

DELVE
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2025 Digital Fundraising Report

Trends, challenges and approaches for
acquiring, retaining, and growing
Individual Mass donors



1st Edition

Geography: North America, USA



Welcome to the 2025 Digital Fundraising Report, your in-depth look at the **key trends, challenges, and approaches** to acquiring, retaining, and growing **individual mass donors**.

Individual Giving has never been more vital for charities. With government funding in flux, individual donors, including the mass donors at the base of the Giving Pyramid, provide a **sustainable, reliable revenue stream that mission-driven organizations can rely on over the long term**, diversifying their revenue streams.

But engaging and acquiring Individual Mass donors through digital channels is no simple task.

All donor segments—especially mid and major—are aging, leaving charities vulnerable to what we call giving-pyramid collapse. Some of today's \$10-per-month donors will grow into tomorrow's \$10,000 annual benefactors. That's why forward-looking organizations must lay the groundwork now, adopting **tailored strategies that attract high-value Millennial and Gen Z supporters through digital advertising**.

Digital fundraising teams face unprecedented cost increases and competition, making digital advertising less profitable for organizations. And most teams lack the expertise around the hands-on mechanics of high-impact digital advertising management, including **algorithm training, robust test-and-learn strategies, or audience-first media management**, and often leave substantial gains on the table.

Moreover, younger donors expect **personalization**, which is their way of saying that they want their values and micro-affinities played back to them — or they feel disconnected from that part of a charity's mission that resonates most with them.

But **personalization requires substantial OpEx investments** in martech, adtech and a first-party data application in digital fundraising.

Challenges aren't just limited to process or technology; **how teams are structured is also a hindrance to digital fundraising growth**. Fragmentation and siloes among development, fundraising, marketing, finance, technology, and other internal departments, stifle collaboration and strategic thinking across the Giving Pyramid.

Top-performing charities will address all above trends and challenges by adopting **integrated, audience-first digital campaigns, aligning all efforts around specific micro-causes that resonate with defined donor micro-audiences**. This approach flips the conventional "function-first" mindset, reshaping the Giving Pyramid from the ground up, with a holistic audience-first framework.

As we look at 2025 and beyond, **individual giving – especially from mass donors acquired online – is poised to be a key engine of long-term growth**.

Although none of this is easy, leading charities will prove it's possible to engage Gen Z and Millennials while stabilizing Boomer contributions. With the right mix of process and mindset in driving higher online revenue, and through the integration of adtech, martech and first-party data in online media, **charities can both crush short term results and create a long term legacy for their mission**.



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*"Well-orchestrated digital strategies can mitigate and reverse pyramid collapse by attracting younger donors, **doubling or tripling digital fundraising revenues (within a 12 month period) with flat media investments**, and knitting internal and external teams together to leverage resources more efficiently."*

1. Trends:

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Defunding is leading charities to double-down on Individual Giving. Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management.

2. Challenges:

Digital ad costs continue to increase, ad platform algorithms prioritize Boomers due to their lower cost and higher value, with few marketers aggressively testing campaigns, and decline in "performance culture". Although every charity wants to move donors up the Giving Pyramid, focus on short term wins and lack of long term strategy stand in the way. Persistent internal siloes, hamper integrations across: brand and performance, marketing and fundraising, data and tech to enable "audience first" strategies, marketing and finance, and internal and external team. Lack of shared KPIs, across all internal silos, make it hard for charities to have a holistic "Audience First Giving Pyramid" approach to increasing digital fundraising impact.

3. Approach:

The Audience First Giving Pyramid enables charities to both crush short term results and build a lasting legacy.

Short term: In year 1, small, consistent steps applied with the right process and mindset, increase paid ad efficiency and effectiveness, thus increasing digital fundraising revenue and creating a foundation for internal integration and strategic and complex conversations. (refer to the Appendix for examples).

Longer term: In years 2 and 3, increase in confidence from higher digital donor revenues enables close Fundraising to Technology partnership, Fundraising to Finance alignment on OpEx and CapEx investments, with shared KPIs lowering internal siloes - powering a digital fundraising strategy based on all the work streams in the "Audience-First Giving Pyramid."

Delve Deeper:

How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

Critical questions for charities:

How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?



Unlike government giving, which is under threat of being **DOGEified**, **individual giving is the most independent, durable, and sustainable form of giving.**



DOGE will help end federal overspending by taking aim at the \$500 billion-plus in annual federal expenditures that are unauthorized by Congress or being used in ways that Congress never intended, **from \$535 million a year to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and \$1.5 billion for grants to international organizations to nearly \$300 million to progressive groups like Planned Parenthood.**¹



According to the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy's 2024 and 2025 Outlook Report, **individual giving is projected to grow by 3.4% in 2025.**²



Foundations and corporate donors may be appealing for short-term funding boosts, **but the real bedrock of charitable sustainability lies in individual giving.** Unlike institutional funders, individuals donate from a place of personal commitment, leading to recurring unrestricted contributions that charities can count on to fund core operations and unexpected needs alike. By fostering strong relationships with individual donors, **charities reduce reliance on conditional grants.**³



A sustainable fundraising strategy should encompass a variety of funding sources. **This diversity not only provides financial stability but also minimizes risk by not being overly reliant on a single source.**⁴

Insight

Control what you can control – that's also true when government funding is under threat.

Charities largely dependent on government funding are being gagged.

To be in Compliance with USAID waivers, charities must get rid of using gender-specific language and the term "humanitarian aid" in their marketing.

As inconceivable as today's political climate seemed in early 2025 – this will pass too.

The US democracy always re-calibrates itself, overtime.

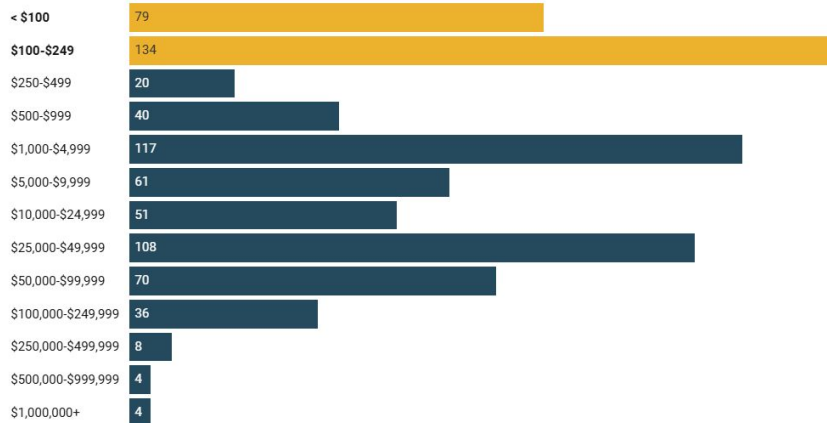


Short-term reality: Yes, mass donors represent only 7.6% of individual giving dollars, if viewed from a 12-month perspective.

Long-term promise: However, when viewed from a long-term perspective, **up to 30% of today's mass donors may become major or supersize donors over the next 20 years.**⁵

Major Donor First Gift Amounts

■ Number of major donors whose first gift was less than \$250 ■ Number of major donors whose first gift was \$250 or more



Insight

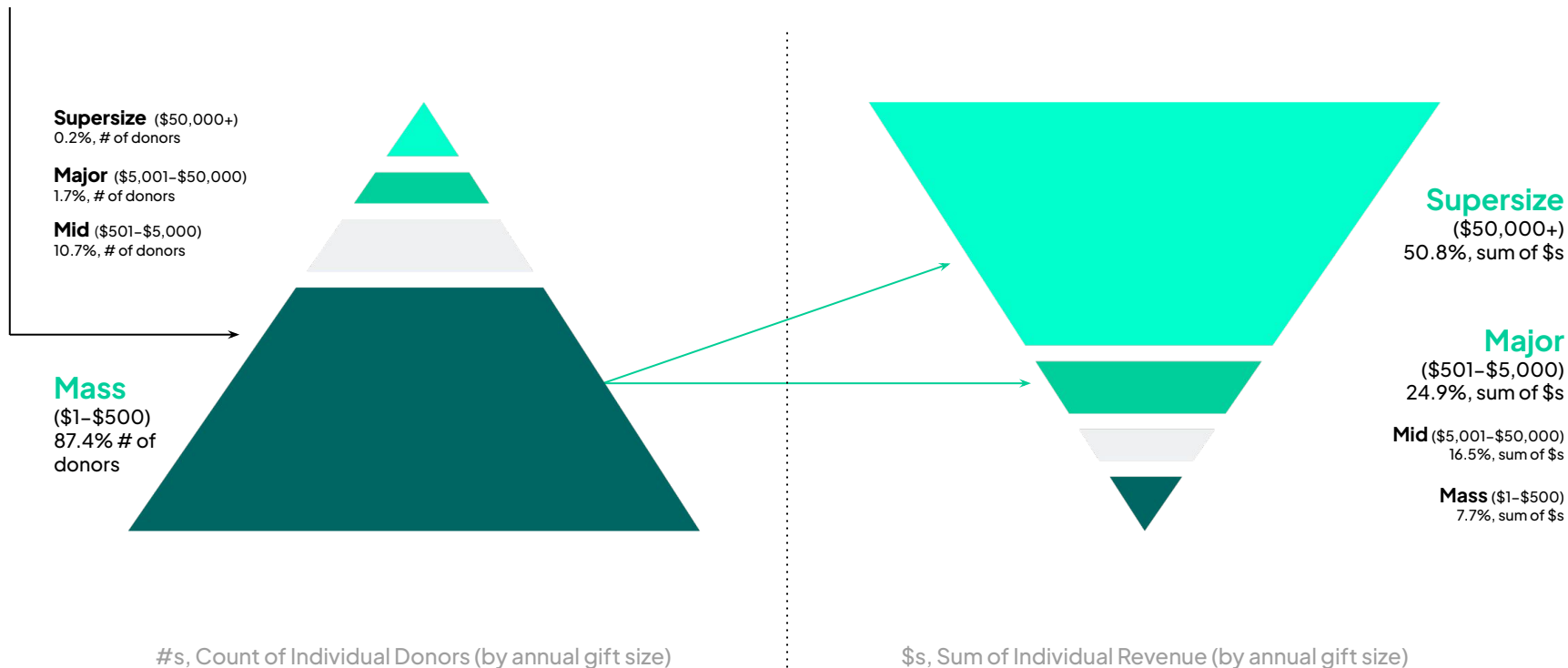
A recent study found that for one charity, 1 in 3 Major donors began with initial gifts under \$250, ie as Mass donors.

The progression to Major donor status (>\$5,000 per year) often spanned several years, with approximately 48% taking at least 5 years and 33% over 10 years to reach that higher-giving level.

With targeted acquisition and then proper engagement strategies, **donors with modest initial contributions can become significant supporters – over time.**



As they move up the giving pyramid, up to **30% of mass donors today** could become the major or supersize donors of tomorrow.





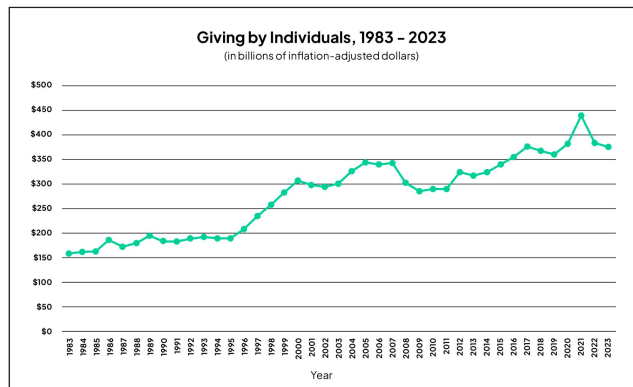
In 2024, mission-driven organizations received \$557 billion in donations.

Individuals represent the largest share of all giving with \$374 billion donated, or 67% of all giving.⁶

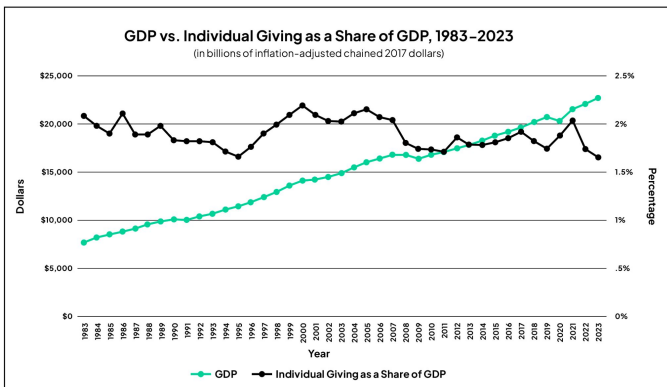
Giving Source	2024 Dollars	Share to total Individual Giving
Individuals	\$374.4 billion	67.2%
Foundations	\$103.5 billion	18.6%
Legacy	\$42.7 billion	7.6%
Corporations	\$36.6 billion	6.6%
Total	\$557 billion	100%



Individual giving dollars have more than doubled over the past 40 years.



However, individual giving dollars are growing at slower pace than the U.S. economy.



In 2023, individual donations represented 1.65% GDP share, the lowest share of the economy since 1983.⁷

Insight

The good news is that Americans continue to donate – especially during times of need. Note the spike in Giving to over 2.0% of GDP in 2021, in the midst of COVID.

The bad news is that in 2023, Individual Giving has declined, even though the economy continues to grow.

This trend can be interpreted two ways:

a) Americans gave so much in 2021, that the decline in 2022 and 2023 are a reflection of that 2021 peak

BOTH/AND

b) the opportunity going forward, for charities to maximize Individual Giving dollars – is there for the taking.



Individual mass donors gave \$27 billion in 2024.

In the U.S., those **Individual Mass donors** represent **7.0% of all Individual Giving dollars**, and 82.7% of all Individual donors.⁸

Segment	INDIVIDUAL MASS DONORS		Mid	Major	Supersize
	Micro	Small			
Sum-Segment					
Total Amount Donated (\$s)	\$100 or less	\$101–\$500	\$501–\$5,000	\$5,001–\$50,000	\$50,000 or more
Share of Total # of Individual Donors	52.4%	30.3%	14.6%	2.4%	0.3%
Share of Total Dollars (\$s)	1.8%	5.2%	16.0%	24.7%	52.3%
Count of total Dollars (\$s)	\$6.8 billion	\$19.8 billion	\$60.8 billion	\$93.9 billion	\$198.7 billion

Insight

Charities often focus on the most valuable mid, major, and supersize individual donors, assigning them dedicated giving officers while relegating mass donors to a separate digital fundraising and individual giving function.

This division leads to fragmented reporting and siloed strategies, where investments in branding, activism, or revenue generation are attributed (often incorrectly) only within the Mass “giver” category.

As a result, the broader impact of Mass donor, digital fundraising efforts are often underestimated – because when mass donors become Mid or higher ‘givers’, digital fundraising almost never gets the credit.

An integrated view across all donor segments, up and down the Giving Pyramid, is key to unlocking greater organizational insights and long-term sustainability, with Mass donors as the foundation of the Pyramid.



Mass donors represent the lion's share of **donors** (87.4%).

But major and supersize donors represent the lion's share of **donated dollars** (67.3%).

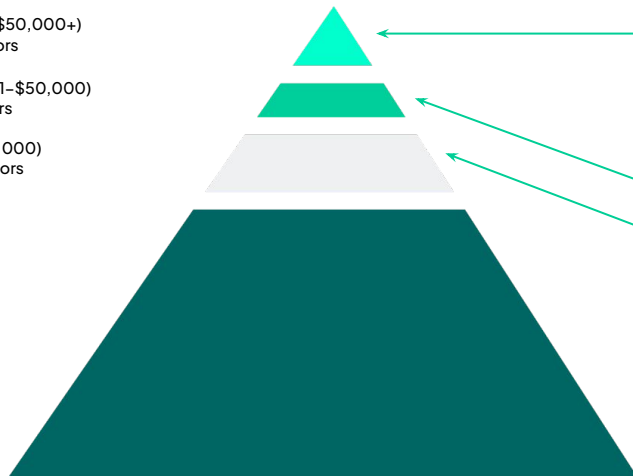
#s, Count of Individual Donors (by annual gift size)

Supersize (\$50,000+)
0.2%, # of donors

Major (\$5,001–\$50,000)
1.7%, # of donors

Mid (\$501–\$5,000)
10.7%, # of donors

Mass
(\$1–\$500)
87.4% # of donors



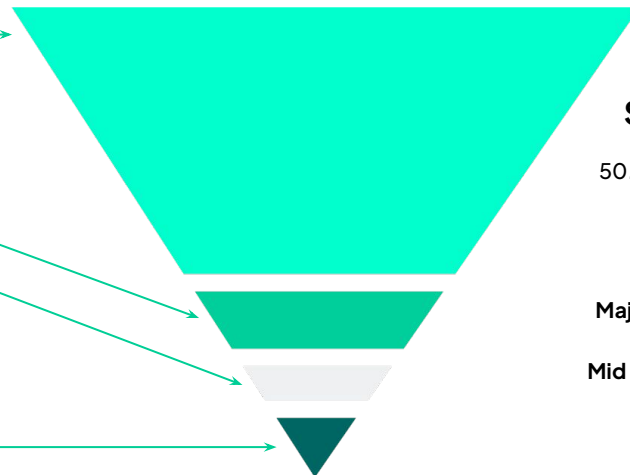
\$s, Sum of Individual Revenue (by annual gift size)

Supersize
(\$50,000+)
50.8%, sum of \$s

Major (\$501–\$5,000)
24.9%, sum of \$s

Mid (\$5,001–\$50,000)
16.5%, sum of \$s

Mass (\$1–\$500)
7.7%, sum of \$s



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Over the next several years, established charities may face Giving Pyramid collapse.

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Defunding is leading charities to double-down on Individual Giving. Over the next several years, established charities may face giving pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management.

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Over the next several years, established charities may face Giving Pyramid collapse.

- Existing Boomer donors are aging out.
- The remaining Boomers (especially Mid and Major tiers) are asked to give more, to maintain revenue.
- Fewer Gen Z and Millennial donors join the mission.
- The Giving Pyramid starts to resemble a *shrinking* Eiffel Tower.
- The deterioration in the base of the Giving Pyramid, reflected in the declining count of all Donors (pyramid-collapse), may over time lead to digital fundraising revenue decline.



The Giving Pyramid is under threat.

All individual donors, across all giving categories, are **aging out at an accelerated rate.**⁹

Type	Mass		Mid	Major + Supersize
Total Amount Donated	<\$100 to \$500		\$501–\$5,000	\$5,001– \$50,000
Type	One time	Monthly	NA	NA
Average age	62.5 yrs old	59.7 yrs old	64.6 yrs old	65.3 yrs old

Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
The average age of a Mass donor	60.8 yrs old	61.6 yrs old	63.1 yrs old	64.4 yrs old	65.1 yrs old

Insight

Few charities track donors' progression from mass to mid to major tiers, largely due to siloed operations, limited technology, and disconnected data strategies.

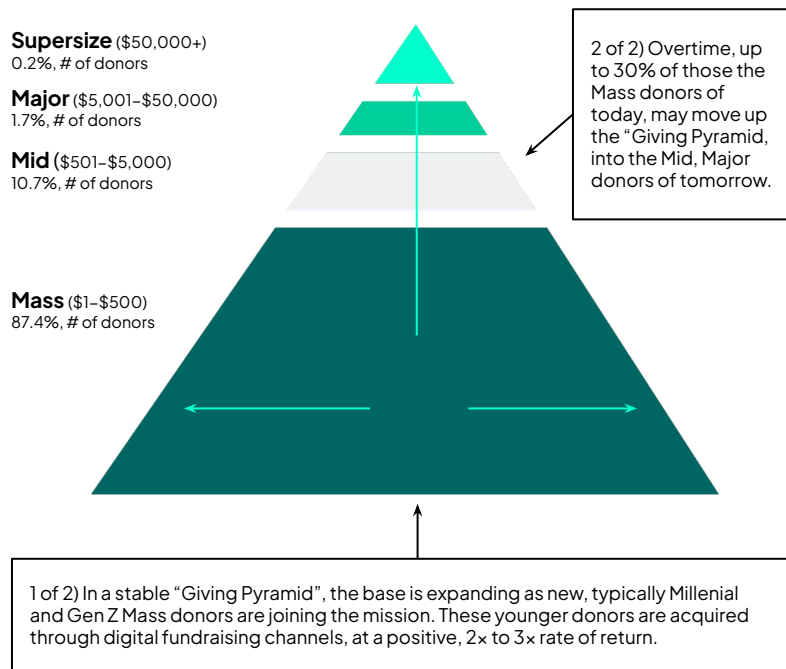
Without a clear view of how someone giving \$10 a month might one day contribute \$10,000 per year, organizations can't effectively plan donor cultivation.

The absence of reporting on donor age and contribution level impedes understanding of aging trends and the need to recruit younger givers.

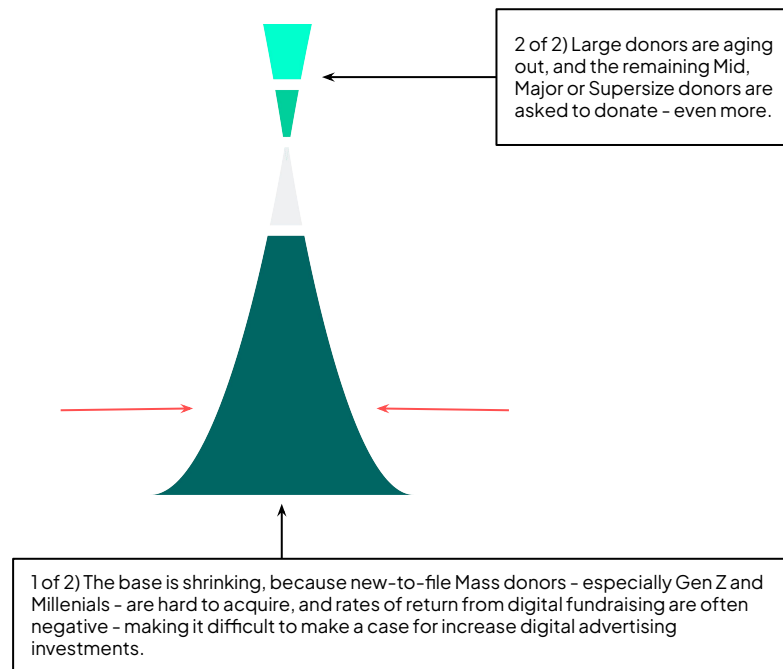
This blind spot diminishes urgency around replenishing the donor base with newer, often younger, supporters.



A **stable** Giving Pyramid looks sturdy.

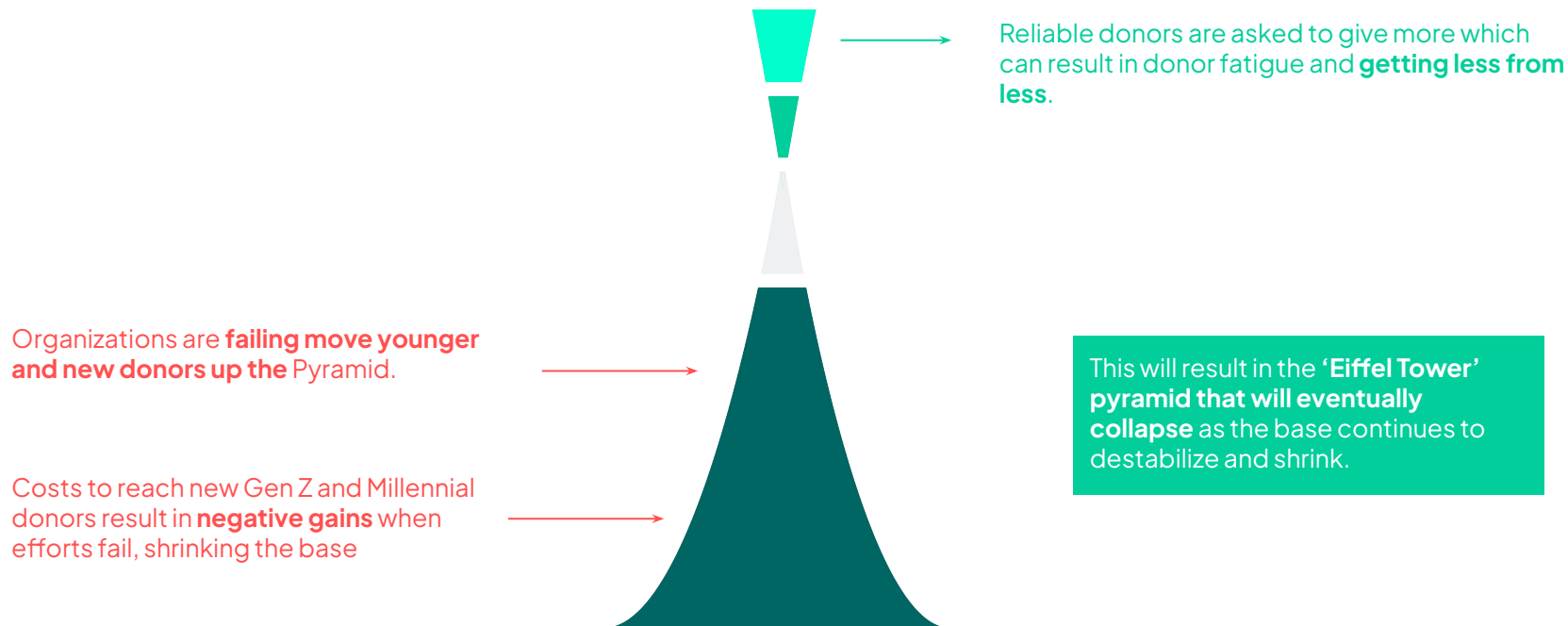


The **actual** Giving Pyramids – for many charities – look like a collapsing Eiffel Tower.





