-effective means of achieving your goals.

Perhaps it might be helpful to see where you are before you decide where you are going. Where do you fit in the categories below? Ad hoc record keeping (some combination of multiple mail lists in word processing programs, one or more separate database files or spreadsheets, handwritten notes, and the memory of staffers and key volunteers, etc.). Reliance on a general-purpose database program (frequently programmed by someone with little understanding of fundraising; frequently time consuming and requiring constant maintenance and programming to obtain the data needed for decision making). Purchase of dedicated fundraising software, but with little oversight or management buy-in. (The powerful tool has become little more than a mail list, especially if there is no managerial commitment to ongoing training in implementing the software.) In-house record keeping combined with contracted outside record-keeping services. (This model is used most often by those who rely heavily on a mail house service provider. When done well, the service provider is capable of providing valuable reports and analysis. However, this somewhat fragmented approach does not maximize the fundraising potential and may leave you without actionable data if you change service providers.) Purchase of dedicated fundraising software with managerial oversight and buy-in, and a budget for continual training and procedure documentation (the best of all worlds). When a nonprofit organization purchases dedicated fundraising software and the development staff is trained and able to use the full powers of the system, the software then becomes a powerful tool that can help dramatically increase contributed income. In summary, management buy-in is crucial to a strategic approach to information management. Development directors, senior staff, and key volunteers are reminded to “inspect what you expect.” Monitor the accuracy of data entry. Review the reports and make decisions based on the data they provide. Avoid duplicate accounts. Use the full power of the system. Establishing the Information System It is helpful to think of an institution's dedicated fundraising software as its main communication tool. Rather than using the system exclusively to track donor information, staff can enter names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and other crucial information pertaining to prospects, volunteers, and other constituencies. Your goal is to avoid maintaining multiple mailing lists so all your important data are integrated in one system. By keeping all donor and prospect information on one database, the development staff can communicate more easily with potential supporters. In fact, all communication becomes simpler. When staff members update information in a record, they will not have to search out the same name and make the identical update in numerous other databases, and you will not need to run multiple reports to get all the