Charities need to cultivate donors at the base of the giving pyramid, as top-tier donors are pressed for increased donations and aging out.





Charities are **not** proactively stabilizing the Giving Pyramid.

The industry urges charities to broaden the base with new-to-file Millennial and Gen Z donors.



Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP): “As the donor population ages, it's crucial for nonprofits to engage **younger generations** to maintain and grow their donor base.”



National Council of Nonprofits: “Nonprofits must adapt their fundraising strategies to **appeal to millennials and Gen Z**, who are becoming an increasingly significant portion of the donor pool.”



The Chronicle of Philanthropy: “With baby boomers entering retirement, charities are focusing on **cultivating relationships with younger donors** to ensure future sustainability.”



Blackbaud Institute: “Understanding the giving **patterns of younger generations** is essential as traditional donor bases age and evolve.”



Nonprofit Quarterly: “To counteract the aging donor demographic, nonprofits are innovating their outreach to **resonate with younger audiences**.”

Insight

During the 2024 giving season, many charities overused email lists or spent heavily on retargeting, often boosting returns briefly but failing to maintain donor file health or meet RoAS goals.

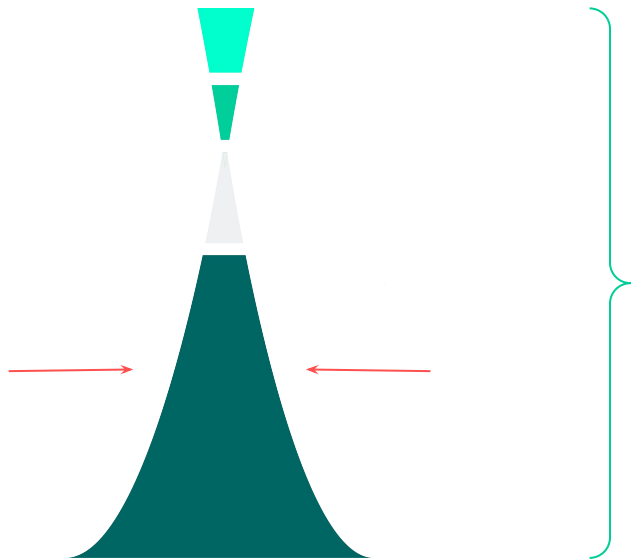
In every scenario, the core issue has been an imbalance between immediate gains and preparing for future growth.

Over reliance on older donors without bringing in younger supporters undermines the Giving Pyramid's base and its long-term stability.

Without a stand-alone plan for new donor acquisition, charities risk diminished revenues and mission sustainability in the years ahead.



For many charities, the Giving Pyramid looks like a **shrinking** Eiffel Tower.



Charities get:

a) fewer donors + b) who must give more
= **stagnant donor revenues.**

\$ Donor
Revenues



3. ... for total Revenue to be
flat.

\$ per Donor



2. ... each remaining Donor
has to give **more**...

of Donors



1. When count of Donors is
declining, and the Giving
Pyramid is 'shrinking...

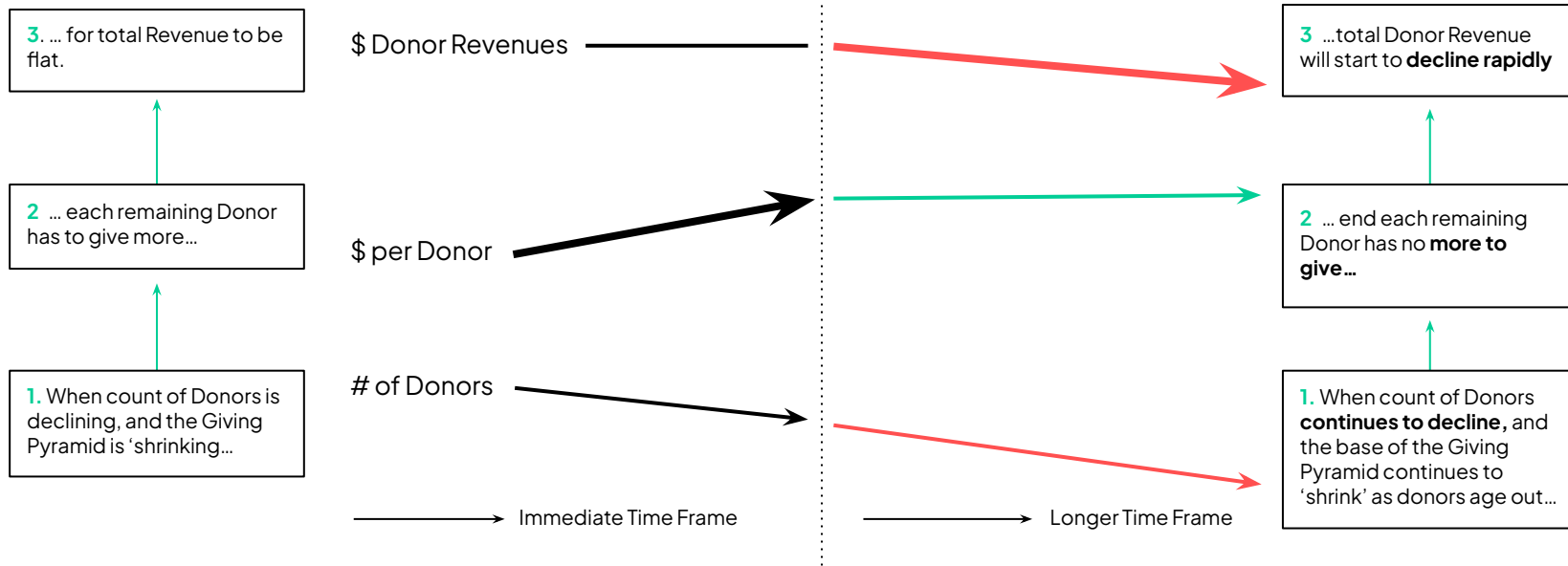
→ Immediate Time Frame



The longer term reality could point to a looming **Giving Pyramid collapse.**

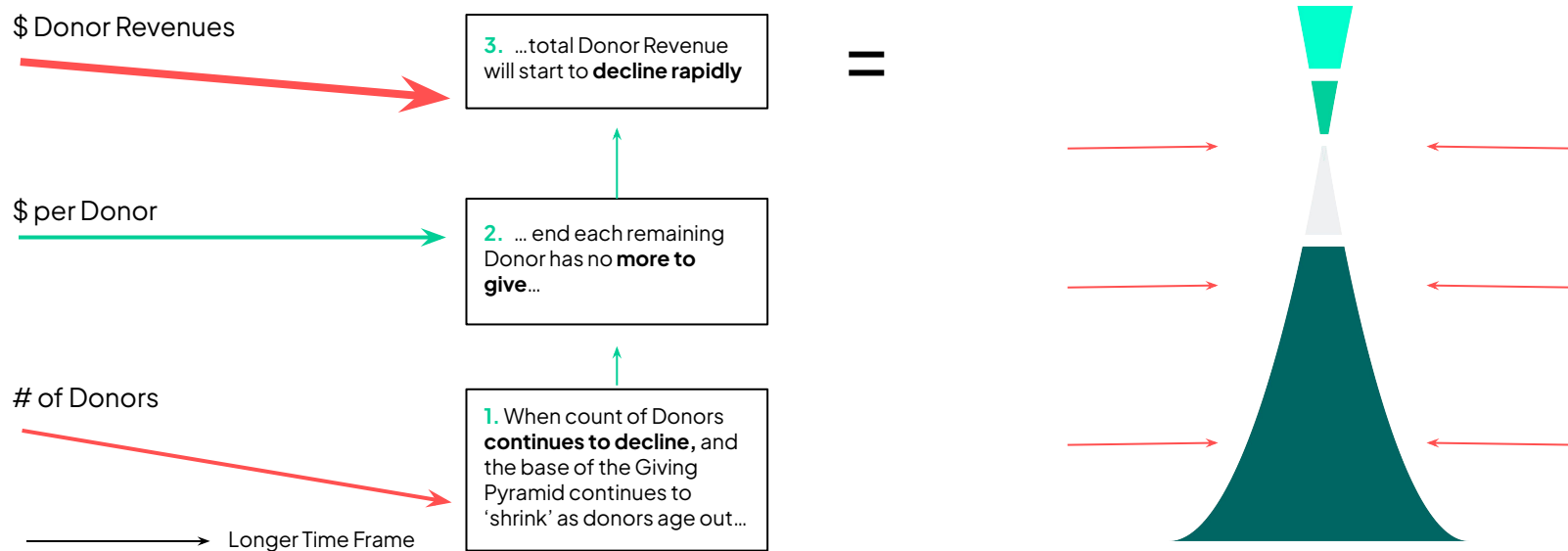
In the **short term**, charities get the same from less: **Fewer donors who must give more = stagnant donor revenue.**

Then in the **long term**, charities get less from less: **Fewer donors who stop giving more = declining donor revenue.**





When fewer donors are asked to give more, overtime, **the Giving Pyramid starts to collapse.**



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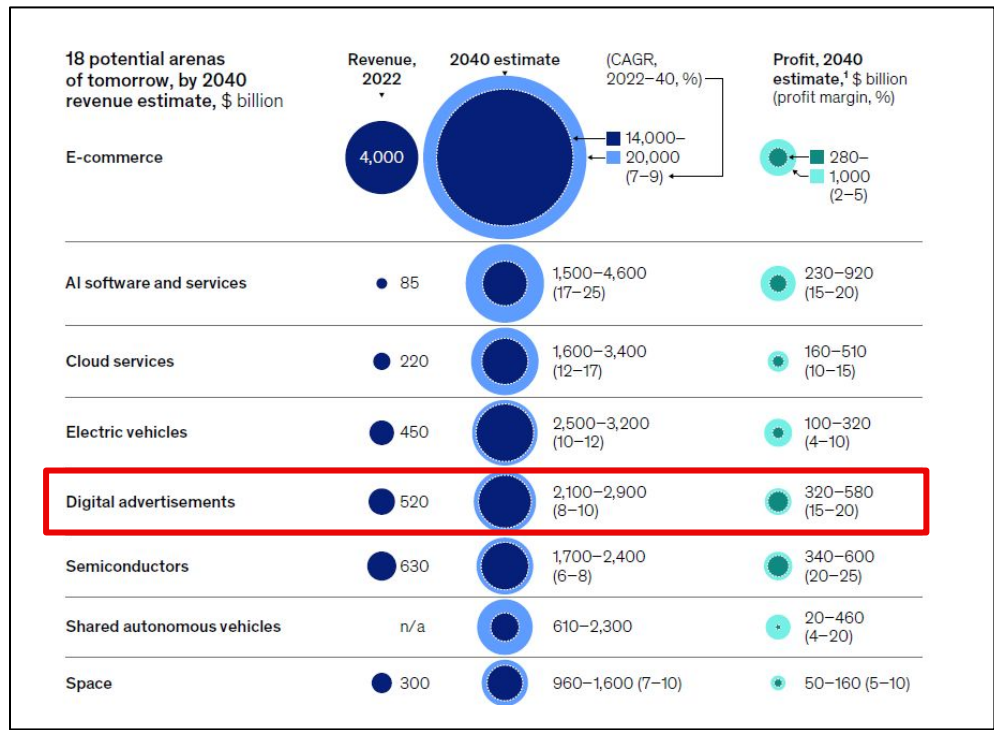
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By 2040, digital advertising is projected to be the 5th largest “industry of tomorrow,” from \$676 billion invested in 2024, to **up to \$2.9 trillion**.¹⁰



Insight

Digital Advertising is the 5th industry of the future, after e-commerce, AI, cloud services, and electric vehicles. Semiconductors, autonomous vehicles or investments in space exploration, are projected to be smaller, by 2040, than online advertising investments.

Digital advertising is not only here to stay; media investments in online channels will grow 2x to 3x over the next 15 years.



A typical donor may make up to 20 ‘steps’ on their digital journey, before providing their credit card number.

“Research indicates that it can take **18–20 points of contact to reach a new donor**, underlining the importance of a multi-channel, consistent marketing approach.” ¹¹

“When a potential donor becomes aware of your organization, **they do not just Google your website**, fill out a donation form, and hit “submit.” ¹²

“For nonprofits today, fundraising can feel like an uphill battle. Between rising postal costs, donor fatigue, and an increasingly crowded digital landscape—it’s **harder than ever to break through the noise and connect with donors**.” ¹³

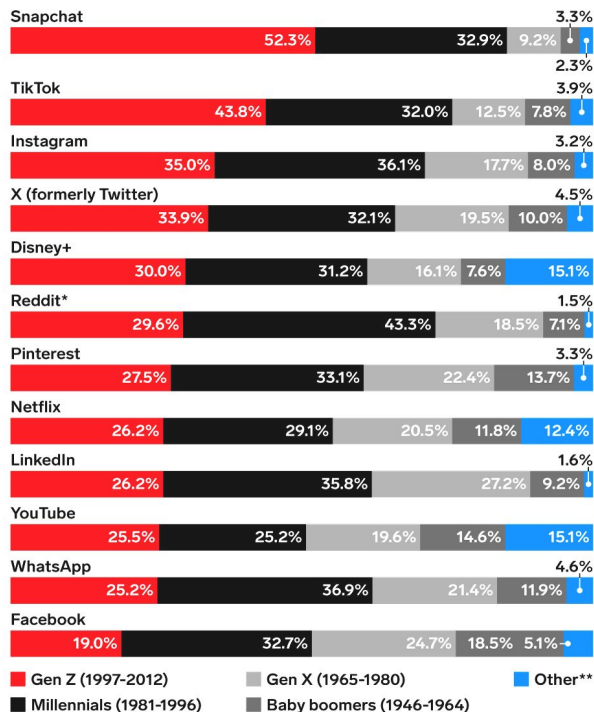
“There is no magic number of touchpoints that will produce the desired results. However, many suggest that it can take anywhere from **seven to twelve touches before a donor decides to actively support a cause**.” ¹⁴



Unsurprisingly, potential Gen Z or Millennial mass donors are the **heaviest users** of Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, X, Disney+, Reddit, or YouTube.¹⁵

Share of Total US Users on Select Digital Platforms, by Generation, 2024

% of total



Insight

Charities often avoid pursuing Gen Z and Millennial donors through digital channels due to misconceptions about higher acquisition costs and low immediate returns.

While younger donors may indeed have lower initial gift capacity, they can deliver substantial long-term value, offsetting early expenses.

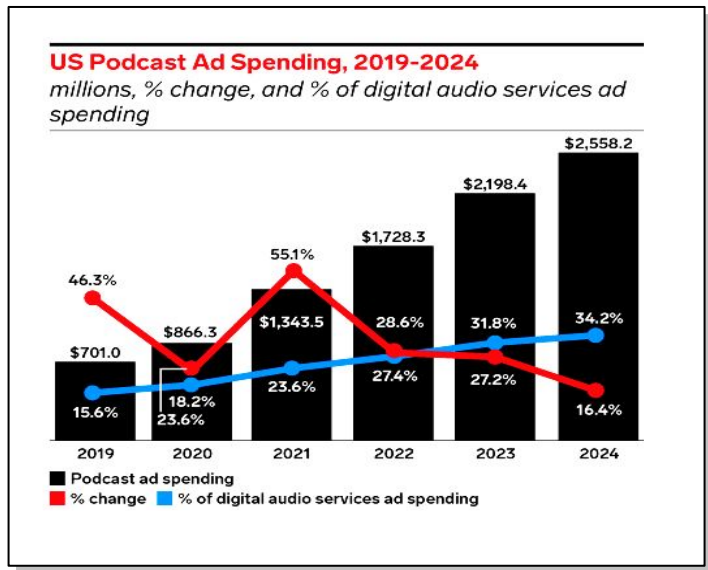
A narrow focus on ROI typically skews toward older donors, overlooking the essential role that younger supporters can play in stabilizing the donor pyramid.

By embracing a balanced strategy, charities can broaden their base, future-proof revenues, and create deeper mission engagement.



In the latest U.S. presidential election, younger people aren't just on **social media**.

Podcasts are emerging as go-to platforms to reach younger donors.¹⁶



Vice President Kamala Harris made headlines this Sunday when she appeared on the wildly popular **podcast** *Call Her Daddy*, hosted by Alex Cooper. The 40-minute interview reached an audience of 5 million listeners, a non-traditional media choice that sparked both praise and criticism.¹²

Donald Trump admitted in a recent appearance on Adin Ross' show that he only "more or less" understood **live streaming**, the publishing of live video on social media. But he told Ross he appreciated that the show was part of "the new wave" of information.¹³

That's meant eschewing traditional media interviews in favor of fawning long-form **podcast conversations** with laddish hosts who draw **massive young audiences**, such as Theo Von, Lex Friedman, Logan Paul, the Nerk Boys, and Joe Rogan, who boasts the most popular podcast in America.¹⁴

The Second Trump Presidency, Brought to You by YouTubers.

Podcasters including Joe Rogan, Theo Von and Logan Paul are mobilizing America's men to lean right. An analysis of over 2,000 videos shows how.¹⁵

Insight

Podcast advertising, unlike radio, lets charities track conversions through cross-device measurement using programmatic platforms like The Trade Desk (TTD).

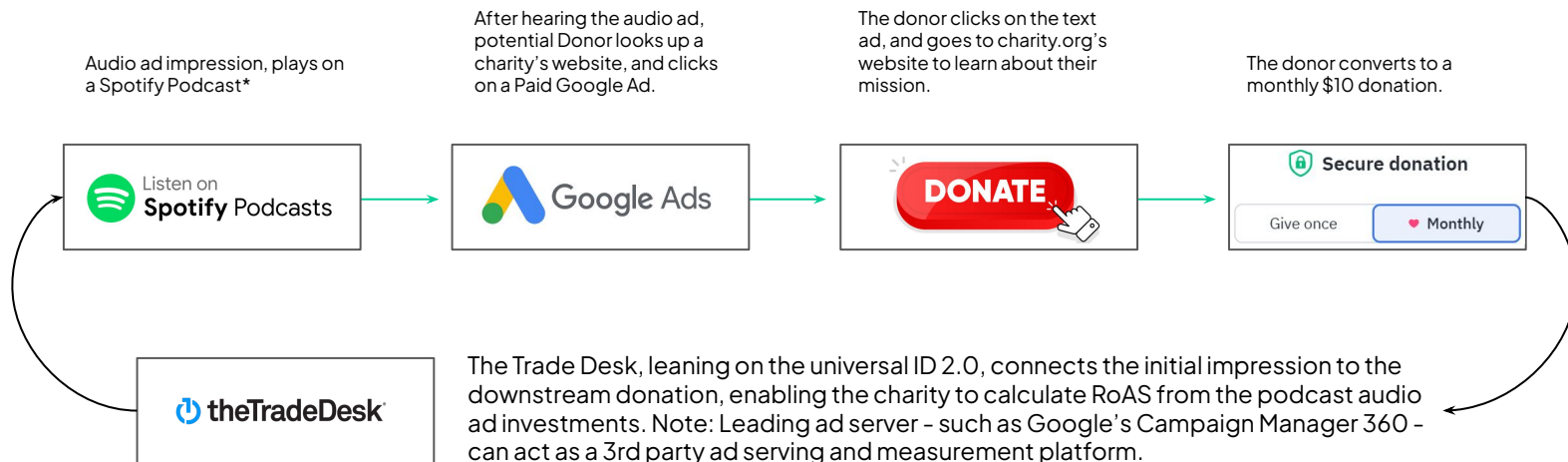
TTD is a leading demand-side platform (DSP) that works with identity-resolution providers such as LiveRamp's Unified ID 2.0.

This setup helps charities serve ads to podcast audiences and measure whether those listeners later convert online.

With precise targeting and real-time analytics, podcast advertising can outperform traditional broadcast, opening new avenues to engage younger donors who increasingly discover information—and make giving decisions—while listening to their favorite shows.



Spotify and The Trade Desk announced a partnership in October 2024 to enable brands to place **performance audio ads on Spotify Podcasts**, enabling brands to stick to strict RoAS targets with audio ads.¹⁷

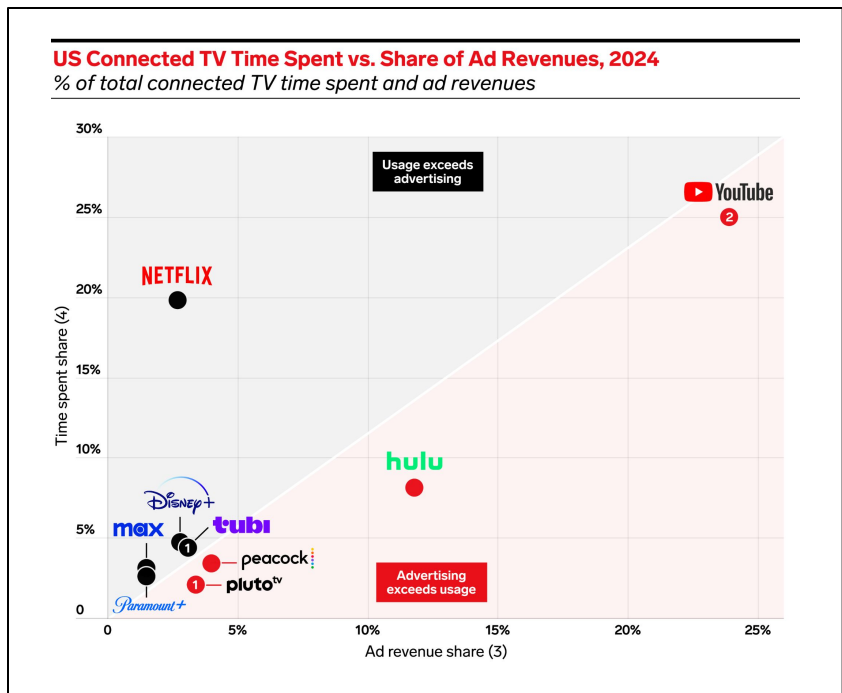


* Audio advertisements can be inexpensively generated, with a detailed level of Personalization, using ethical AI solutions, enabling charities to launch personalized brand creative at scale. However, because of unique audience-first targeting available from TTD, such audio brand creative, is actually managed as performance advertising, with strict RoAS targets.



Similar drastic shifts are happening in video streaming.

With linear TV declining, Google's YouTube, is now **the biggest video streaming platform**.¹⁸



Insight

YouTube accounts for nearly 25% of both online ad spend and total user time, outpacing Netflix, Hulu, Max, Disney, and Peacock combined.

For charities looking to connect through video, this makes YouTube a prime platform, especially as linear TV's influence wanes.

Even podcasts are increasingly streamed on YouTube, making it a cross-platform hub.

Its massive audience reach—bolstered by data-driven advertising—lets charities share their stories widely, making it essential for those wanting to elevate brand awareness and engage prospective donors of all ages.



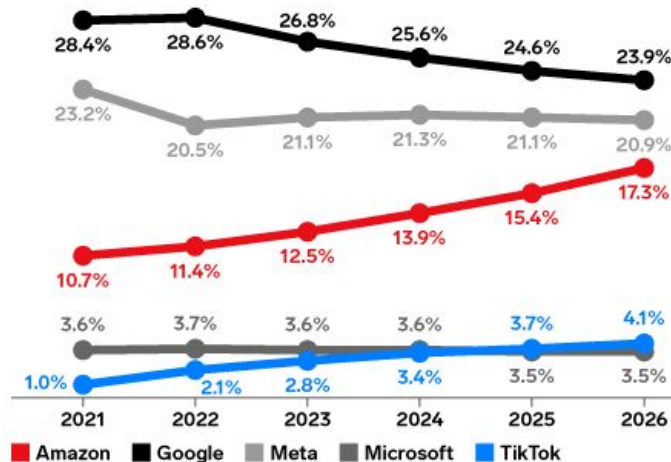
Amazon is not just the fastest growing e-commerce platform, but also **the fastest growing ad platform**.¹⁹

Charities can lean on Amazon's intent data, to:

- reach new donor audiences outside of Amazon
- drive Amazon's audiences to the charity's website, to raise money

Amazon Is Closing In on Meta, as the Duopoly Fades and the Triopoly Solidifies

% of US digital ad spending among select companies, 2021-2026



Insight

Many nonprofits may see Amazon Ads as purely product-focused, overlooking the power of Amazon's Demand Side Platform (DSP).

Through Amazon DSP, charities can access Amazon's vast first-party data on user behavior and intent—far beyond just driving purchases on Amazon.com.

For instance, a new parent (tracked by a recent diaper purchase) could be more inclined to support a children's charity.

This approach expands donor acquisition strategies by leveraging rich ecommerce data, guiding high-affinity prospects from Amazon's ecosystem to a nonprofit's website for direct donations.

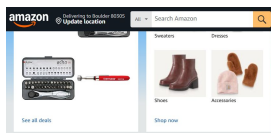


Amazon has 2 ad products:

- **Amazon Ads** (tailored to so-called endemic CPG brands)
- **Amazon DSP** (targeted at the so-called non-endemic brands, including charities.)

Amazon DSP allows charities to tap into Amazon's consumer **intent data**, shedding insight on its 230 million U.S. customers.

Amazon Ads collects Audience data, driven by consumers' purchase behavior.



Amazon pipes all of its purchase and browse history, into its proprietary programmatic Amazon DSP



Charities use Amazon DSP, to show their display or video ads, outside of Amazon, e.g., on NYTimes.com



The click from the ad, served by the Amazon DSP, takes the potential donor to a charity's website, where the donor can convert to a one time or monthly donation.



The Amazon DSP, is a leading Programmatic platform, enabling charities to tap into a unique inventory at scale and at attractive CPMs.

Note: Leading ad server – such as Google's Campaign Manager 360 – acts as a 3rd party ad serving and measurement platform.

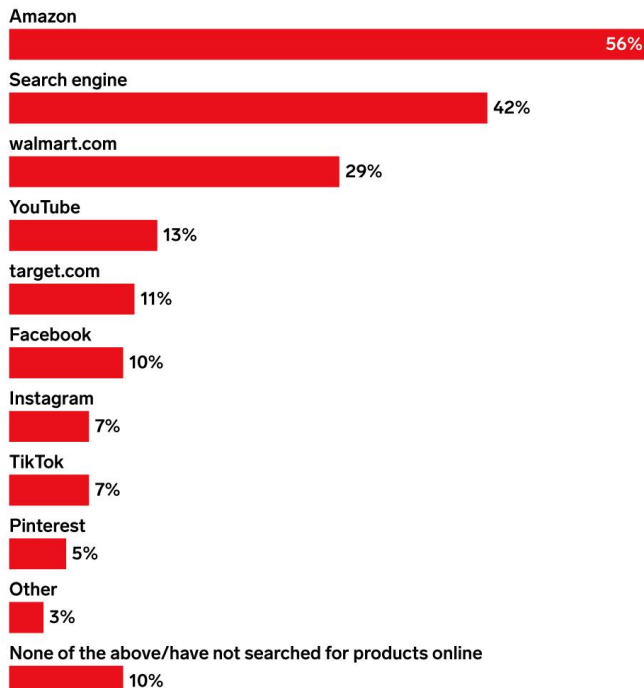


Google's share of the search market **is down to almost 50%**.

TikTok, Instagram, or Pinterest, etc., **are growing share**, becoming search platforms of the future.²⁰

Where US Consumers Start Their Search When Online Shopping, Feb 2024

% of respondents



Insight

Although Google still commands roughly half the search market, emerging platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Pinterest are becoming search engines in their own right.

These shifts underline how digital advertising—once siloed into search, social, or display—now requires a more nuanced, audience-centric approach to reach modern donors effectively.

(Note: Amazon DSP differs significantly from Amazon Ads, which focuses on search-like product listings within Amazon's site.

As noted on the prior page, by tapping into robust intent data, Amazon DSP lets charities run ads off-Amazon, driving donors directly to a nonprofit's landing page.

We do NOT recommend Amazon Ads for charities - only the Amazon DSP).



In the age of digital marketing, direct mail is as relevant as ever.

Why? **Because direct mail still works.**

DIGIDAY

*“While the proliferation of new channels means that direct mail isn’t the only direct marketing option, **it still frequently outperforms the alternatives.**”* ²¹

*“Agency execs say they are suggesting diversification even **beyond digital into traditional channels, like direct mail,** to all clients.”* ²²

*“Digiday recently reported that as marketers look to diversify their media mix beyond digital into traditional channels, **direct mail will grow by 1.5% to make up \$38.2 billion of U.S. offline marketing spend this year.**”* ²³

*“In one case example, **DTC bedding and lifestyle brand Parachute has invested in direct mail alongside spending on digital channels, including social and streaming platforms** — a strategy they’ve pursued since at least 2018.”* ²⁴

Insight

Direct mail remains surprisingly resilient, often outperforming other channels.

Yet many charities silo direct mail and digital fundraising, leaving valuable insights untapped. Budget allocation should reflect performance, not departmental divides.

With decades of experience in audience segmentation and test-and-control, direct mail offers lessons that digital marketing can emulate.

Greater synergy between these channels can boost ROI while delivering more relevant, personalized messages to supporters.

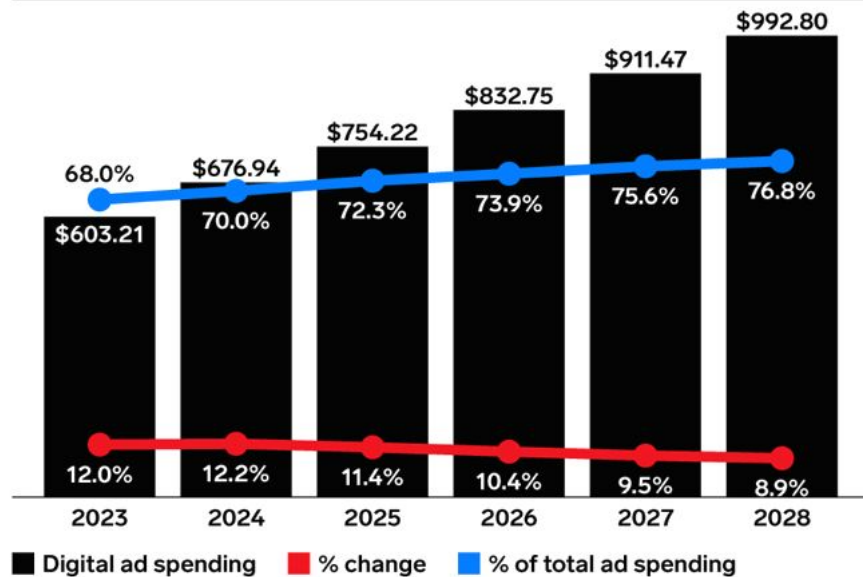
An integrated approach ultimately strengthens donor relationships and ensures funds are used where they are most effective.



Over the foreseeable future, **digital advertising is projected to continue to grow.**²⁵

Digital Ad Spending Worldwide, 2023-2028

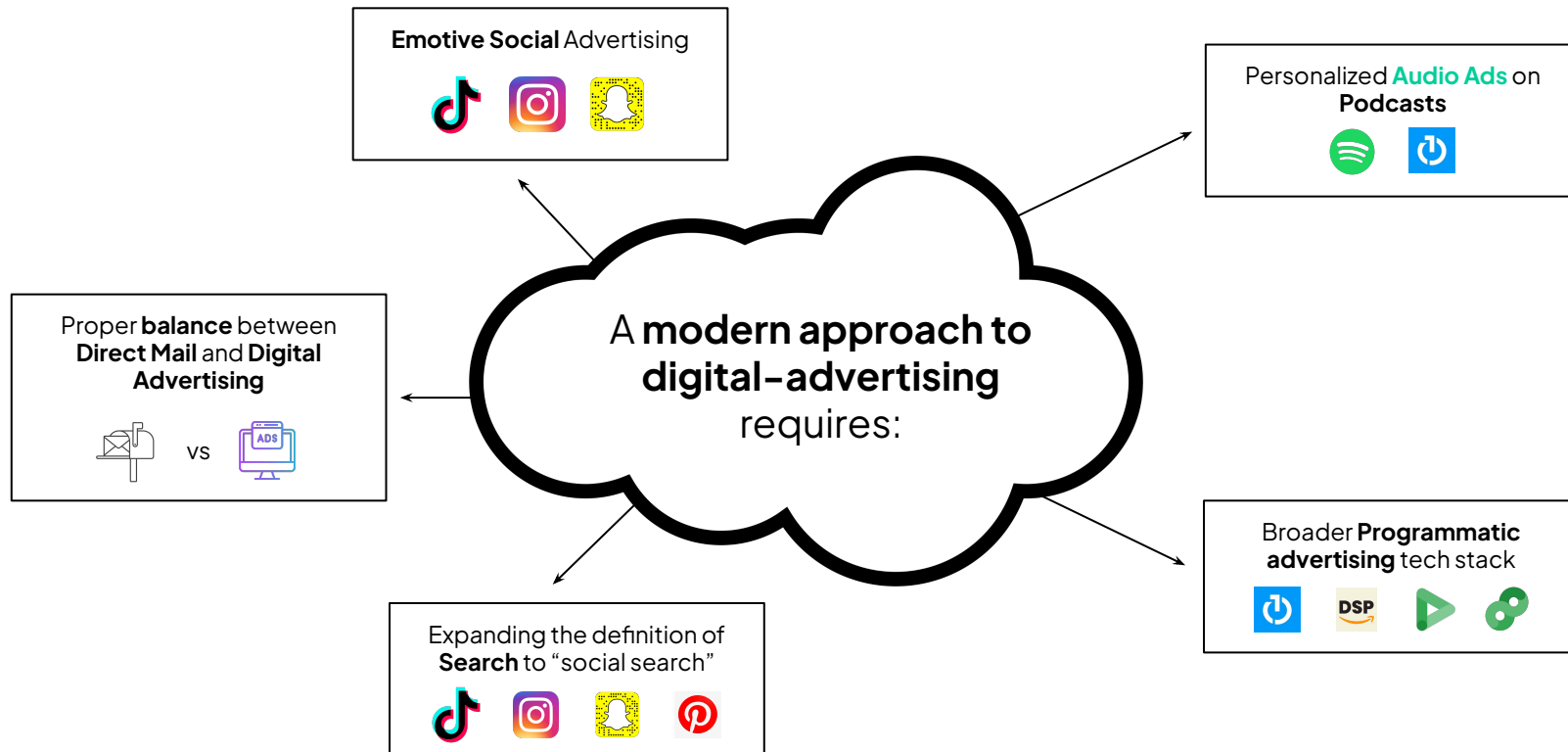
billions, % change, and % of total ad spending



Insight

Growth in online advertising is a reflection of faith that for-profit brands are putting into online advertising as the channel of choice, to acquire new customers. Commercial brands continue to invest in online advertising, for reasons such as:

- 1. High ROI and measurable performance:** Digital advertising enables brands to track performance metrics in real-time, such as click-through rates (CTR), conversions, and cost per acquisition (CPA). This transparency helps brands optimize their campaigns quickly, maximizing ROI and reducing waste.
- 2. Targeted reach and precision:** Unlike traditional media, digital advertising offers unparalleled targeting options. Brands can segment audiences based on demographics, interests, behaviors, and even past interactions. This precision allows brands to reach specific customer personas, improving ad relevance and effectiveness.
- 3. Scalability and flexibility:** Digital advertising campaigns can be scaled up or down quickly. Brands can start with a smaller budget, test different ad variations, and then increase investment based on what works best, making digital channels both flexible and cost-efficient.



1. Trends:

Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and **makes donors feel heard**, a key to getting through to younger donors.

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Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. **Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors.** Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management.

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Delve Deeper:

How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

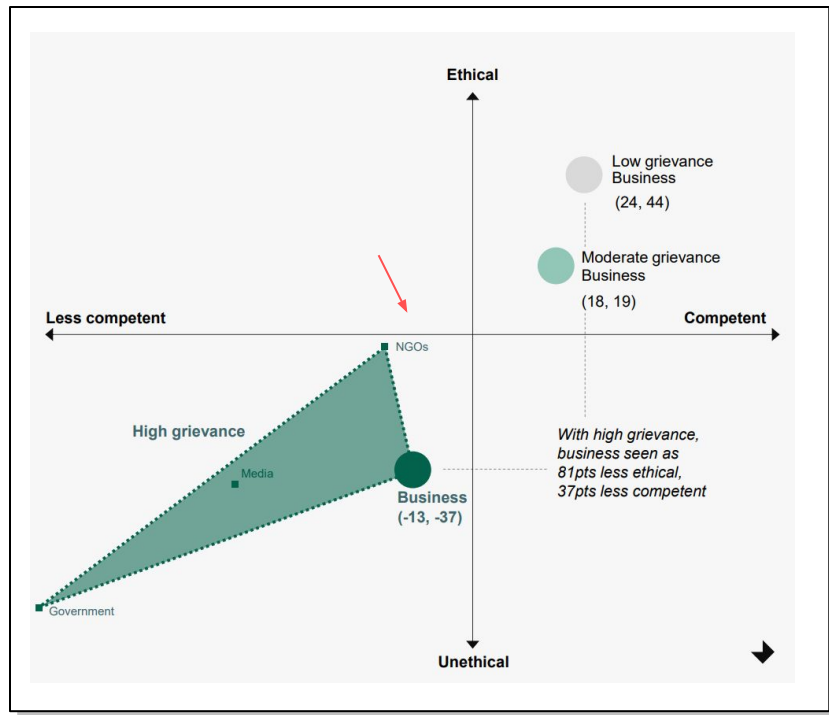
Critical questions for charities:

How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?



Trust in all institutions is on the decline, including in NGOs.

That declining sense of trust, **leads donors to care more about causes; less so about charities.**²⁶



Insight

The increasingly importance of **peer-to-peer (P2P) fundraising** is one reflection of the decline in trust in institutions, including charities.

Donors today are motivated by trust, ease, and personal connections, and they're engaging through social and digital channels in record numbers to support causes via their peers.

The industry's growth – reflected in rising participation and a booming market for P2P platforms – shows no signs of slowing.

As nonprofits innovate with gamification, virtual events, and inclusive campaigns, peer-to-peer fundraising is becoming more accessible and appealing to the next generation of givers.

This model's impact is twofold: it equips nonprofits with a powerful tool to broaden their donor base and raise more funds, and it empowers individuals to actively contribute to and shape the philanthropic landscape.

P2P fundraising has transformed charitable giving into a more personal, social, and engaging experience – one that is driving significant benefits for causes and communities around the world.



When donors care most about causes (and less about charities), **it's on charities to personalize their messaging around specific causes.**

Personalization is about an approach to serve:
1) a unique **micro-affinity** to 2) each **micro-audience**.



18 Motivations for Donors to Give to Your Nonprofit article explores various factors that drive individuals to donate, **emphasizing the importance of aligning fundraising appeals with donors' personal values** and the causes they care about. It suggests that highlighting the mission and impact of the cause can be more effective than focusing solely on the organization itself.²⁷

Rally Up

The Psychology of Giving: Understanding Donor Motivations" piece examines the psychological aspects of charitable giving, noting that **donors often support causes that align with their personal beliefs and values.** It underscores the significance of connecting with donors on an emotional level by focusing on the cause's impact, rather than the organization's attributes.²⁸



THE
CHARITY
CFO

The Psychology of Fundraising: Why Do Donors Give?" – article discusses the **psychological motivations behind charitable donations, highlighting that donors** are driven by a sense of duty, personal values, and the desire to make a difference. It emphasizes that charities should focus on communicating the importance and impact of the cause to effectively engage donors.²⁹

Insight

Although personalization has become a buzzword, its true meaning can be misunderstood.

Here is why:

Donors increasingly choose to support specific causes aligned with their personal values rather than simply backing well-known organizations.

Overstimulation from constant messaging means that charities must actively demonstrate alignment with donors' interests to stand out.

Assuming the general (often very distracted) public understands a charity's broader mission will lead to missed connections.

To remain relevant, nonprofits need to own clarity around what drives their supporters and tailor communications around those unique, cause-focused micro-affinity motivations.



Personalization is essential because it **evokes emotions**.

Each micro-audience feels special or seen when content is personalized to their own micro-affinity.³⁰

Loyalty is up for grabs...



75%

of consumers tried a new shopping behavior during the pandemic¹

...and consumers expect personalization from the brands and businesses they choose.



71%

of consumers expect personalization²



76%

of consumers get frustrated when they don't find it²

Insight

According to this McKinsey report, **72% of consumers expect businesses to acknowledge their interests and individual needs.**

To consumers (and donors), **personalization means feeling uniquely valued.** In the nonprofit sector, demonstrating commitment to donors as people—not just contributors—prompts stronger emotional engagement.

(Giving officer who work one-on-one with mid or major donors already do this in their work, tailoring how they speak about a charity's mission with each donor's micro-affinity.)

This approach fosters deeper trust and loyalty, especially among younger donors.

When charities align campaigns with donor passions and show tangible impact, supporters recognize they matter. That sense of personal attention drives higher retention rates and more meaningful donor relationships.

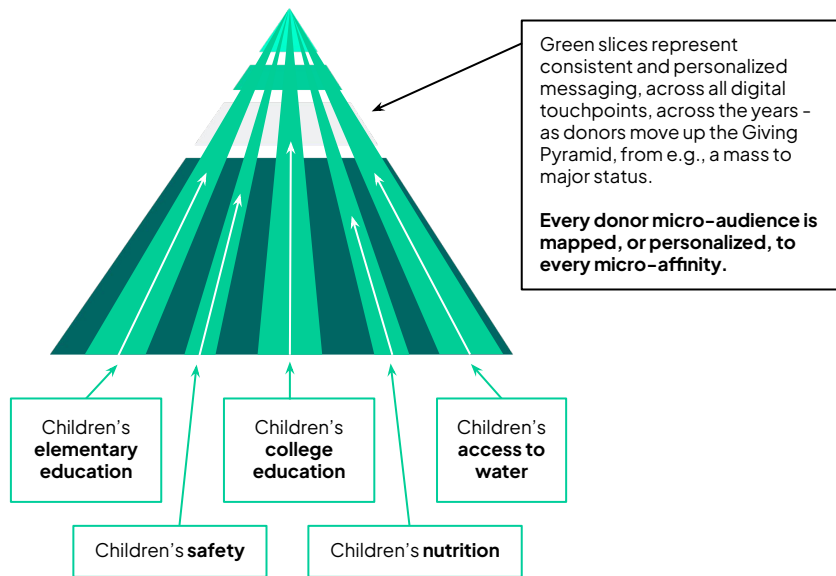


To connect with donors emotionally, charities should speak to donors' **unique values and beliefs.**

Monolithic general messaging that is not personalized does not reflect donors' values and micro-affinities



Personalization is how charities can deliver ads that reflect the values of today's donors





Effective **personalization** requires an **audience-first strategy** to digital communications.



"**A technology blueprint for personalization at scale**" by McKinsey & Company outlines the integration of customer-data platforms and data-management platforms, **augmented with audience identity-resolution platforms, to unify data**. This unification is essential for making data available across channels for activation, thereby supporting effective personalization efforts.³¹



"To create truly personalized customer experiences, marketers need a **deeper understanding of their audience** — one that ensures brands are leveraging the data consumers want and expect them to have, enabling them to understand how to best engage with each individual based on their interests and preferences. **By collecting first-party data from their owned properties like email, SMS/MMS, mobile push, and their brand's website**, they can create personalized experiences that respond to customers' needs in the moment while ensuring they comply with privacy laws and consumer expectations."³²



"**Fuel personalization at scale with a unified data foundation**" – by Adobe emphasizes the necessity of integrating and standardizing cross-channel customer experience data. This approach enables comprehensive analysis and reporting, facilitating educated actions and audience activation. A unified **data and audience foundation is crucial for delivering personalized experiences at scale**.³³

Insight

Effective digital fundraising depends on thorough understanding of donor affinities and mapping these audience insights to first-party data.

This requires clarity on which aspects of your mission resonate with various donor segments—be they mass, mid, or major donors.

By gathering audience signals and preferences in a structured, privacy-compliant manner, charities can segment donor micro-audiences accurately and tailor communications to specific motivations or micro-affinities.

Ultimately, personalizing the donor journey starts with robust data collection and analytics, ensuring that each appeal speaks directly to what each supporter cares about most.



Effective personalization initiatives require:

- internal integration among technology, data, marketing & fundraising teams
- buy-in from finance
- right people within digital fundraising to create a holistic blueprint for the initiative



“Seven common ‘funding headaches’ for charities – and what you can do about it” by the Directory of Social Change addresses the struggle charities face in covering core costs, including **technology infrastructure**. The article suggests that private funders are increasingly recognizing this issue and are building core cost coverage into their grant-making.³⁴



“Key challenges and opportunities facing the charity sector” by the Charities Aid Foundation discusses the impact of economic pressures on charities, leading to reduced income and increased operating costs. The article emphasizes the importance of digital capacity for service delivery and fundraising, noting that continued **investment in digital infrastructure remains essential**.³⁵



“Charities & Not for Profit Key Challenges” by Menzies LLP highlights the financial challenges charities face due to economic uncertainties, which complicate efforts to sustain essential programs and services, including technology infrastructure projects. The article also mentions **the difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled staff, which can impact the implementation of technology projects**.³⁶



“The Do’s And Don’ts For Creating An IT Budget That Wins Executive Buy-In For Nonprofits And Higher Education Institutions” by Forbes discusses the importance of **aligning IT initiatives with the organization’s mission to gain executive support**. It advises clearly communicating how technology investments serve as enablers and drivers of the nonprofit’s mission, and tying each proposed IT expense to specific outcomes like **improved efficiency or increased donor growth**.³⁷

Insight

A robust personalization strategy relies on more than just technology or audience data; it demands organizational alignment.

According to recent reports (Directory of Social Change, Charities Aid Foundation, Menzies LLP), charities face increased operational costs and technology funding gaps.

Without buy-in across technology, individual giving, marketing, fundraising, and finance teams, personalization efforts risk stalling.

Forbes further underscores the necessity of tying IT investments to tangible nonprofit outcomes, emphasizing clear communication on how tech infrastructure enables mission growth and donor engagement.



Donors want to see and hear emotional storytelling that makes them **feel heard** and aligns with their values.

Personalized creative that's raw, unedited, and authentic can accomplish that objective.

Forbes

"A higher percentage of the media we consume – across generations – is increasingly raw, unedited, timely and authentic..."⁴¹

HUFFPOST

"Millennials Want Brands To Be More Authentic. Here's Why That Matters."⁴²



SocialMediaToday

"Survey Finds Consumers Crave Authenticity – and User-Generated Content Delivers."⁴³



EMARKETER

"Authenticity is key: Reaching the Gen Z consumer"⁴⁴

Insight

In today's dynamic media landscape, audiences expect content that is authentic and tailored to their values.

Research, including findings from Edelman's Trust Barometer, indicates that real, unedited narratives resonate more than polished corporate messaging. Donors increasingly seek genuine connections and are drawn to emotional storytelling that reflects their personal beliefs.

For charities, this shift means that embracing a personalized storytelling approach is essential to build trust, forge lasting connections, and motivate long-term donor engagement.

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Creative is under intense price pressure with an increased need to justify investments in brand-creative production.

WSJ

Creative costs are questioned

Creative talent is being shed “at a speed I have never seen.” Some salaries for chief creative officers have fallen roughly 20% over the past 10 years. **With AI, “creatives are moving further down the totem pole.”**³⁸

WSJ

Industry Consolidation

The convergence of AI advancements and cost-cutting pressures has prompted significant industry consolidation. Notably, Omnicom Group and Interpublic Group are in advanced talks to merge, potentially forming the world's largest advertising company. **This merger reflects a strategic response to the challenges posed by AI in the brand-creative production processes**, and the need for scale to invest in new technologies and maintain competitiveness.³⁹

Forbes

Shift in brand creative roles

As AI takes over routine tasks, the role of creative agencies is evolving. Agencies are increasingly focusing on areas where human creativity and strategic insight are indispensable, such as brand consulting, consumer insights, and high-level creative ideation. **This shift requires agencies to adapt by developing new skills and capabilities to complement AI-driven processes.**⁴⁰

Insight

During economic uncertainty, creative costs are often viewed strictly as expenses, even as AI forces a shift toward greater efficiency and cost-cutting.

Agencies and charities alike face mounting pressure to deliver more with the same budget while grappling with ethical concerns—like bias and privacy—in AI applications. The merger between Omnicom and Interpublic reflects broader industry consolidation driven by these pressures.

As AI handles routine tasks, human creativity must focus on strategic, high-value areas, intensifying the need to justify every creative investment.



The lines between Brand and Performance creative are blurring.

But charities aren't set up to enable brand and performance media integration.



How Brand and Performance are Converging in Modern Media

Article discusses how expanding ad budgets are leading to a **unified strategy that combines brand-building and performance marketing**. It highlights trends such as omnichannel verification, the merging of streaming and linear TV, the importance of first-party data, and the role of AI in advertising.⁴⁵



Balancing your budget between performance marketing and brand building

Article delves into the importance of finding the **right balance between brand-building and performance marketing**. It discusses how an overemphasis on short-term tactics can undermine long-term brand equity and offers strategies for integrating both approaches.⁴⁶



Blurring the boundaries between brand and performance marketing

This piece examines the **increasing interdependence of brand and performance marketing**. It emphasizes the need for businesses to educate stakeholders on aligning budgets and strategies, and provides insights on integrating both approaches effectively.⁴⁷

Insight

Many nonprofits and for-profits still silo their brand and performance marketing budgets.

Traditionally, brand efforts generate top-of-funnel awareness, while performance tactics drive conversions.

This separation often leads to a lack of tracking of the impact from brand investments, across the whole Giving Pyramid, even though recent industry insights emphasize the merging of these disciplines.

With first-party data, AI, and omnichannel strategies increasingly driving success, the traditional divide is outdated—leaving charities ill-prepared to harness integrated, audience-first campaigns that capture both awareness and measurable donor action.



More creatives than ever are generated with the help of AI.

The race is speeding up, but organizations are behind.

"If you've been hesitant to incorporate AI into your marketing strategies, **you're already behind.**" ⁴⁸

"As AI adoption continues to grow, we can expect to see a more **pronounced divide between early adopters and laggards.** Companies that have successfully integrated AI into their marketing operations will likely pull ahead, benefiting from enhanced campaign effectiveness and more efficient resource allocation." ⁴⁹

"Brands can start to create infinitely more variants of content as their teams face increasing demand for content on channels like social and paid media, allowing them to **personalize experiences at scale and unlock massive business opportunity.**" ⁵⁰

"The **AI content marketing market size has grown exponentially in recent years.** It will grow from \$3.2 billion in 2024 to \$4.02 billion in 2025 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 25.9%." ⁵¹

AI Content Marketing Global Market Report
2025



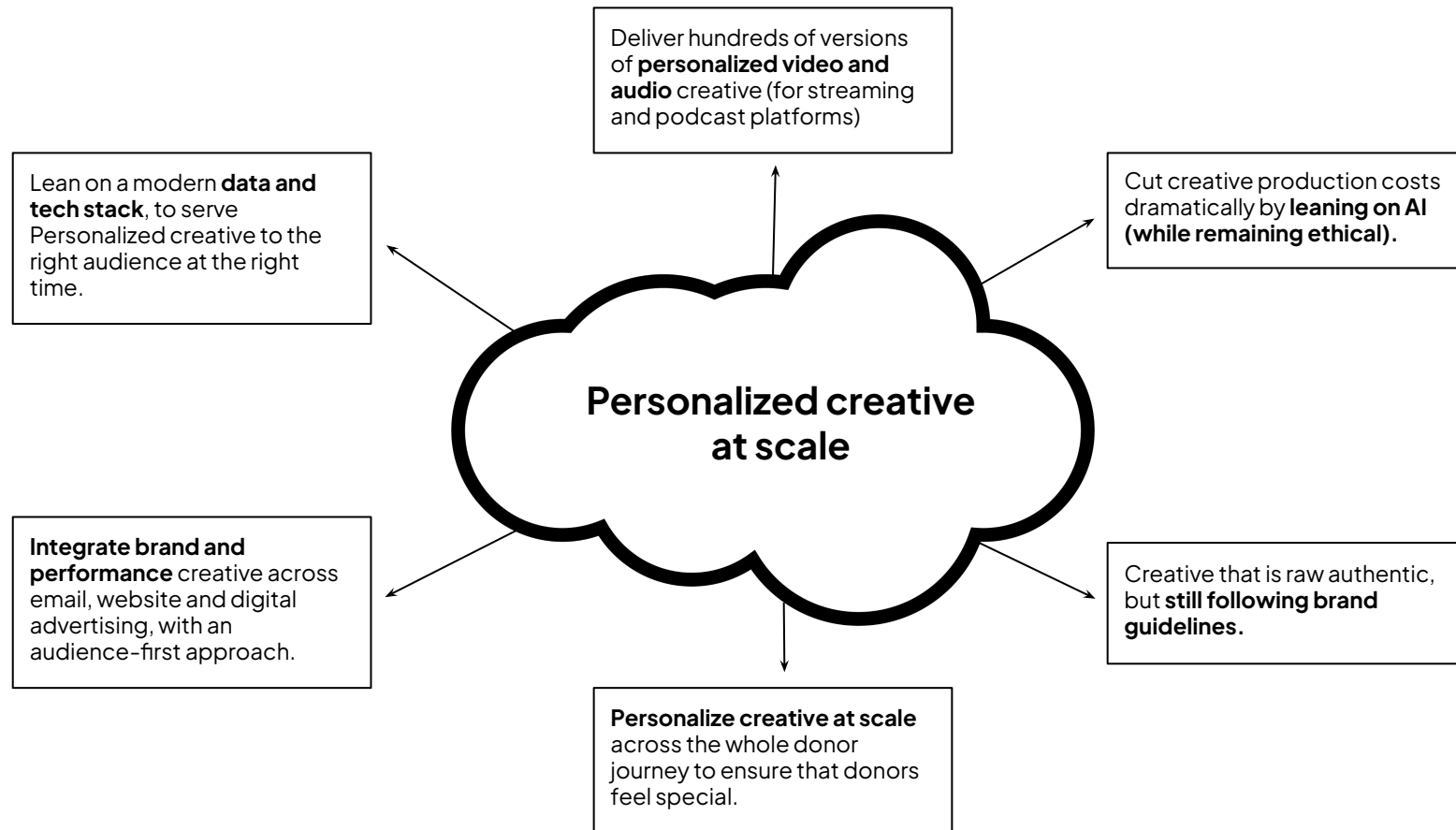
Insight

Content marketing is no longer just about creativity—it's about intelligence. **AI is changing the way brands create, distribute, and optimize content, making it more personalized, scalable, and effective.**

The AI content marketing market is projected to grow from \$3.2 billion in 2024 to \$4.02 billion in 2025, showing how quickly brands are adopting AI-driven strategies.

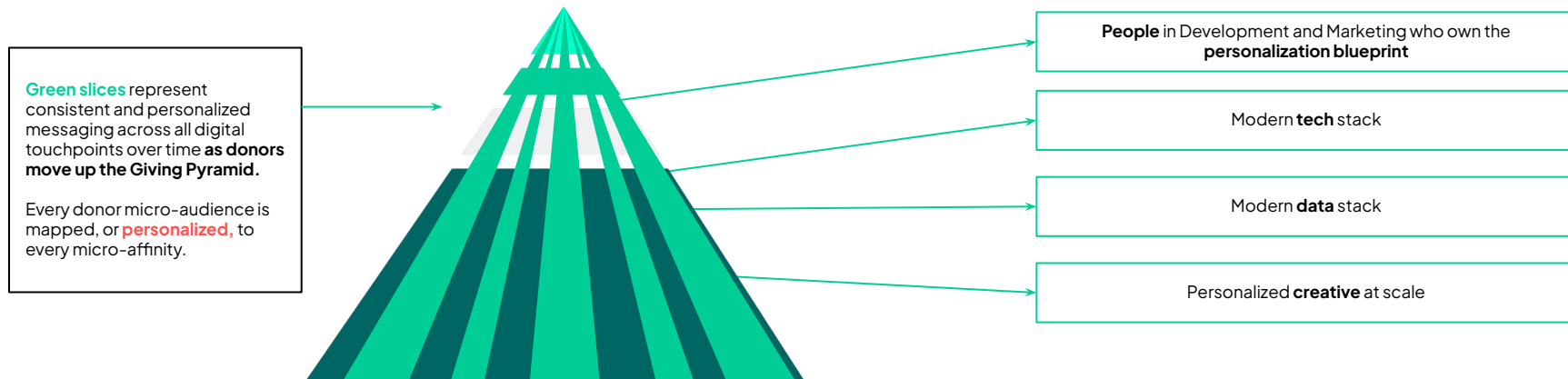
Automated tools now analyze audience behavior, predict trends, and generate tailored content in real time, ensuring every piece resonates with the right people.

Those who embrace AI are seeing exponential growth, increasing engagement, and optimizing resources, while brands that hesitate risk falling behind in an increasingly competitive digital landscape.





The **puzzle** that **powers personalization** across the whole Giving Pyramid includes:



2. Challenges:

Digital ad costs continue to increase, **ad platform algorithms prioritize Boomers due to their lower cost and higher value**, with few marketers aggressively testing campaigns, and decline in “performance culture.”

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Critical questions for charities:

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As online advertising becomes the primary way to attract individual mass donors, **the cost of online ads (CPCs and CPMs) is getting more expensive.**⁵²

	2020 A	2021 A	2022 A	2023 A	2024 A	2025 F	2026 F
Average digital media ad inflation	1.2%	4.7%	8.0%	3.3%	2.1%	2.3%	3.9%

Insight

Digital ad costs (CPCs and CPMs) are rising in line with CPI inflation, as shown by the increasing annual digital media ad inflation rates.

This means that to generate the same return from flat ad budgets or prior placements or strategies, performance marketers must work progressively harder each year to drive the same revenues and returns.

Essentially, while rising media costs are expected, maintaining flat advertising returns requires continuous aggressive optimization and strategic refinement to counteract the inflationary pressures on every click and impression.

Recommendation

Charities that grasp the behind-the-scenes optimization tactics employed by media traders on platforms like Meta, Google, and Amazon are better equipped to manage and get ahead of the rising advertising costs.

By investing in skilled media trading or developing in-house expertise, organizations can adjust their digital strategies to more than offset inflation's impact on digital revenues.

This proactive approach enables charities to maintain or even grow returns on performance media, ensuring that increased ad spend does not compromise their ability to attract and engage individual mass donors.



Many charities experience negative returns (such as negative RoAS) from their **online advertising investments**.⁵⁶

ORGANIZATION	PERFORMANCE (THAT ORG IS LOOKING TO IMPROVE)
Federated Religious NFP	Negative; 0.4 RoAS avg. all digital ad media
US arm of global organization helping refugees	Negative; 0.3 RoAS in non-brand paid search Negative; 0.8 RoAS in brand paid search Negative; 0.2 RoAS in Google Ads PMax
International organization protecting human rights	Negative; 0.7 RoAS avg. all digital ad media
US branch of global organization dedicated to ending poverty	Negative; 0.9 RoAS in paid search
US organization dedication to finding a solution to those navigating cancer	Negative; 0.4 RoAS in brand paid search Negative; 0.02 RoAS in non-brand paid search Negative; 0.1 RoAS in non-Google Ads

Insight

Many charities privately admit that their digital fundraising efforts often yield low returns. In fact, almost all charities that we speak to report negative RoAS across digital channels.

In contrast, our for-profit brands are unapologetic about demanding positive returns on every advertising dollar invested.

This discrepancy seemingly reveals a tolerance (or resignation?) for subpar digital performance within nonprofit digital strategies, highlighting the need for rigorous media optimization.

Charities must demand higher performance standards to achieve growing, sustainable, and positive returns on their digital media investments.

Recommendation

Digital fundraising professionals should never accept negative returns as inevitable.

Top-performing charities achieve a RoAS of \$2–\$3 per media dollar by applying stringent optimization practices and accountability measures.

To transform digital advertising results, charities must adopt performance-driven strategies, utilize robust audience-first analytics, and work closely with external partners.

Establishing clear KPIs and higher benchmarks will drive improvements in digital fundraising, and shift the focus from merely maintaining results to actively growing positive returns. By raising expectations, charities can better justify and then grow their ad investments.



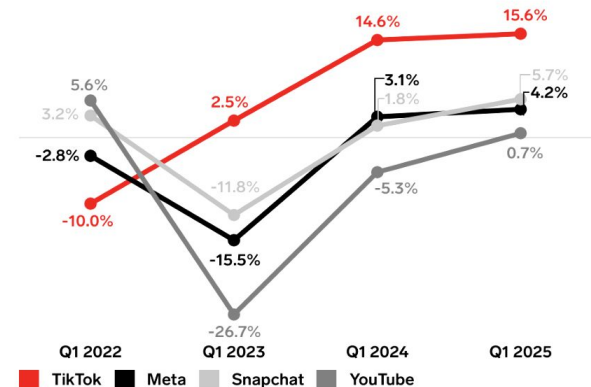
Average CPMs and CPCs are
more expensive now than ever.

“Digital marketing is one area seeing **noticeable changes, especially in CPM and CPC pricing.**”

“...if you don't adapt, **those rising costs can take a big bite out of your marketing ROI.**” ⁵³

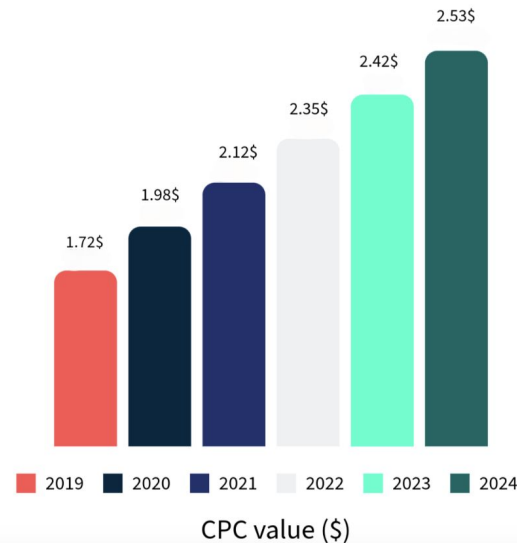
Social CPMs Are on the Rise, With TikTok Leading the Pack

% change in US social and YouTube ad cost per thousand (CPM), Q1 2022-Q1 2025



CPM rates on social platforms are rising, indicating increased competition.⁵⁴

How have average CPCs changed over the years⁵⁵





Charities are unknowingly fundraising online to donors who are aging out the fastest.⁵⁷

Age Group	Cost of Online Acquisition	1st donation value
Boomers (60+)	\$50.38	\$166.1
Gen X (45–59)	\$63.68	\$180.5
Millennials (25–44)	\$59.49	\$141.1
Gen Z (18–24)	\$113.38	\$98.2

But Boomer donors are the cheapest and most valuable audience, as untrained algorithms will prioritize Boomer audiences in targeting, and de-prioritize Millennials or Gen Z.

Insight

Observing the data in the table on the left, we see that while Boomers are acquired at lower costs and deliver higher first donations, younger donors—especially Gen Z—are more expensive to acquire and typically give less.

This paradox is compounded by ad platform algorithms (e.g. in Google Ads, Meta Ads, etc) that tend to favor lower-cost (but older) donors.

A key issue to understanding this reality, is that many charities don't track donor age on their forms, depriving digital platforms of the necessary data to target younger, cause-driven donors effectively; and denying Media Traders who are 'hands on keyboard' the signals to train algos to avoid over-indexing on targeting younger audiences.

Without this type of age data, ad budgets may be inadvertently skewed toward older demographics that charities are less interested in growing.

Recommendation

To realign digital strategies, charities should capture donor age at every interaction across their journey – for all donors.

By integrating age data into their systems, charities can train platforms like Google Ads' PMax to prioritize younger audiences.

This data-driven approach will enable more refined 'audience first' targeting, ensuring that ad spend is optimized to both maximize returns and attract the younger donors crucial for long-term growth.



Out-of-the-box or **untrained algorithms** built into Google, Meta, Amazon, or TikTok **come with unintended consequences.**

A media-optimization algorithm may **exclude younger donors** because their cost of acquisition is high.



Facebook Is Finding Problems With Artificial Intelligence Too



Unintended Consequences of Algorithmic Personalization



Understanding Social Media Recommendation Algorithms



Algorithms and their unintended consequences for the poor



The Unintended Consequences of Algorithmic Bias

Insight

Many charities, and their agencies, rely on out-of-the-box algorithms in platforms like Google Ads (PMax), Meta Ads (Lattice), or Amazon Ads (AIO) to boost campaign performance with minimal manual effort.

However, all of those algorithms are the equivalent of an easy button, and easy doesn't equate effective. And there is truly no free lunch when it comes to ad performance management.

For organizations with larger digital ad budgets, the untrained algorithms often underperform or yield negative returns.

In some cases, they inadvertently exclude higher-cost segments such as younger donors, skewing audience targeting. This unintended bias underscores the need for tailored algorithm training to ensure optimal performance and inclusive, strategic donor acquisition.

Recommendation

To overcome these challenges, charities should invest in a systematic approach to train and optimize the algorithms on platforms like Google, Meta, Amazon, and The Trade Desk.

Tailor and train these automated systems to your specific audience and performance objectives, mitigating unintended biases that overlook valuable segments such as younger donors.

By refining algorithmic targeting, organizations can create a competitive advantage and secure superior returns on their digital ad spend, ensuring every dollar works harder for your fundraising goals.



Training of algorithms requires charities to lean on robust first-party data to create proper training models.

Yet, **charity marketers struggle to embrace their first-party data** because of challenges in strategy, technical infrastructure, data collection, privacy, governance, and resourcing.



Marketing leaders must manage their first-party data effectively.

But how marketers gather and manage first-party data will be key. No. 1: Establish a foundation for customer data management. No. 2: Tailor data collection for current conditions. No. 3: Create compelling touchpoints for data collection on owned channels.⁵⁸



First-party behavioral data is a priority at all stages of the customer journey, not just discovery – “The biggest thing that makes first-party data difficult to collect is that you have to have infrastructure in place,” said Mitchell-Wolf. There has to be a way to collect the data, governance on the back end to connect data with marketers, and compliance standards built into the system.⁵⁹



First-party data: key benefits and challenges for marketers The biggest challenge in developing a first-party data strategy is pulling all this siloed data together to create a complete view of the customer.⁶⁰

Insight

Effective algorithm training relies on robust first-party data, yet many charities face hurdles in building that strong audience foundation.

The key challenge? Lack of talent that understands martech and adtech, audience segmentation across micro-affinities, and application in digital fundraising, with personalization across.

Gartner stresses that managing first-party data is crucial for tailored customer insights, while experts like Mitchell-Wolf highlight the need for reliable infrastructure and compliance measures.

Without addressing these issues, especially around multi-disciplinary talent (internally or among external partners) charities risk deploying untrained algorithms that fail to deliver optimal campaign performance.

Recommendation

To improve digital ad returns, charities must adopt a basic first-party data strategy with audiences at the core.

Begin by segmenting your donor base—not only by lifetime value but also by their micro-affinity for specific causes—and analyze both first- and third-party characteristics.

This granular approach enables training of digital advertising algorithms to target high-value donor segments effectively. Investing in data collection and integration lays the groundwork for donor journey personalization, ultimately boosting returns on digital ad investments and fostering deeper donor engagement.



Automation, untrained algorithms, and a lack of first-party data aren't the only obstacles to increasing digital advertising returns.

Humans are also a challenge.

Digital media traders forgot about tried-and-true, test-and-learn principles honed in direct mail.

"It surprises me how colleagues who manage Digital Marketing, are unfamiliar with classic Direct Mail concepts, such as "statistical significance" or "test matrices". **CEO, large U.S. charity**

"My paid media team never looks at the change log in Google Ads - which means they never know if my agency implemented A/B tests." **VP, markets and partnerships, global charity**

"Both my agency, and the Google team, tell me I should just set the campaign and forget it, i.e. 'let the algorithm do its thing'" **Paid media manager, U.S. office of INGO**

Insight

Sadly, many digital marketers of today dismiss the importance of test-control groups in favor of rapid, algorithm-driven campaigns, citing inconvenience, complexity, and pressure for quick results.

Without true control groups, there's no clear baseline for measuring incremental lift, leading to guesswork instead of data-driven decisions.

As a result, digital marketers struggle to identify what really works, undermining their capacity to optimize returns.

This lack of rigorous testing parallels a broader trend of overlooking time-honored test-and-learn principles refined over a century of direct mail fundraising.

Recommendation

Despite advances in AI, human insight and classic testing methodologies remain indispensable. After all, Chat GPT was only launched in November 2022, and yet some marketers act as if AI systems well in their maturity, when they continue to be in their infancy.

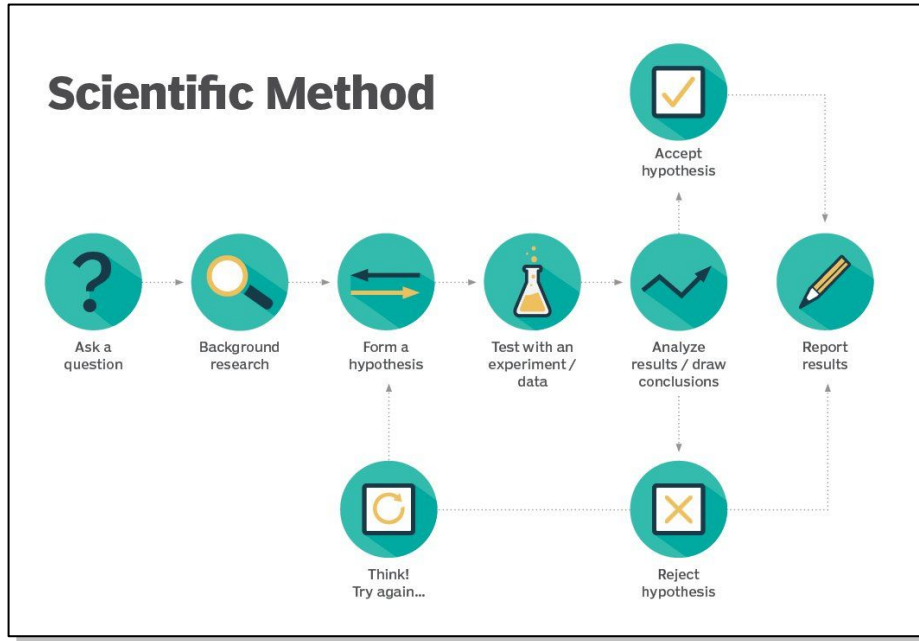
Charities seeking significant gains in digital advertising should apply "test and learn" principles from direct mail - systematically running controlled experiments to isolate success factors.

While digital testing can be time-intensive, the payoff is substantial: a clearer understanding of campaign performance and the ability to scale what works. In our experience, testing is the #1 driver of lift in digital revenues, by as much as 100% vs. algo-only scenario.

By blending machine-driven optimization with human-driven testing discipline, organizations can elevate returns by over 2x over a 12 month period, and make more confident, data-backed advertising investment decisions - with audiences at the center.



Digital marketers often don't use **the Scientific Method** and a **test-and-learn mentality** to marketing to get significant RoAS gains.



Why is the Scientific Method a “forgotten art and science” among digital media traders?

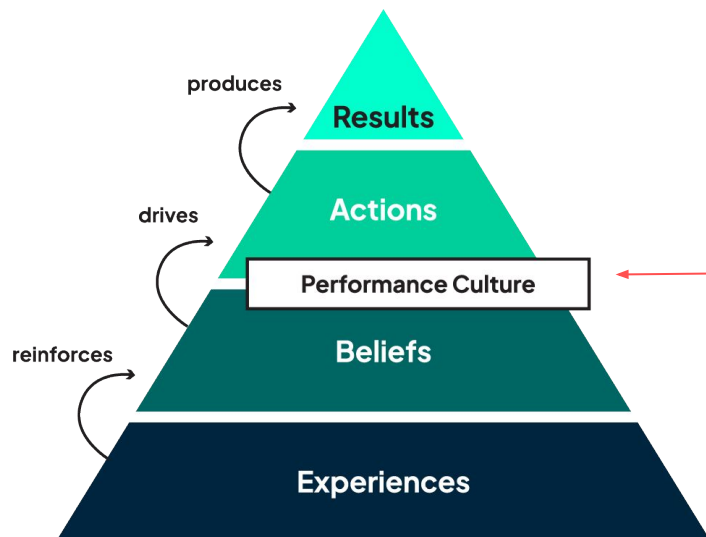
Few **best practices** exist or aren't documented

The approach is **time intensive**, requires many manual hours

The method sometimes succeeds, sometimes fails, exposing **marketers to critique**



Higher returns from ad budgets often aren't realized, because the in-house or agency teams **lack the right “performance culture”** – i.e. a relentless drive to generate higher returns from digital fundraising.



A lack of proper mindset among media traders will have an outsized negative impact on performance or results from digital advertising.

Insight

Process and mindset go hand in hand in digital fundraising and advertising.

While frameworks like algorithm training and test & control are crucial, results often hinge on the personal drive – attitude, ambition, and commitment – of the people who are hands on keyboard managing ad investments

Leaders who state, “it’s not personal, it’s just business,” absolutely overlook the human factor that brings procedures to life. A media trader’s “fire in the belly” can outshine pure procedural expertise, as passion and determination often spark innovative solutions and sustained performance improvement.

Recommendation

Whether building an internal team or choosing an external agency partner, performance culture is paramount to increasing digital donor revenues by 2x to 3x.

Beyond checking boxes for skills or processes, look for shared values and a relentless focus on results.

During hiring or vendor selection, ask questions like, “If our ad returns drop, what’s your first step?” or, “How do you respond when RoAS is negative?” This reveals whether potential team members or partners embrace a mindset of accountability and adaptability.

A strong “performance culture” ultimately drives above-average ROAS and meaningful, enduring advertising results.

2. Challenges:

Although every charity wants to move donors up the Giving Pyramid, **focus on short-term wins and lack of long term strategy stand in the way.**

1. Trends:

Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management .

2. Challenges:

Digital ad costs continue to increase, ad platform algorithms prioritize Boomers due to their lower cost and higher value, with few marketers aggressively testing campaigns, and decline in "performance culture". **Although every charity wants to move donors up the Giving Pyramid, focus on short term wins and lack of long term strategy stand in the way.** Persistent internal siloes, hamper integrations across: brand and performance, marketing and fundraising, data and tech to enable "audience first" strategies, marketing and finance, and internal and external team. Lack of shared KPIs, across all internal silos, make it hard for charities to have a holistic "Audience First Giving Pyramid" approach to increasing digital fundraising impact.

3. Approach:

The Audience First Giving Pyramid enables charities to both crush short term results and built a lasting legacy.

Short term: In year 1, small, consistent steps applied with the right process and mindset, increase paid ad efficiency and effectiveness, thus increasing digital fundraising revenue and creating a foundation for internal integration and strategic and complex conversations. (refer to the Appendix for examples).

Longer term: In years 2 and 3, increase in confidence from higher digital donor revenues enables close Fundraising to Technology partnership, Fundraising to Finance alignment on OpEx and CapEx investments, with shared KPIs lowering internal siloes - powering a digital fundraising strategy based on all the work streams in the "Audience-First Giving Pyramid."

Delve Deeper:

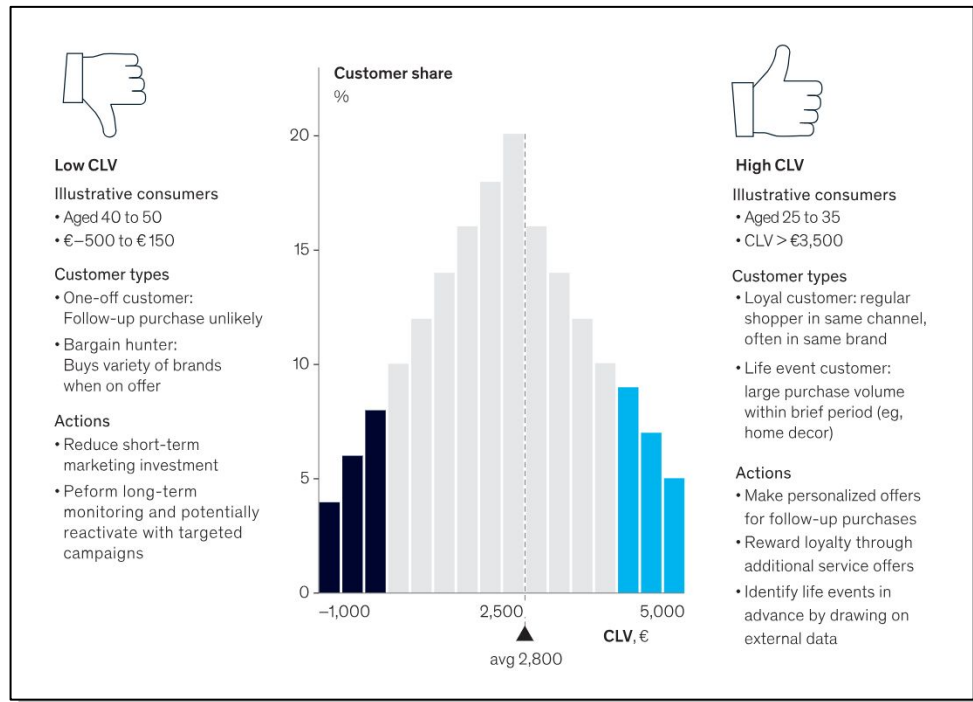
How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

Critical questions for charities:

How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?



The for-profit sector has long prioritized its marketing acquisition efforts by **focusing on highest lifetime value (LTV) customers.**⁶¹



McKinsey
& Company

“Through **targeted media investments**, companies can **identify their most valuable customers** in three steps and secure their loyalty long term.”



Charities recognize that **maximizing share of recurring donors allows them to increase donor LTV & unrestricted revenue – simultaneously.**



National
Philanthropic
Trust

Three Ways **Recurring Giving** Can Make a Major Impact for Donors and Nonprofits ⁶²



Giving
USA™
A public service initiative
of The Giving Institute

Building a Resilient Nonprofit: The **Impact of Recurring Donors** Explained ⁶³



Top 7 Reasons to **Invest in Monthly Recurring Donations** ⁶⁴



Unlock Fundraising's **Hidden Gem: Recurring Giving Programs** ⁶⁵

Insight

For-profit brands have long recognized the power of recurring customer revenue: acquiring and retaining valuable consumers is an upfront investment that pays off exponentially over time.

Charities can adopt these best practices, by focusing on donor lifetime value (LTV), particularly among those who give monthly. Recurring donors offer consistent, predictable funds that stabilize cash flow and reduce the constant need for new prospecting.

Yet many ad platforms default to single-transaction metrics, overlooking long-term donor potential and underutilizing the full capacity of digital campaigns.

Recommendation

To elevate long-term digital fundraising success, charities should prioritize targeting donors most likely to be monthly donors.

Start by incorporating LTV into campaign metrics on platforms like Meta, Google, and Amazon; train these algorithms to recognize and target recurring-donor behaviors.

Align messaging with donor capacity, past engagement, and cause affinity to nurture deeper relationships over time.

By spotlighting monthly donors in strategic segments – rather than solely chasing large one-off gifts – charities can unlock more reliable revenue, improve donor retention, and use resources more efficiently across all digital channels.



Recurring donors give more, more often, and **are 7.5x more valuable** over their lifetime than single-gift donors.⁶⁶

Gift Type	Annual gift	Count of annual gifts	Annual retention	LTV
Single gift donors	\$71.7	1.7	45.2%	\$71.7
Recurring gift donors	\$172	10	83.6%	\$533.2



Millennials are **4x more likely** to become recurring donors than Gen Z and **2.4x more likely** than Boomers.⁶⁷

Demo	Share that give on a recurring basis	Share of total population in the US
Boomers	18%	20.9%
Gen X	28%	19.5%
Millennials	44%	21.7%
Gen Z	11%	20.7%

Insight

Millennials' strong inclination toward recurring donations stems from multiple factors rooted in modern consumer behavior and philanthropic psychology.

Subscription-based services like Netflix, Spotify, and Amazon Prime have normalized monthly payments, making recurring giving an easy extension of familiar habits.

Millennials also prefer digital-first interactions, seeking convenient, mobile-friendly donation experiences. Beyond convenience, they value authenticity and social proof—trusting organizations whose missions align with personal values and whose impact they can visibly track.

This combination of financial readiness, digital fluency, and cause-driven motivation significantly raises their likelihood of recurring support.

Recommendation

To cultivate Millennial recurring donors, charities should adopt strategies that mirror subscription-based models and emphasize transparency.

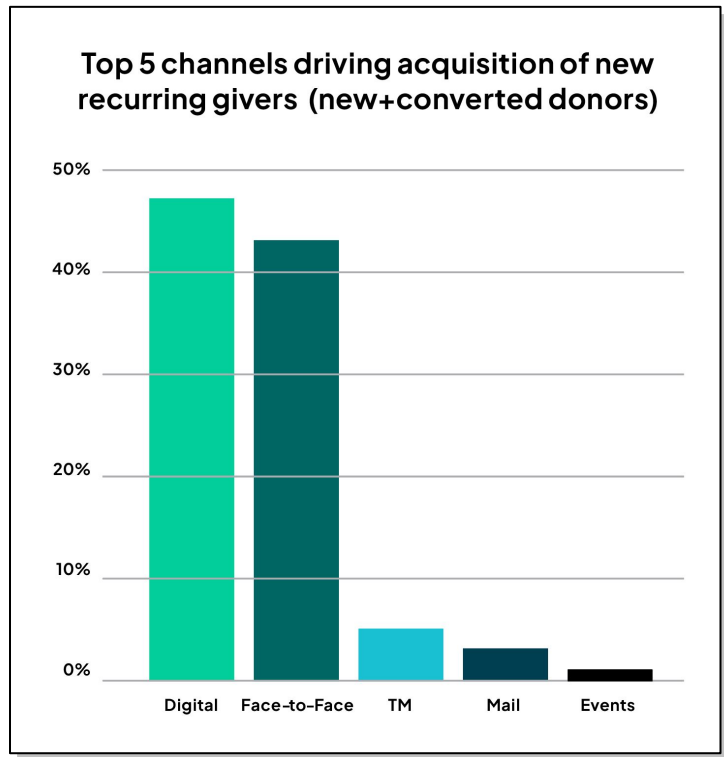
First, design a frictionless digital experience with one-click monthly-giving options and mobile-friendly forms. Second, provide frequent, impactful updates - via email, social media, or text - highlighting tangible outcomes that resonate with Millennial values.

Incorporate social proof through peer testimonials or user-generated content, reinforcing trust in your mission.

Finally, leverage audience-first data to personalize outreach, ensuring messaging speaks directly to each donor's unique motivations (mapping micro-affinities to micro-audiences), thereby encouraging sustained engagement and heightened lifetime value.



Digital is the No. 1 channel for driving recurring donations, (followed closely by face-to-face).⁶⁸



Insight

Digital channels have emerged as the primary driver of recurring giving because they closely mirror the subscription-based experiences that modern donors, especially Millennials, find intuitive.

With minimal effort, supporters can sign up, track impact in real time, and adjust their giving as needed. This fluid, data-driven environment not only streamlines monthly commitments but also enables nonprofits to personalize outreach, improving donor loyalty.

Face-to-face or direct mail channels lack the instantaneous feedback and scalable personalization that digital tools provide.

Recommendation

Nonprofits should develop frictionless digital Member Centers with subscription-like digital giving flows that minimize steps and simplify ongoing donor management.

Send regular, transparent impact updates via email, text, or social media to sustain engagement and trust.

Leverage analytics – such as open rates, click-throughs, and donor retention metrics – to continually refine messaging and user experience.

The scalability and data-driven precision of digital channels remain key for recurring giving. By merging convenience with insights, charities can secure dependable, long-term income from a robust base of monthly donors.

2. Challenges:

Persistent internal siloes hamper integrations across: brand and performance, marketing and fundraising, data and tech to enable audience-first strategies, marketing and finance, and internal and external team.

1. Trends:

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Delve Deeper:

How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

Critical questions for charities:

How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?



But **paid advertising platforms are “blind” to the downstream donor value signals “locked” in a charity’s CRM system.**



So without the right tech stacks and properly structured first-party data, ad platforms cannot target donors based on their actual or predicted LTV.

Insight

Paid advertising platforms like Google Ads or Meta Ads do not natively allow targeting based on donor lifetime value. All ad platforms optimize targeting to immediate or single donation value, and are blind to any downstream recurring or monthly donor revenue.

However, with the right adtech and martech stacks, and a robust first-party data strategy, nonprofits can identify high LTV donor segments.

By integrating these audience-first insights, with LTV as the key targeting parameter, into ad buying platforms, charities can effectively optimize budgets and messaging for maximum short- and long-term impact.

Recommendation

Charities should centralize and enrich their first-party audience data within a strong tech-stack infrastructure that calculates and/or predicts LTV.

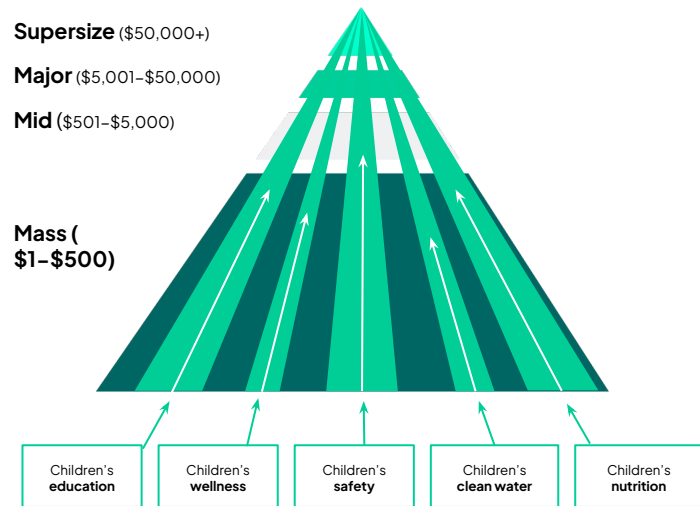
By syncing audience segments with major ad platforms, charities can tailor digital fundraising campaigns to reach high-potential donors while improving return on ad spend.

In practical terms, this means optimizing targeting to maximize RoAS from Mass donors, with an eye towards those Mass donors moving up the Giving Pyramid, to mid or major levels in the future.



A look at a lack of internal **brand vs. performance** marketing integration.

Instead of viewing the Giving Pyramid holistically, through the lens of micro-audiences and their micro-affinities...



... in reality, **brand and performance teams:**

- have disconnected budgets
- use different KPIs to measure success
- are managed by different internal teams
- creative is produced by different partners

AND

- there is no alignment on the role of brand vs. performance creative across the whole donor journey, from mass to major donor up the Giving Pyramid.

Insight

Brand and performance teams often operate in silos, with disconnected budgets, KPIs, and creative and media partners.

Often, audience data is not shared and unified across brand and performance teams: a brand impression may be shown to a donor, without performance media present to then drive a click and conversion.

This fragmentation leads to mismatched messaging and donor journeys that ignore the nuanced micro-audiences and micro-affinities across the Giving Pyramid.

Without a unified lens on how each audience segment transitions from casual supporter to major donor, nonprofits risk duplicating efforts, eroding brand consistency, and undermining fundraising effectiveness.

Recommendation

Bridging brand and performance silos starts with a shared framework for audience segmentation and campaign goals.

Audiences should always be at the center of all brand and performance investments.

Aligning budgets and KPIs ensures both teams contribute to a cohesive donor journey, from mass to major donor.

Emphasize collaborative creative development, with clear role definitions for brand vs. performance content.

Establishing joint planning sessions and leadership oversight fosters accountability, drives synergy, and delivers consistent, impactful donor experiences.



For-profit examples: Lack of internal **brand vs. performance** marketing integration.⁶⁹



Nike seamlessly blends compelling brand storytelling with data-driven performance marketing. Its “Just Do It” campaigns inspire and resonate emotionally, while their digital initiatives, such as the Nike Training Club app, provide personalized workout plans, driving user engagement and sales. In 2024, Nike reported a 10% increase in digital sales, **attributing this growth to their integrated marketing strategies.**



Dove’s “Real Beauty” campaign focuses on authentic brand messaging that promotes natural beauty and self-esteem. This purpose-driven marketing has been **complemented by targeted performance campaigns highlighting specific products over four years**, Dove achieved double-digit growth in Australia and New Zealand, outpacing its parent company.



Airbnb has shifted focus **from heavy reliance on search advertising to broader brand marketing campaigns that emphasize belonging and community.** This approach has been supported by performance marketing efforts to drive immediate bookings. In 2024, Airbnb increased its marketing spend to strengthen its brand presence, contributing to a 15% rise in revenue.



Casper, a direct-to-consumer mattress brand, disrupted the traditional mattress industry by **combining brand marketing with performance campaigns.** They utilized social media, podcasts, and influencer partnerships to build brand awareness and drive traffic. This strategy led to significant growth, with Casper achieving over \$100 million in sales within its first two years.



Kia Australia experienced record sales, surpassing 80,000 cars sold in 2024, making it the fourth-largest automotive brand in the market. This success is attributed to a **strategic shift towards brand marketing, including high-profile advertising campaigns and sponsorships, complemented by performance marketing efforts promoting specific models.**

Insight

In for-profit marketing, friction between brand storytelling and performance (direct response) tactics is long-standing.

Brand teams prioritize emotional resonance—like Nike’s “Just Do It” or Dove’s “Real Beauty”—while performance teams focus on measurable returns and short-term conversions.

This “storytelling vs. spreadsheets” clash stems from differing objectives, creative philosophies, and timelines.

Yet examples such as Airbnb and Casper show that synergy between brand and performance is possible. When brand-building efforts complement audience-first data-driven campaigns, organizations see stronger brand loyalty, more efficient ad spend, and ultimately, accelerated revenue growth.

Recommendation

In pursuit of alignment, unify brand and performance teams around shared KPIs and an audience-first framework, encouraging them to interpret each other’s data and creative insights.

Iterative testing weaves storytelling and direct response into a cohesive whole, ensuring each campaign resonates emotionally while driving tangible results.

Emphasize “hook first, brand second,” layering brand identity onto a performance-centric message, or vice versa.

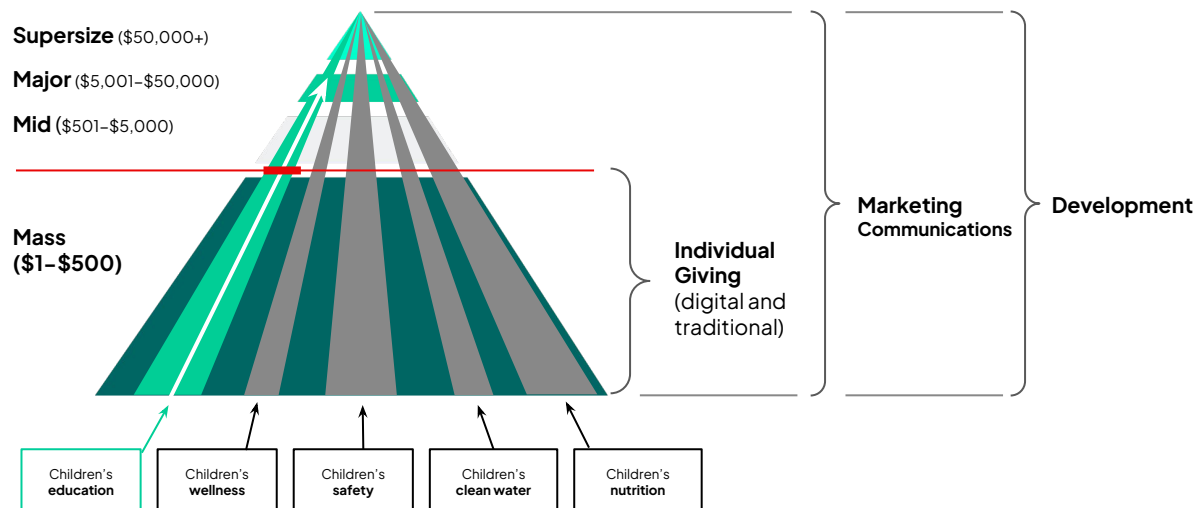
By forming hybrid teams, charities can amplify each discipline’s strengths, optimize resource allocation, and achieve both brand equity and conversions in a single, integrated effort.



Lack of internal **individual giving** vs. **marketing** vs. **development** integration.

Instead of viewing the Giving Pyramid as an ongoing donor journey...

... **in reality**, individual giving owns mostly the **mass** donors; development owns most of the **mid or major** donors; and marketing 'owns' **messaging** across the Giving Pyramid.



Insight

Historically, nonprofits separated individual giving, development, and marketing, reflecting distinct focuses on immediate donation appeals (individual giving, e.g. in direct mail in the past or in digital fundraising today), donor relationships (development), and awareness (marketing).

With digital channels playing an increasingly pivotal role – especially in engaging younger donors – this siloed approach can hamper cohesive strategies.

Typical warning signs include fragmented reporting, conflicting goals, and inconsistent coordination around technology and data. Overlapping responsibilities often result in missed opportunities to maximize donor revenue.

Recommendation

Nonprofits could adopt a cross-functional plan that **unites fundraising, development, and marketing communications under shared objectives and KPIs** – while respecting their unique strengths and roles.

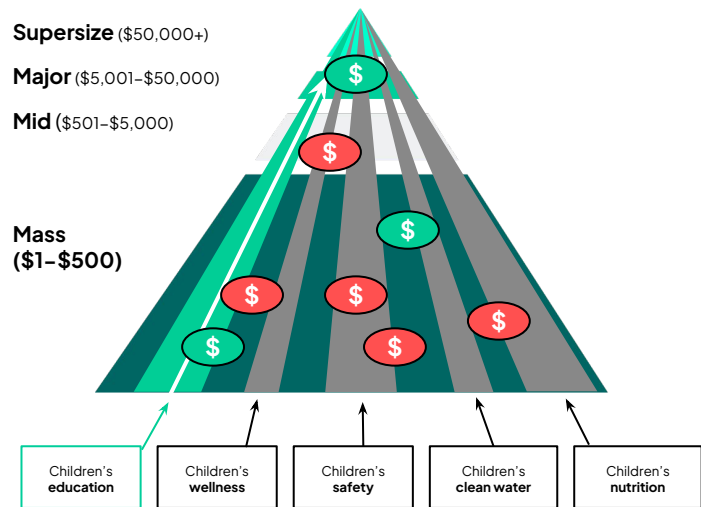
Standardize data management and use integrated technology platforms to capture unified donor insights. Align creative and messaging across channels for consistency, particularly in digital efforts aimed at younger supporters.

While no overnight fix exists, incremental steps – like cross-department task forces, common metrics, and ongoing performance assessments – can break down silos.

Lack of development and technology to foster an audience-first integration.

Instead of collaborating with the CTO on an audience-first strategy, with a common goal between fundraising, marketing and technology around maximizing value from initiatives...

... in reality, the CTO's technology and data investments are viewed as an expense, short-changing every team's ability to maximize donor revenue.



CTO's Tech and Data Budget?

Valuable Investment?

Wasteful Expense?

Insight

In many charities, technology and data remain siloed from fundraising and marketing, with adtech and martech viewed as cost centers. This disconnect often arises from CTOs focus on system infrastructure, data integrity, and compliance, while fundraising and marketing teams prioritize immediate donor engagement and revenue targets.

Without a clear narrative linking adtech and martech to enhanced donor experiences, better targeting, and ultimately higher donor revenue, tech budgets are not seen as growth drivers.

As an outcome, charities underinvest in tech and data that could spur sustainable donor acquisition and deepen supporter relationships.

Recommendation

Nonprofits should align fundraising, development, marketing communications, and technology objectives around a unified "audience-first" growth strategy, ensuring that every tech investment directly supports donor engagement and revenue goals.

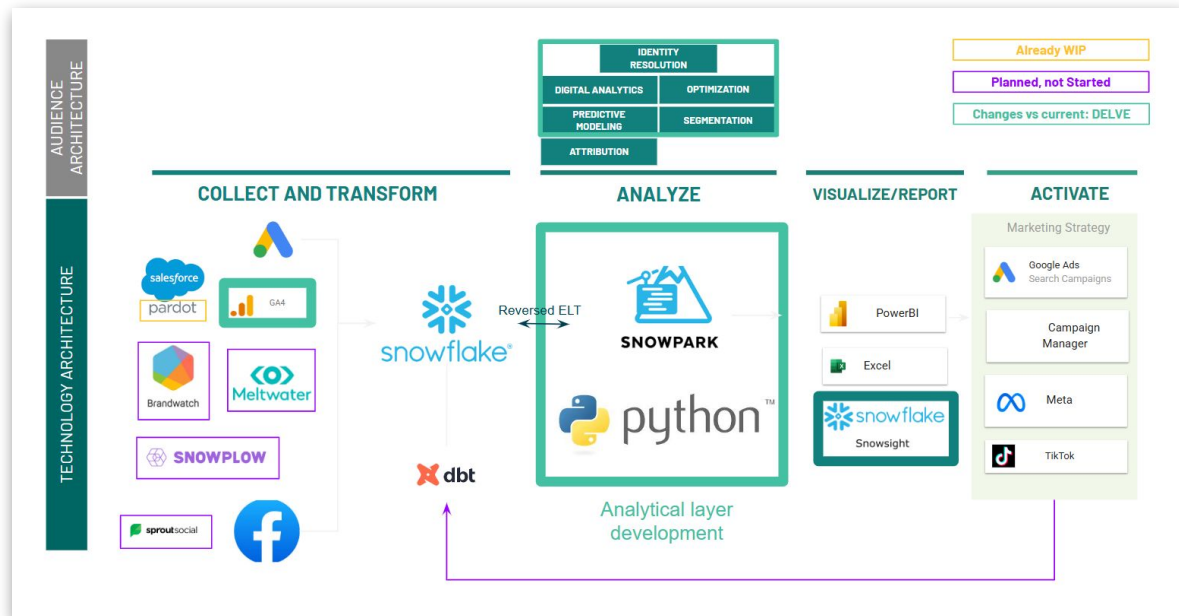
For example, develop shared KPIs – like donor lifetime value or online conversion rates – that technology solutions directly influence.

Encourage proactive collaboration with the CTO to integrate data analytics, CRM platforms, and automation tools that boost donor retention.

By demonstrating clear ROI and reinforcing how tech drives measurable value, teams shift from viewing technology budgets as overhead to recognizing them as pivotal investments.



To enable an **audience-first personalized approach** to communications across all channels, charities must have a **robust tech and data stack**.



At Delve Deeper, we believe that **charities should have full control over their tech and data assets.**

Given funding constraints faced by many charities, often **leaning on existing out-of-the-box components** (e.g. Google's GMP and GCP stack) is often **the most cost-effective way** for charities to enable an audience-first approach to advertising and donor journey management.



Acquiring, growing and retaining Millennial and Gen Z mass donors isn't just a process and mindset challenge. **It's also an integration challenge across five organizational layers.**



Insight

Acquiring and nurturing Millennial and Gen Z donors is not just about processes or mindsets; it also requires unifying five organizational circles of trust: (1) brand vs. performance marketing, (2) individual giving, marketing, and development, (3) technology and data, (4) finance and executive, and (5) external agencies and partners.

While obstacles often fall under people, process, or technology, it's the human element – how these circles of trust interconnect – that most profoundly influences success.

When these layers align, charities can create a cohesive donor experience and stronger long-term outcomes.

Recommendation

We don't claim to possess a universal fix for organizational change — that's the domain of specialized consultancies.

Though no universal roadmap exists for transformative change, charities can foster cross-departmental synergy by

- (a) adopting a **shared strategic framework, like the Audience First Giving Pyramid**, and
- (b) **defining unified KPIs that span all "circles of trust"** throughout the Audience First Giving Pyramid.

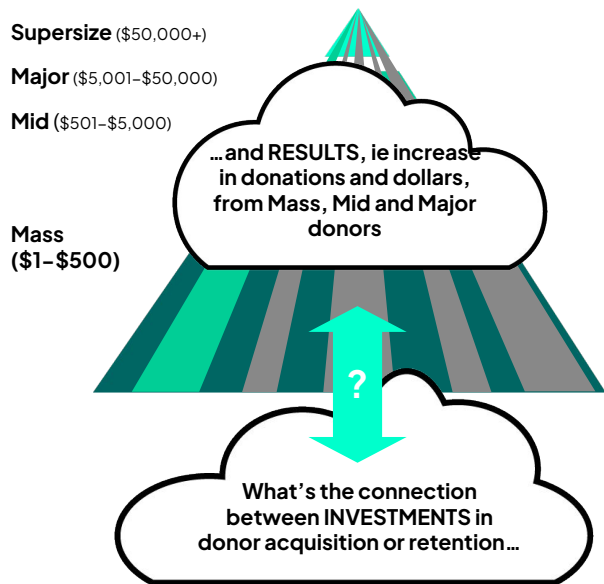
This approach cultivates a common language across brand, performance, technology, finance, and external partners, ensuring that every decision supports a holistic donor journey. As charities evolve internally, uniting these five layers behind donor-centric goals can dramatically enhance both short-term returns and long-term donor revenues



Lack of individual giving marketing vs. finance integration.

Instead of **collaborating closely with the CFO** and the finance function and helping the CFO understand how ad investments translate into downstream results...

...in reality, the **individual giving and marketing teams are often on the defense**, having to justify their expenses vs. working with finance as partners sharing a common mission.



Individual Giving and Marketing Comms vs. Finance

Collaborative relationship?

Adversarial relationship?

Insight

Individual giving and marketing are often perceived by a charity's CFO's office as spenders rather than investors.

This arises when the finance function sees **limited transparency about how resources for creative, media, adtech, martech, or first-party data yield measurable outcomes like increased revenue**. Consequently, individual giving and marketing teams find themselves justifying costs post-hoc instead of collaboratively planning with finance.

Without a clear, shared understanding of how investments drive impact, CFOs may treat digital fundraising budgets as overhead items rather than strategic enablers.

Recommendation

To break this cycle, nonprofits should formalize cross-functional planning that ties fundraising inputs - such as marketing spend or creative production - to quantifiable outputs, like new donor acquisition or lifetime value.

Establish common KPIs - and a shared framework around the Audience First Giving Pyramid - that **both the CFO and fundraising teams can track and interpret** (e.g., cost per donor, net revenue growth, number of mass donors moving up the pyramid).

Engage the finance function early, inviting them into campaign brainstorming and goal-setting.

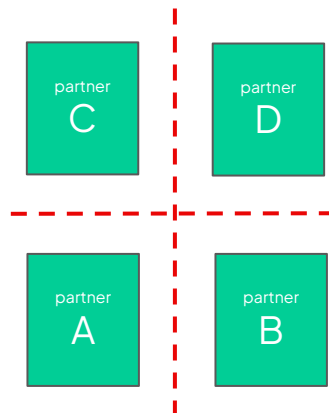
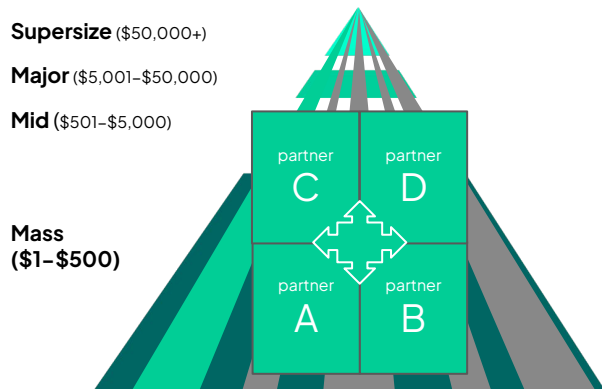
By co-creating robust financial models and reporting frameworks, fundraising teams shift from defensive cost justification to proactive partnership, empowering the CFO to view these expenditures as purposeful investments that fuel the mission.



Lack of cross-agency and partner integration.

Instead of orchestrating and project-managing seamless campaign execution with all partners (SEO, email, direct mail, digital advertising, UX, data, tech, etc.) working in tandem to further the mission...

... in reality, **external partners are often disconnected**, operating in silos, minimizing or mitigating the impact on donation growth.



Insight

Nonprofits often rely on multiple external partners – covering SEO, email, direct mail list management, digital ads, UX, data, and technology – to drive donor engagement and dollars.

But without centralized coordination, these partners frequently operate in silos, each pursuing their own approach without shared KPIs or cohesive timelines.

This fragmentation results in inconsistent messaging, duplicated efforts, and ultimately weaker impact on donation growth.

Without clear orchestration of activities, charities can't fully leverage cross-partner insights or maximize synergies across channels, missing opportunities to enhance the donor experience and boost revenue.

Recommendation

Appoint a dedicated coordinator or project manager responsible for integrated campaign execution.

Collaborate on common KPIs – such as donor LTV or net-new to file – and regularly convene cross-partner meetings, with alignment on metrics as the north star.

Base all campaigns on a shared strategic framework, such as the Audience-First Giving Pyramid presented in section 3-Approach.

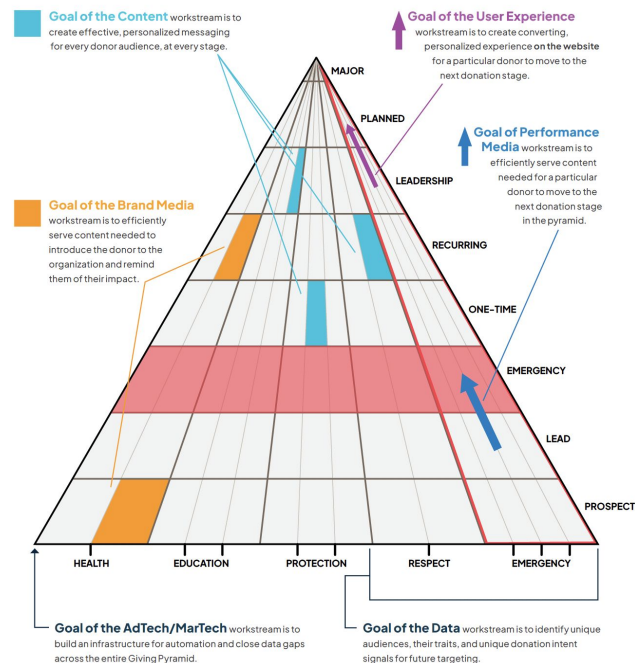
By unifying strategies and fostering open communication, nonprofits can break down silos, improve the donor journey, and ultimately drive stronger fundraising performance across all channels.



Lack of **internal and external integration** stands in the way of charities getting faster donor acquisitions and revenue growth.



The Audience-First Giving Pyramid offers a winning framework.



2. Challenges:

Lack of shared KPIs,
across all internal silos,
make it hard for charities to
have a holistic Audience
First Giving Pyramid
approach to increasing
digital fundraising impact.

1. Trends:

Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management.

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3. Approach:

The Audience First Giving Pyramid enables charities to both crush short term results and built a lasting legacy.

Short term: In year 1, small, consistent steps applied with the right process and mindset, increase paid ad efficiency and effectiveness, thus increasing digital fundraising revenue and creating a foundation for internal integration and strategic and complex conversations. (refer to the Appendix for examples).

Longer term: In years 2 and 3, increase in confidence from higher digital donor revenues enables close Fundraising to Technology partnership, Fundraising to Finance alignment on OpEx and CapEx investments, with shared KPIs lowering internal siloes - powering a digital fundraising strategy based on all the work streams in the "Audience-First Giving Pyramid."

Delve Deeper:

How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

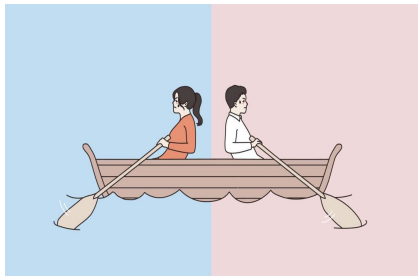
Critical questions for charities:

How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?

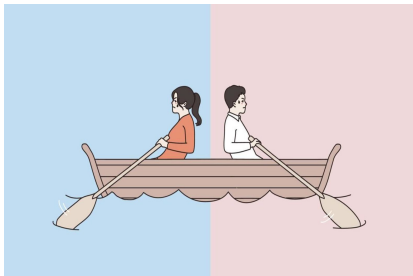


Another key challenge: **Lack of shared KPIs and a single source of truth in donor data.**

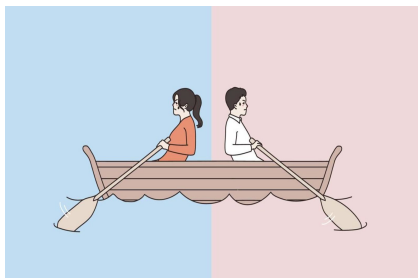
Development **vs.** Finance



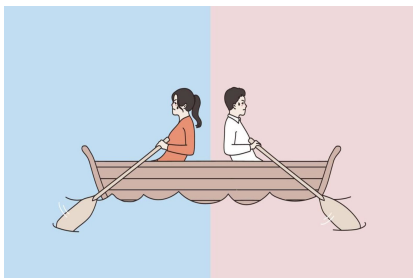
Mass Gifts **vs.** Major Gifts



CapEx **vs.** OpEx



Individual Giving **vs.** Marketing Comms



Insight

Charities aren't just facing a challenge with integration and siloes in creating a unified framework for their teams.

A related bigger hurdle lies in fragmented donor audience data across multiple systems, across different departments.

Without a single source of truth around audiences, teams can't track donor journeys or measure performance accurately, leading to repeated solicitations, inconsistent messaging, and missed growth opportunities.

When reporting and KPIs differ by department, it's tough to align on goals or share insights effectively. As a result, nonprofits fail to fully leverage donor relationships, falling short of their potential to drive long-term support.

Recommendation

Adopt a comprehensive donor reporting platform that consolidates data from all fundraising channels.

Define shared KPIs and reporting templates, ensuring every department speaks the same "data language."

Encourage cross-functional collaboration to maintain consistency and transparency in donor information.

By establishing a single system of record, nonprofits can better coordinate their Audience-First Giving Pyramid strategies, making data-driven decisions that enhance donor journeys, drive higher conversions, and boost long-term revenue.



Example: Some leading charities are starting to define “integrated & **shared KPIs**”, to help their **team row in the same direction** and squeeze more from their existing digital investments.⁷⁰

Key priority: Integrated & Shared KPIs



This is one of the key shifts we are making to break down silos and ensure that we are driving results by putting our supporters, rather than our own internal teams and goals, first.

UNICEF Australia:

- Introduced shared KPIs on months 0-3 retention between F2F and Retention teams which helped lead to an 4% increase in retention.
- Aligned lead gen and conversion KPIs across digital and TM teams which led to 11% increase in conversion.





But in order to have shared KPIs, charities need **a centralized system of record** – one source of data that all departments can use to see progress against common goals, as shown in this Save the Children example.⁷¹

Key priority: Integrated **data and measurement**

Effective data and measurement is a fundamental foundation of integration. Although this is generally understood to be a priority, there are key **barriers** that we have to address to achieve this:

- **Limited investment in roles**, including Data analysts, architects and engineers, as well as low numbers of digital analysts embedded into marketing teams.
- **Lack of investment in knowledge and skill development** to enable teams to fully understand technology and data requirements.
- **Global inconsistency** in terms of tech, platforms and techniques for integrated data and measurement.

One barrier is data and systems. Right now, the data is two weeks delayed and we can't optimise our campaigns. We're migrating to salesforce, but this won't fix the issue. We need to look at the core of the problem. - Member

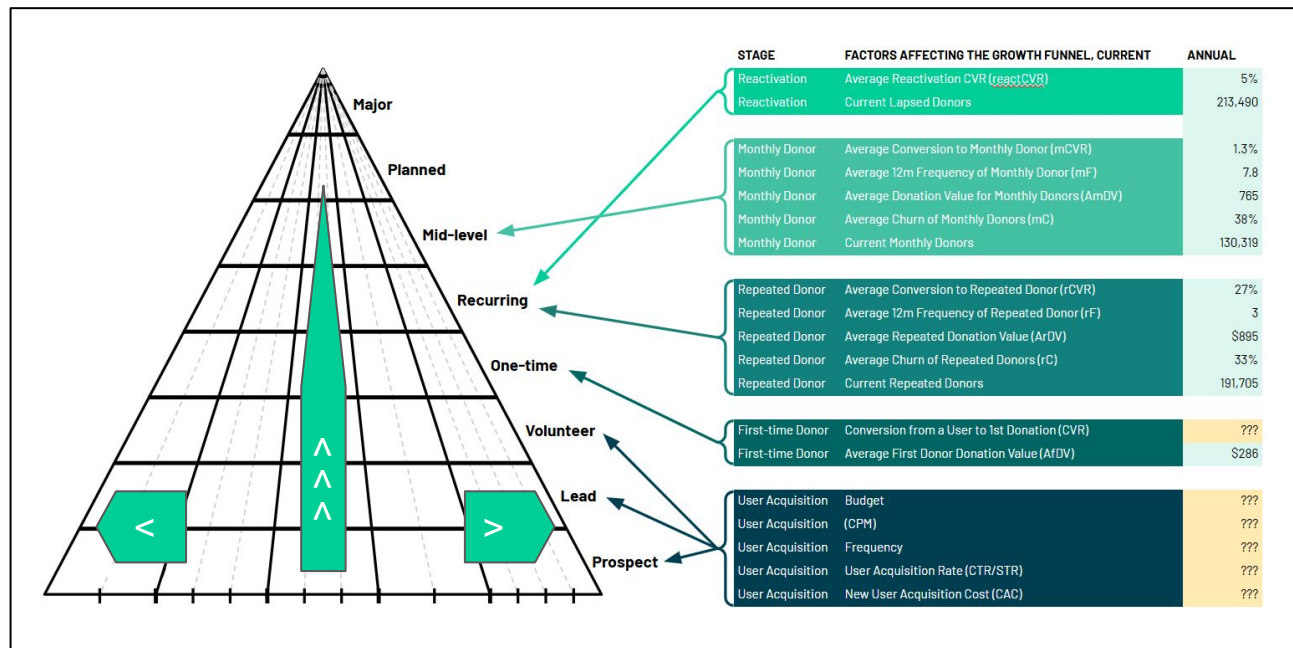


Save the Children



A system of record measures and reports on all donors, across all KPIs – **regardless of the Donors' gift status.**

Such a system also **enables** all departments to view their efforts in the context of the whole Audience-First Giving Pyramid.



3. Approach:

The **Audience First Giving Pyramid** enables charities to both crush short term results and built a lasting legacy.

1. Trends:

Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management .

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Delve Deeper:

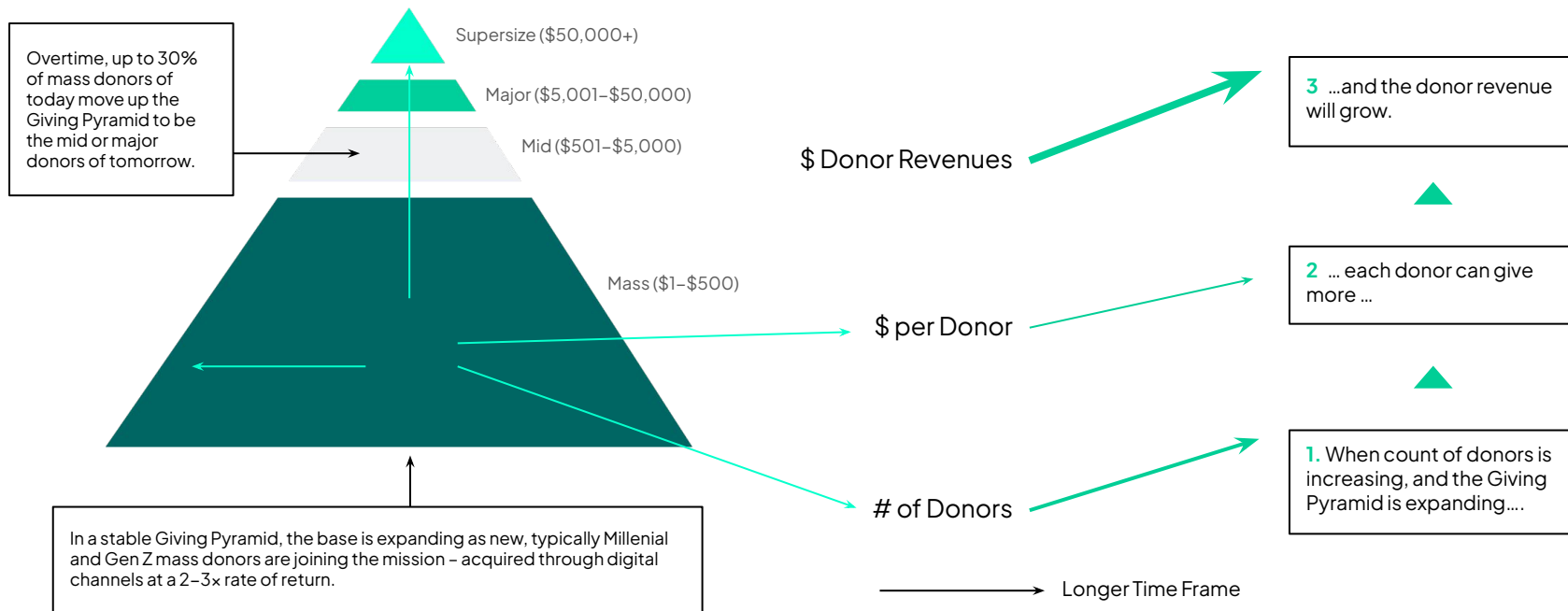
How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

Critical questions for charities:

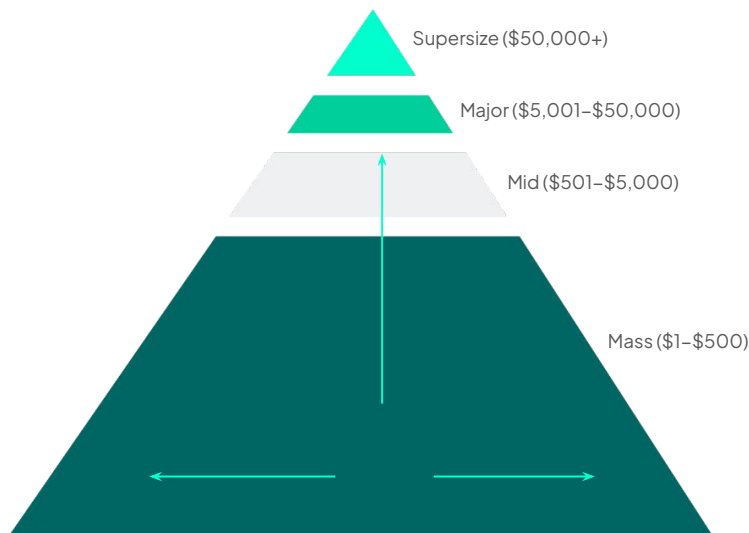
How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?

When a healthy Giving Pyramid has a strong base and donors whose gifts increase over time, then long-term, **charities get more from even more:**

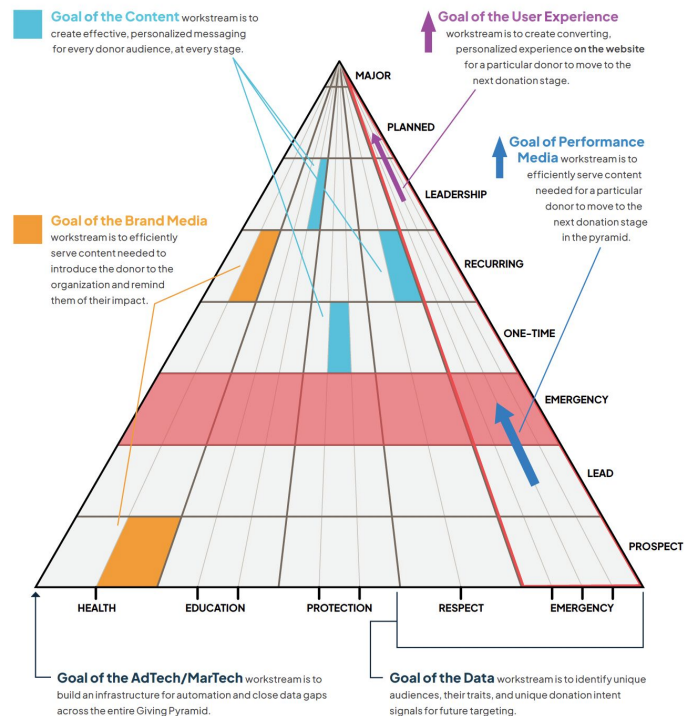
Meaning, “more donors, who give more” = steady growth in donor revenue



What's a **proven framework** that enables charities to attract more young donors at a positive RoAS and cultivate them into major donors over time?



The **Audience-First Giving Pyramid** is a proven approach that expands the base with more mass donors and moves them up towards mid or major status.



Read more about the **Audience First Giving Pyramid** framework in our white paper.

[> Download](#)

From \$10 to \$10,000: Rethinking the Giving Pyramid in a New Age for Philanthropy (and Donors)

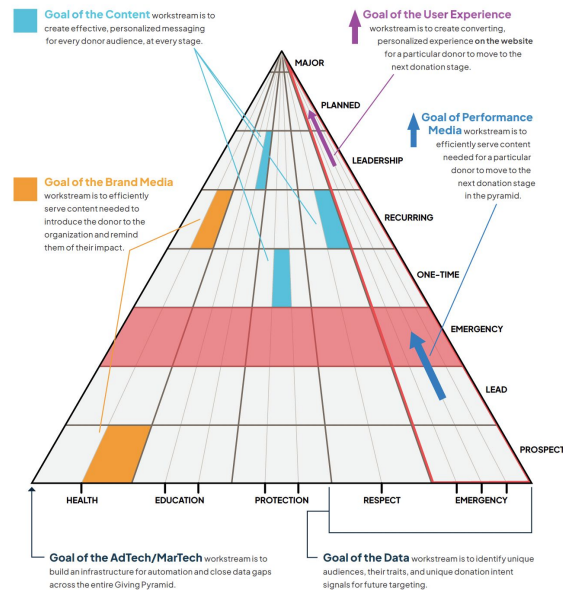
DELVE DEEPER[™]

2025



Putting audience first.

Our strategy modernizes the classic giving pyramid, aiming to broaden the base by acquiring a greater number of individual donors (from all channels, including direct mail, email, paid search, paid social, programmatic, and others) and enhancing each one's lifetime value.



DELVE DEEPER[™] Rethinking the Giving Pyramid | 2025

8

- Donors often connect with a **specific mission pillar** due to **personal experiences**.
- This applies to **both mass donors** at the foundation of the Giving Pyramid – **and major donors** at its apex.
- **In the traditional model:**
 - **Major donors receive personalized attention**, which is tailored to them by the Fundraising and Development teams.
 - Meanwhile, **donors at lower levels of the pyramid typically receive communications that lack personalization**.

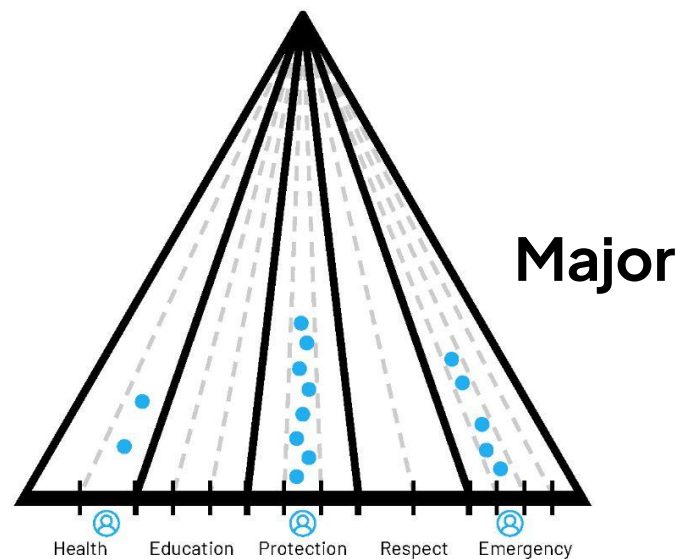


DIAGRAM 1

- The **future of fundraising** lies in engaging the bottom of the pyramid - the **Mass audience**.
- **Every donor, from the base of the pyramid to the major donors, should receive a personalized experience.**
- This approach allows all donors, regardless of their capacity to give, **to feel like valued members of a united mission** - and increase their contributions as their capacity to give grows.
- The "Vertically sliced" Giving Pyramid creates tailored journeys for groups of donors who **share a passion for a specific mission pillar**, along with similar demographic and psychographic traits, Intent, and Capacity to Give.
- **Emergency** represents both a distinct mission pillar and a donation stage.

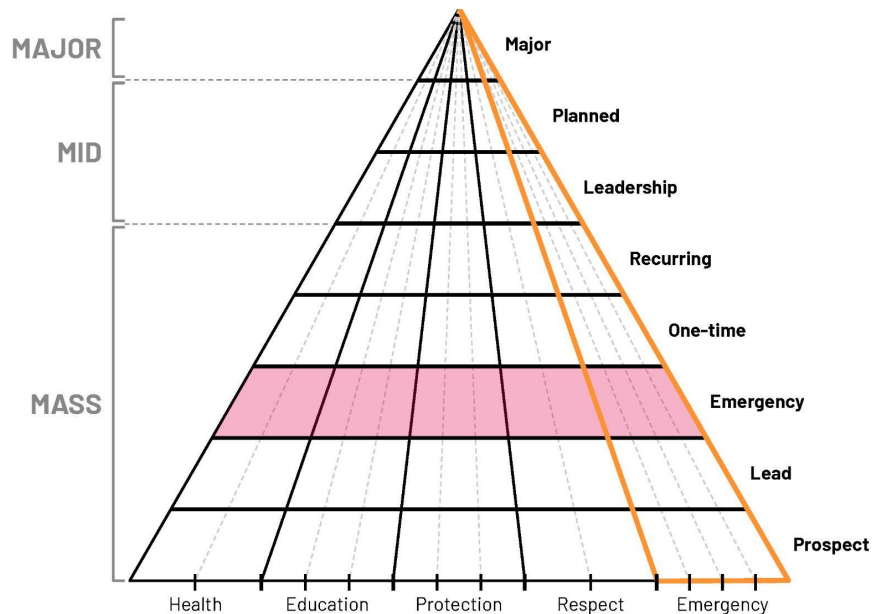


DIAGRAM 2

- **Every individual cell of the Audience-First Giving Pyramid represents a Content Asset** that this particular Audience of donors needs to see at a specific stage to **move them to the next Donation Stage**.

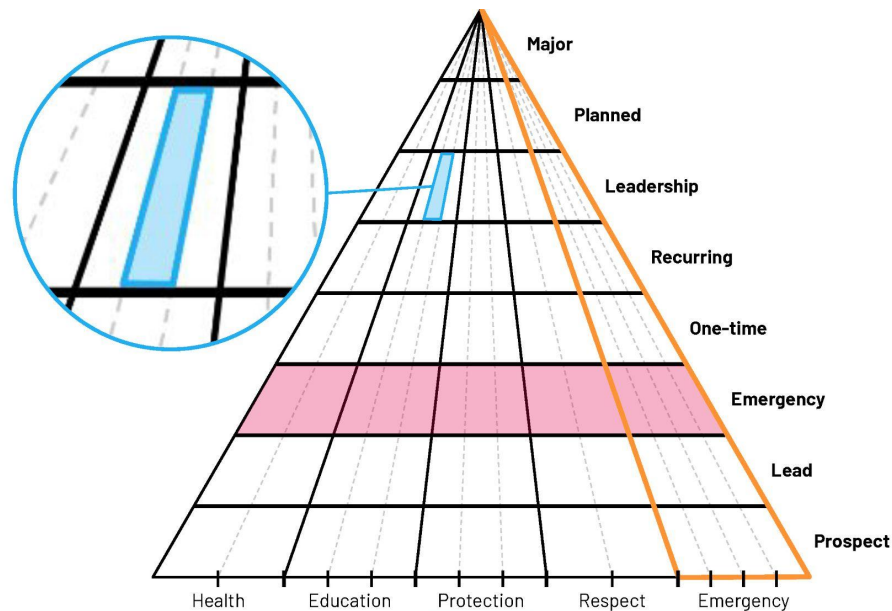


DIAGRAM 3

CHALLENGE	EXAMPLE: HOW THE AUDIENCE-FIRST GIVING PYRAMID SOLVES KEY CHARITY CHALLENGES
INCREASE IN COMPETITIVE BRAND LANDSCAPE	By focusing Brand Media on a smaller set of well-defined audiences and initiating personalized conversations aligned with the emotional affiliation of every donor , Charities can dominate the competition within those audiences and increase their brand recall, equity, momentum, consideration, quality, and familiarity.
REDUCED BUDGET	By defining a smaller set of well-defined audiences for Performance Media , Charities can set individual Audience-level objectives and only select audiences with the highest potential to donate or with the highest predicted LTV, while suppressing prospects with low predicted LTV.
SHRINKING DONOR AUDIENCE	As a part of the Data workstream, Charities can identify their existing donors who are at the risk of churning – therefore deploying either Performance Media to advance them to the next stage or Brand Media to maintain their involvement .
RISING MEDIA COSTS	By identifying the best audiences to target as part of the Data workstream , developing personalized Content that improves creative effectiveness , and relentless testing in Media workstreams, Charities' performance gains will continue to cover the ongoing media cost increase.
INCREASED NEED FOR BRAND AUDIENCE EXPANSION	By identifying not-yet-penetrated audiences and going after them regionally to minimize the cost of entry, Charities can expand its audience reach, while maintaining profitability .
3RD PARTY COOKIE DEPRECIATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of ability to target Look-a-Likes is overcome by the focus on durable Data sources and increased focus on Personalized Creative with the help of AI • Loss of ability to attribute revenue to an exact touchpoint is overcome by defining the objectives and measuring revenue at the Audience level.

- **Not every donor is ready to advance to the next donation stage at a given time.**
- **A successful full funnel Brand + Performance program should cater to the needs of these donors**, making them feel valued and included regardless of their monetary contributions.
- **Brand Media can be leveraged to remind such donors of their impact.**
- **Performance Media should be focused on those donors ready to advance up the giving pyramid.**
- Visually, certain vertical slices of the pyramid - certain Audiences - will never reach the Major Donor stage.

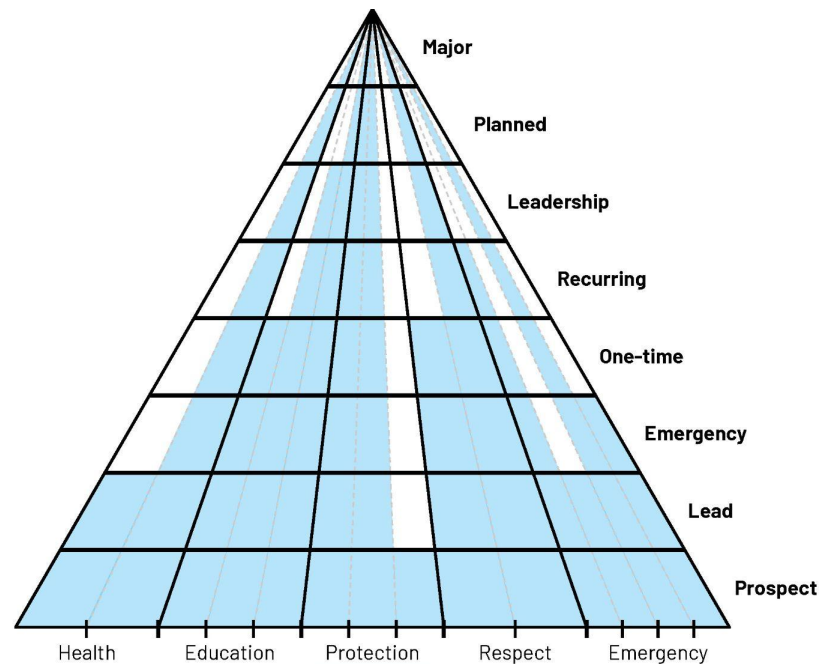


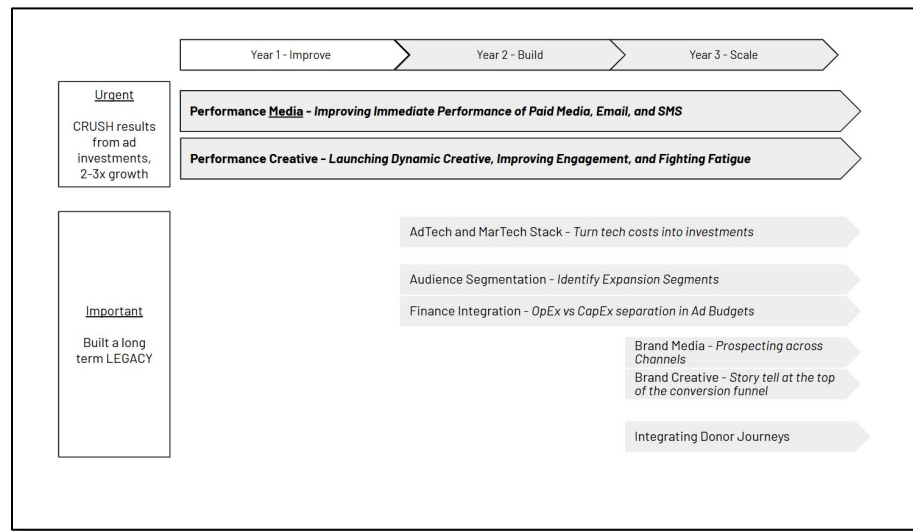
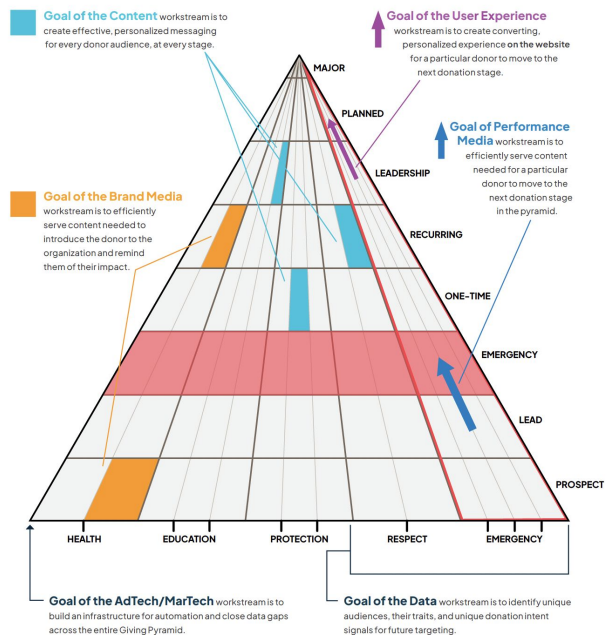
DIAGRAM 4

To implement the Audience-First Giving Pyramid, **show quick wins and create a foundation** to power sustained donor and gift growth.



A proven project includes 3 elements:

- **3-year timeframe**, with year 1 as “crawl” and year 3 as “run”
- **2 horizontal efforts**, with a short-term urgent effort and a long-term important effort
- **6 workstreams**, across key internal and external teams



3. Approach:

Short term: In year 1, small, consistent steps applied with the right process and mindset, increase paid ad efficiency and effectiveness, thus **increasing digital fundraising revenue by 2x to 3x**, and creating a foundation for internal integration and strategic and complex conversations. (refer to the appendix for examples).

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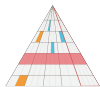
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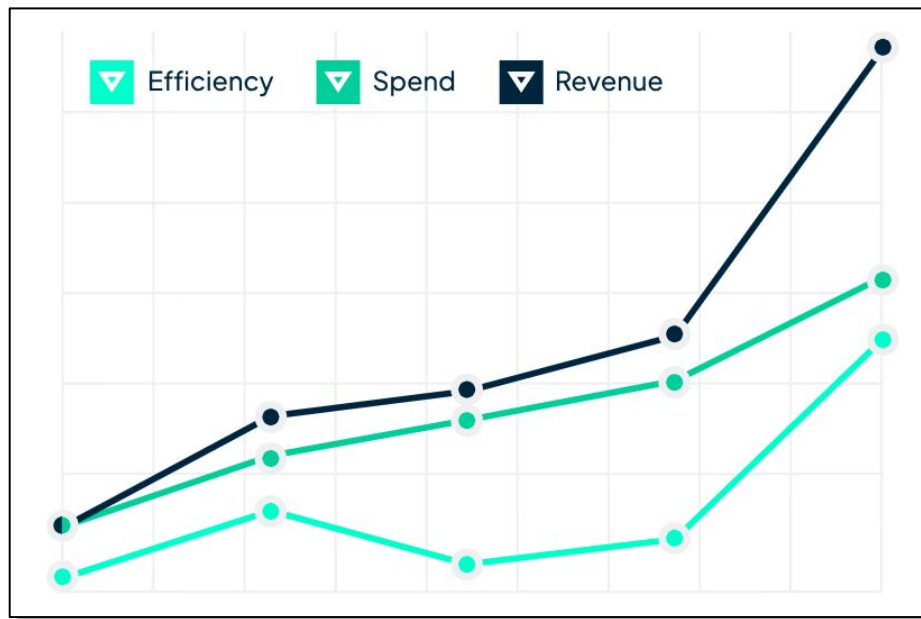


Exponential Value – is what we do at Delve Deeper.

1. Boost your ad investment efficiency.
2. Earn the right to grow your media investment.
3. Exponentially increase revenue and amplify impact.

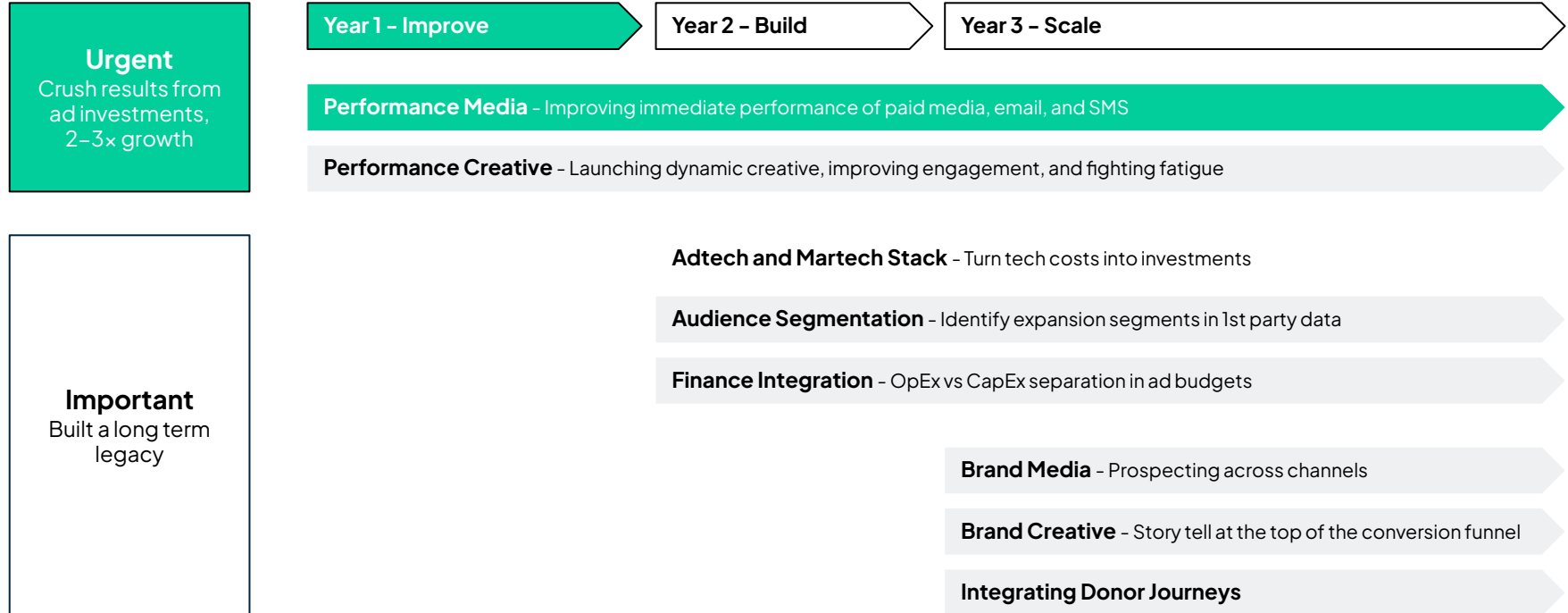
**We defy the law of diminishing returns—
empowering you to do much more,
with more.**

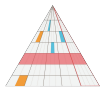
**The accompanying chart is based on a real
client's results. Over 6 years, we achieved
25x revenue increase.**





How can charities **increase donor revenues by 2 – 3x over a 12-month period?**





The right **Process** can generate **2x+ increases in donor revenues** – with the **same or flat digital advertising investments**. **Do more with the same.**





Every process needs a **mindset to match**.

A team with a **play-to-win mindset** will always push to maximize returns.



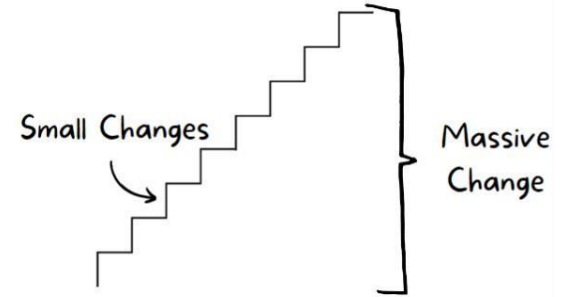
Fire In The Belly

Strong desire to succeed through enterprise and hard work



Highly-Functioning Team

Trust, healthy conflict, commitment, accountability, and results



Always Getting Better

Small, consistent and relentless steps lead to massive improvement in results

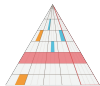


With the right mindset, hands-on media traders spend most of their time on aggressive optimization:

DELVE media traders are spending a minimum of 18 hours every week optimizing media, with the rest spent on planning and setup tasks. To be successful, **they need a Trading Process, in addition to a Trading Mindset.** Our process - called **Start / Stop / Continue** - is built to:

- Spend **70% of the Media Trader time and 70% of Campaign Budget** on refining Evergreen tactics
- Spend **10% of the Media Trader time and 10% of Campaign Budget** on scaling ongoing tests
- Spend **10% of the Media Trader time and 20% of Campaign Budget** on launching net-new tests
- Spend **10% of the Media Trader time** on cutting the non-performing tests and declining tactics

DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
HYGIENE - Check Setup	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 1 hour per day to review Pacing & Performance vs. KPIs for all live campaigns■ Check for ad disapprovals & troubleshoot if needed■ Check all tactics that were recently changed or launched to ensure they are performing as expected■ Check for Deliverability, Auction Winning, and Impression Share reports to validate we are not being outbid■ Check for undesired Competitor Conquesting activity■ Check budget segments■ Check Bid Automation and Bid Adjustments settings■ Check % share of Default Ads served				
Analysis to Inform STOP / START / CONTINUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2 hours to deep dive■ Focus on Inventory Dimensions such as Exchanges, Categories, Websites, Context (keywords), Position on Page, Viewability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2 hours, analyze the best performing Ad Groups to identify new audiences to launch and potential sub-line items - eg. separating Chrome browser with the budget increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2 hours to deep dive■ Focus on additional Dimensions such as Audiences and Keywords, bid adjustments, Creative, Audience performance - focus on Existing tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2 hours to Delve Deeper into the worst performing aspects of the campaign and identify what to Stop - keywords, line items, ad groups, audiences, ZIP codes, or retargeting to certain pages on the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 4 hours, weekly check to identify last-minute "Stop" candidates based on the most recent negative performance dynamics
CONTINUE - Refining Existing Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2 hours implement changes based on analysis■ For example, separate certain websites into direct PMP deals■ For example, pause underperforming Zip Codes and scale top-performing Zip Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 0 hours, Tuesdays are focused on new launches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 4 hours implement changes based on analysis - split out specific Branded KWs into stand-alone Ad Groups to maximize IS or split our ReProspecting line items into Recency buckets with varying Bidding Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2 hours implement changes based on analysis - eg. modify Ad Groups to include the day-performing aspects of the Stopped ones - keep 1 out of 5 newly tested keywords but put it on the Manual Bid setup	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 3 hours, modify exclusions - Negative keywords, negative bid adjustments - based on the most recent trends to save the weekend budget
START - Launching New Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 0 hours, Mondays are focused on analyzing the weekend results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2 hours, launch new Ad Groups based on the best performing audiences and technical dimensions - splitting best performers up with slight changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 0 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 3 hours, launch net-new tests not informed by historical data but by hypothesis for future performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 0 hours, we recommend avoiding Friday launches so that traders can closely monitor performance post-launch



Transforming CARE's Google PMax campaign to achieve 2x ROAS and 4x revenue

Delve Deeper helped improve CARE's ROAS and increase revenue significantly by auditing and optimizing the nonprofit's campaigns on Google's Performance Max platform.

Challenge

CARE asked Delve Deeper to improve its return on ad spend (RoAS) and grow revenue via digital marketing. The organization had been using Google's Performance Max (PMax) platform but found it delivered a lower RoAS and less revenue than expected.

Approach

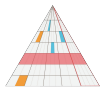
After an optimization audit, Delve Deeper restructured the campaign and created five distinct asset groups and trained PMax's algorithm to optimize targeting.

By aligning each asset group closely with the interests and behaviors of different audience segments, Delve Deeper enhanced the relevance and engagement of the ads, leading to better performance across all fronts.

Exceptional Results

We made significant improvements in a short timeframe and with limited budget:

- Increased RoAS by **209%** and budget by **73%** within 3 weeks.
- **Revenue rose 437%.**



LEUKEMIA &
LYMPHOMA
SOCIETY®

Helping the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society scale revenue despite lower media investments

Delve Deeper helped the LLS rapidly increase revenue during the year-end giving season despite budget constraints and rising media costs.

Challenge

The LLS tasked Delve Deeper with quickly onboarding and ramping up its paid ads program in Q4, while also generating critical year-end fundraising

With a highly competitive digital environment, CPCs up 384% in December and limited budgets, Delve Deeper needed to quickly optimize to maximize returns and grow donations.

Approach

Delve Deeper employed a results-driven paid media strategy tailored for LLS's year-end fundraising needs.

Delve Deeper's mantra of "outperforming performance" ensured continuous testing, real-time adjustments, advanced targeting, creative optimization, value-based bidding, and user experience enhancements to create personalized, high-impact ads that generated revenue.

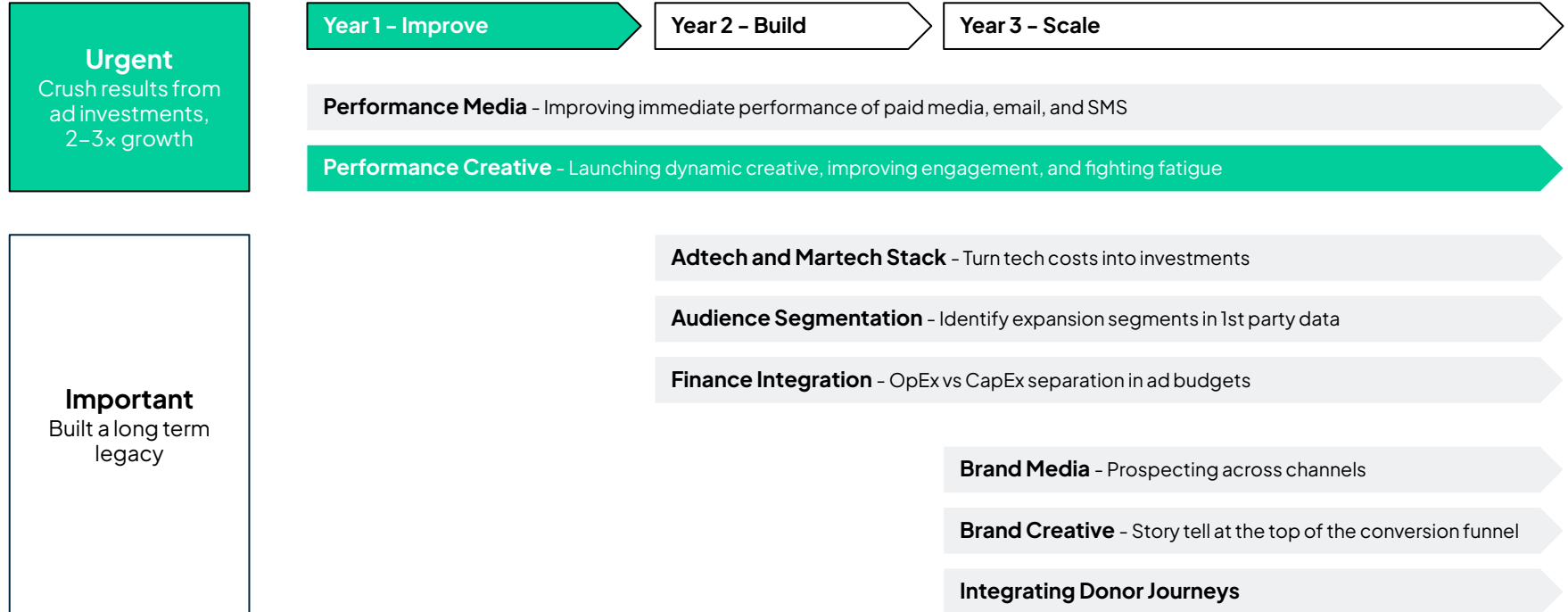
Exceptional Results

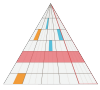
Exceptional results for LLS during the year-end campaign window:

- Despite a **5%** reduction in total media spend, **blended revenue across all our managed channels increased by 29% compared to the previous year.**
- Paid social had a **9%** increase in RoAS while spending **25%** less year-over-year.
- CVR increased by **102%**



How can charities **increase donor revenues by 2 – 3x over a 12-month period?**





Creative personalized to every micro-audience across the Giving Pyramid, with an audience-first approach to targeting, increases CTRs and contributes to higher RoAS.

unicef USA

ALERT

URGENT HELP NEEDED FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT

Don't stop helping the children in need.

DONATE TODAY

unicef USA

ALERT

EARTHQUAKE HITS SYRIA-TURKISH BORDER

UNICEF is on the ground responding to the needs of thousands impacted by the earthquake in Syria.

CONTRIBUTE NOW

unicef USA

THE PANDEMIC IS KEEPING GIRLS FROM RETURNING TO SCHOOL

SAVE HER SEAT

unicef USA

UNICEF won't stop working to brighten children's lives all around the world.

BRIGHTEN FUTURES

unicef USA

SEE WHERE YOUR DONATIONS GO

Match the cards to see the supplies your help provides children worldwide.

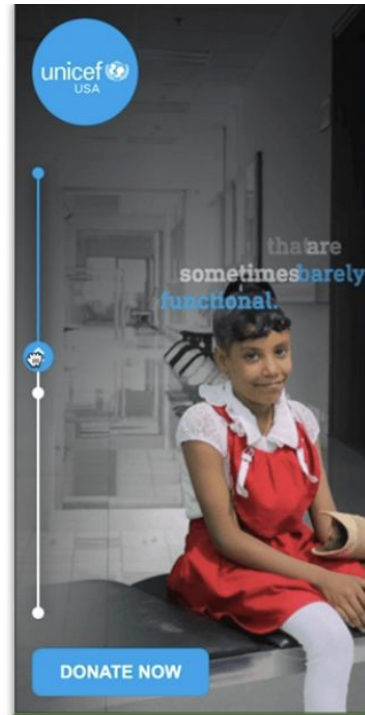
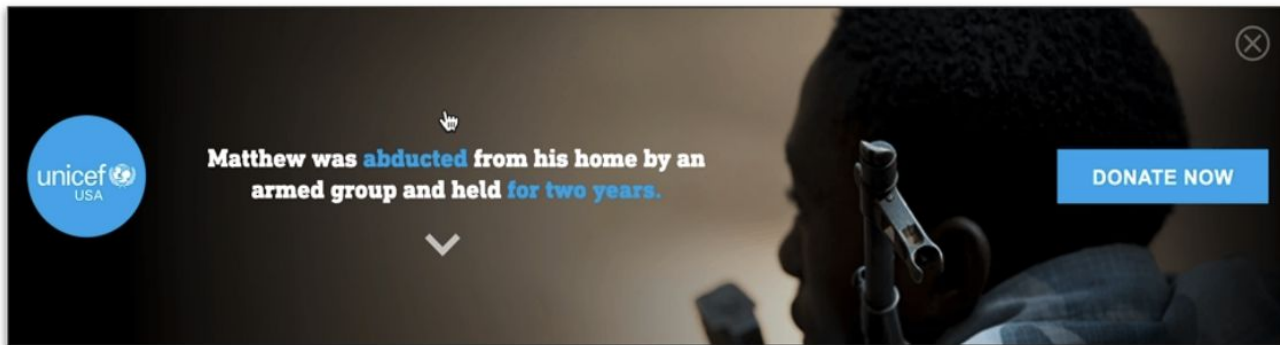
\$55 can provide 1 family hygiene kit

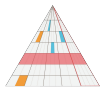
	HYGIENE	SHELTER	
	HYGIENE		
			SHELTER

START NOW



Creative personalized to every micro-audience across the Giving Pyramid, with an audience-first approach to targeting, increases CTRs and contributes to higher RoAS.





Driving double-digit digital revenue growth for Partners in Health with dynamic creative optimization

Delve Deeper helped PIH find new long-term donors through an omnichannel strategy that prioritized dynamic creative optimization, ensuring the right ads were seen by the right people at the right times.

Challenge

PIH needed to increase awareness and bring in Millennials with targeted, personalized advertising, while also re-engaging older donors who drifted away.

Approach

We designed a full-funnel digital strategy with emotionally engaging ads that aimed to convert casual browsers into long-term, committed donors.

With personalized ads, we converted interest into action in the form of one-time or recurring donations.

We used dynamic creative optimization to continuously test personalized ads while using retargeting strategies across channels, reaching people where they spent their time online.

Exceptional Results

We saw **dramatic results in just two months**, with new supporters discovering PIH through sophisticated ad placements:

- **An increase of 52% in digital revenue**
- An **81%** year-over-year increase in H1
- Strategic targeting delivered RoAS of **1.8x**
- ROoS grew by **98%** for programmatic, **89%** for SEM, and **48%** for social.

Creative



3. Approach:

Longer term: In years 2 and 3, increase in confidence from higher digital donor revenues enables close Fundraising to Technology partnership, **fundraising to finance alignment on OpEx and CapEx investments, with shared KPIs lowering internal siloes – powering a digital fundraising strategy** based on all the work streams in the Audience-First Giving Pyramid.

1. Trends:

Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management.

2. Challenges:

Digital ad costs continue to increase, ad platform algorithms prioritize Boomers due to their lower cost and higher value, with few marketers aggressively testing campaigns, and decline in "performance culture". Although every charity wants to move donors up the Giving Pyramid, focus on short term wins and lack of long term strategy stand in the way. Persistent internal siloes, hamper integrations across: brand and performance, marketing and fundraising, data and tech to enable "audience first" strategies, marketing and finance, and internal and external team. Lack of shared KPIs, across all internal silos, make it hard for charities to have a holistic "Audience First Giving Pyramid" approach to increasing digital fundraising impact.

3. Approach:

The Audience First Giving Pyramid enables charities to both crush short term results and built a lasting legacy.

Short term: In year 1, small, consistent steps applied with the right process and mindset, increase paid ad efficiency and effectiveness, thus increasing digital fundraising revenue and creating a foundation for internal integration and strategic and complex conversations. (refer to the Appendix for examples).

Longer term: In years 2 and 3, increase in confidence from higher digital donor revenues enables close Fundraising to Technology partnership, Fundraising to Finance alignment on OpEx and CapEx investments, with shared KPIs lowering internal siloes – powering a digital fundraising strategy based on all the work streams in the "Audience-First Giving Pyramid."

Delve Deeper:

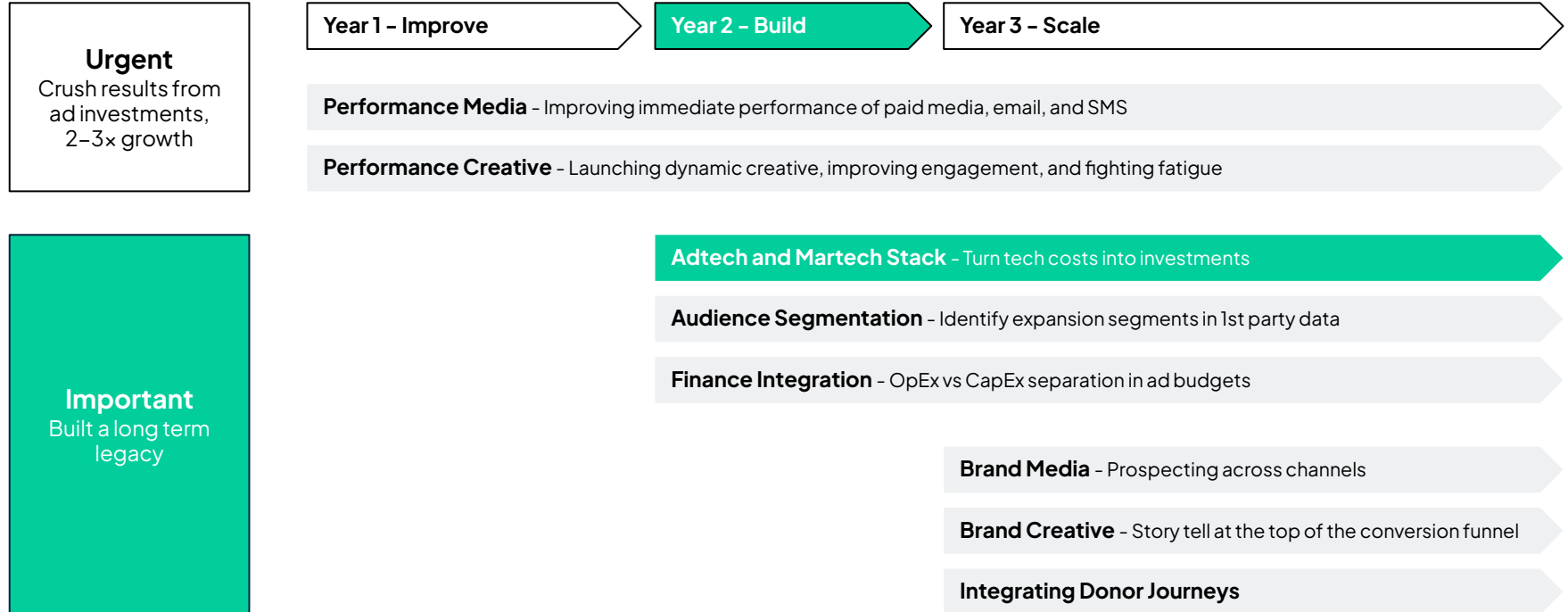
How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

Critical questions for charities:

How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?

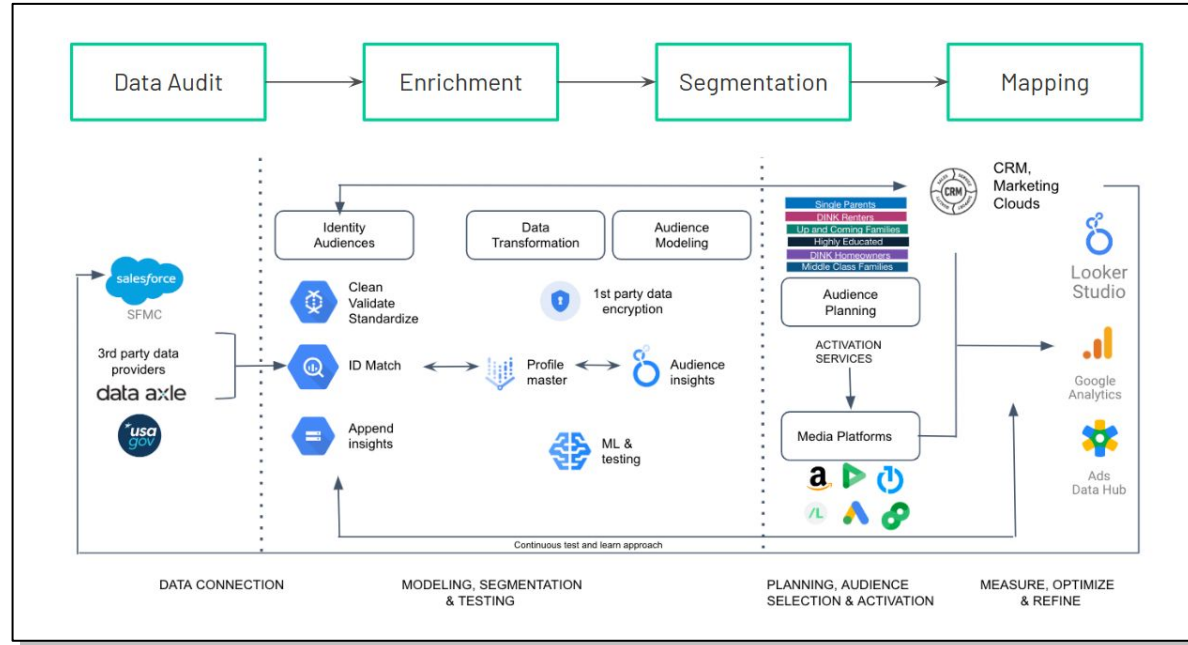


How to avoid pyramid collapse by **turning technology expenses, into technology investments.**





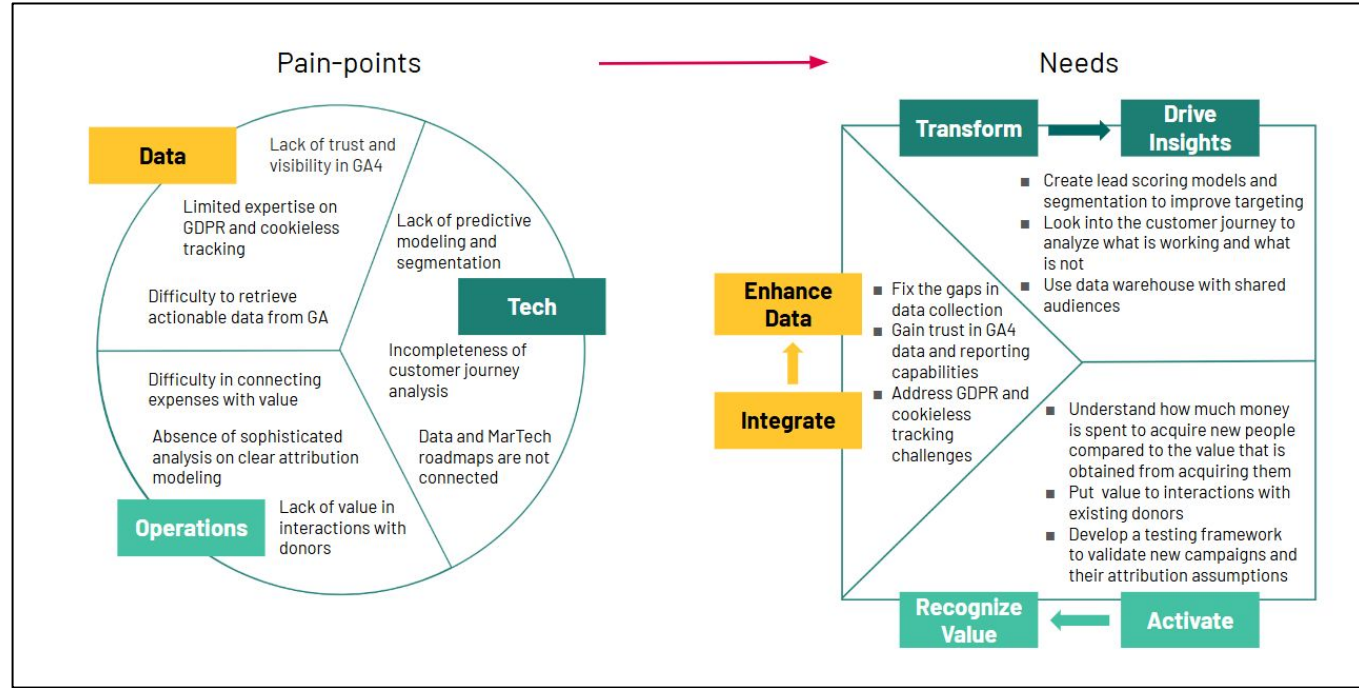
Turn costly technology into a valuable asset with adtech infrastructure that enables personalization at scale.

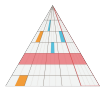


Each **micro-audience** is mapped to the right **micro-affinity** across the whole Giving Pyramid donor journey.



With **a modern tech stack**, charities can start to collect data across the whole donor journey and build a cohesive view on the Giving Pyramid using **an audience-first strategy**.





Helping UnicefUSA improve long-term prospects

Delve Deeper worked with UUSA to improve long-term donor prospects by guiding it through its first significant push into first-party data and machine-learning modeling in digital marketing.

Challenge

Like many nonprofits, Unicef USA has long relied on older audiences, namely baby boomers, for a significant portion of annual donations.

Unicef USA needs to recruit younger generations and grow them into long-term donors. With limited marketing dollars to spend, nonprofits can struggle to meet their donation goals, and they often don't have internal resources to identify ways to improve their marketing efficiency.

Approach

We focused on finding new, high-value audiences through UUSA's first-party data, our Audience First Giving Pyramid framework, and conducting six tests to boost reach.

Our integrated approach combined technology, data, and media to build predictive models to identify high-value donors and serve them personalized content.

Our data science team utilized look-alike (LAL) audiences to find and engage net-new donors. And we boosted efficiency by focusing ad dollars only on those high-value audiences.

Exceptional Results

Our strategy helped Unicef USA harness advanced data and technology paired with effective media activation.

- Increased incremental revenue by \$1 million over two years.
- Improved conversion rate for the six tests conducted.



How to avoid pyramid collapse by **prioritizing more and new younger mass donors** who have higher donor lifetime value.

Urgent

Crush results from
ad investments,
2–3× growth

Important

Built a long term
legacy

Year 1 – Improve

Year 2 – Build

Year 3 – Scale

Performance Media – Improving immediate performance of paid media, email, and SMS

Performance Creative – Launching dynamic creative, improving engagement, and fighting fatigue

Adtech and Martech Stack – Turn tech costs into investments

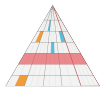
Audience Segmentation – Identify expansion segments in 1st party data

Finance Integration – OpEx vs CapEx separation in ad budgets




Brand Media – Prospecting across channels

Brand Creative – Story tell at the top of the conversion funnel

Integrating Donor Journeys

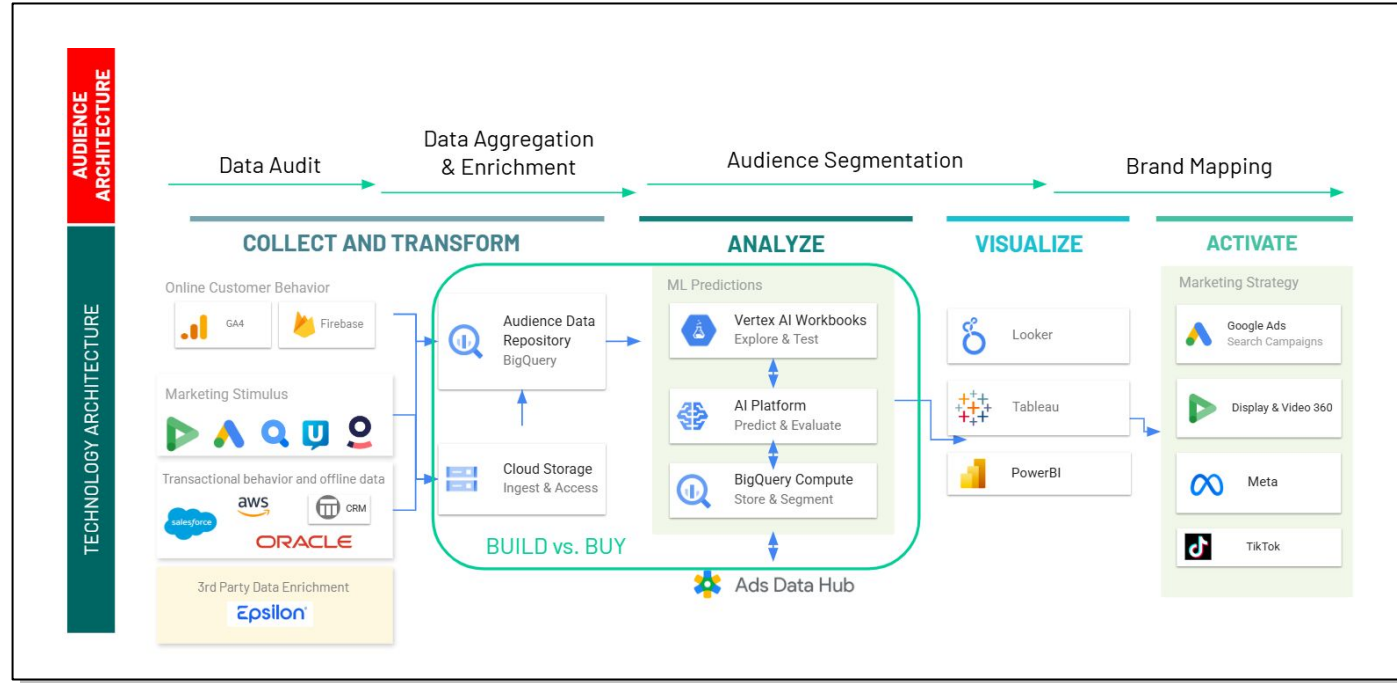


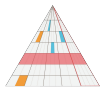
Segment all existing first-party audiences to **identify Super Donors** – those with highest lifetime value – by separating existing file into a number of small micro-audiences.

		COST TO ACQUIRE	UPFRONT REVENUE	ONGOING REVENUE	TOTAL REVENUE
OBSCESS ABOUT →	 Super Donors	\$\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$
	 Core Middle	\$\$	\$\$	\$	\$
ACTIVELY SUPPRESS →	 Distractors	\$\$	\$	-	(\$)



The right adtech and martech infrastructure will power the Audience First Giving Pyramid and enable micro-audience targeting across all major ad platforms.

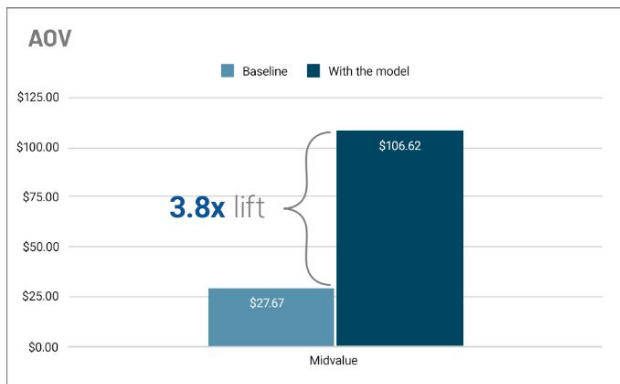




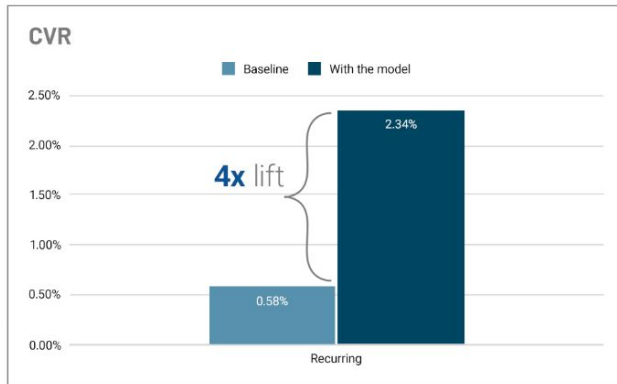
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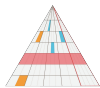
- **Mid-Value Model** – Identifies current donors with propensity to give more than the average donation amount. For these donors, display higher sliding scale
- **Recurring Donor Propensity** – Model the donor file with an RFM approach. Output score for this model indicates a donors propensity to become a recurring donor.

Mid-Value Donor Model



Recurring Donor Model





How Delve Deeper helped greater good charities achieve record EOY success

Delve Deeper helped GGC overcome declining organic engagement, leveraging data-driven strategies in highly optimized paid advertising campaigns.

Challenge

GGC faced growing pressure to achieve more with the same amount of resources.

Organic donor engagement was declining, making unpaid channels less likely for donor acquisition and retention. Paid campaigns were underperforming, RoAS was low, and first-party data didn't bring much

Approach

We focused on precision and efficiency in paid media strategies, starting with cleaning up GGC's first-party data, segmenting donors and enabling our audience-first approach.

After various tests, we prioritized high-return paid search and programmatic advertising and dynamically adjusted campaigns to optimize performance in real time.

Exceptional Results

GGC nearly doubled the original paid media RoAS goal:

- Generated 258% more donor revenue in second half of 2024.
- Exceeded paid media revenue target by 2x
- RoAS went up up 37%.



How to avoid pyramid collapse by **earning the right for incremental CapEx investments to power Tech and Data investments**, through close collaboration with Finance.

Urgent

Crush results from ad investments, 2–3x growth

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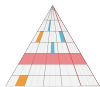
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Integrating Donor Journeys



A 2x increase in year 1 revenue with the same ad budget helps **redefine conversations with finance**. **Conversations move from “costs” to focus on “investments.”**

One key element of discussion: what is **OpEx** and what is **CapEx**?

OpEx

Advertising budget

Creative budget

Partner fees

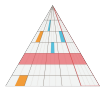
VS.

CapEx

Data stack

Technology stack

Data science resources



A 2x+ increase in year 1 revenue with the same ad budget helps redefine conversations with finance. Pro forma allows development, marketing, and finance to project the revenue impact, **turning costs into investments** and showcasing trade-offs.

		SCENARIOS	MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4	MONTH 5	MONTH 6	MONTH 7	MONTH 8	MONTH 9	MONTH 10	MONTH 11	MONTH 12
STATUS QOO	OUTPUT	Sum of annual revenues	\$57,593,393	\$56,917,375	\$56,253,341	\$55,603,867	\$54,968,497	\$54,346,786	\$53,738,304	\$53,142,635	\$52,559,376	\$51,988,137	\$51,428,541	\$50,880,223
	OUTPUT	MoM change	NA	-1.2%	-1.2%	-1.2%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-1.1%
		SCENARIOS	MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4	MONTH 5	MONTH 6	MONTH 7	MONTH 8	MONTH 9	MONTH 10	MONTH 11	MONTH 12
DELVE PROPOSAL	OUTPUT	Sum of annual revenues	\$57,996,307	\$57,730,205	\$57,463,365	\$57,258,590	\$57,055,626	\$56,874,226	\$56,714,156	\$56,575,193	\$56,457,122	\$56,359,742	\$56,282,861	\$56,226,300
	OUTPUT	MoM change	NA	-0.5%	-0.4%	-0.4%	-0.4%	-0.3%	-0.3%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.1%
Incremental Value (in-month)			\$402,914	\$812,830	\$1,230,024	\$1,654,723	\$2,087,129	\$2,527,440	\$2,975,652	\$3,432,558	\$3,897,746	\$4,371,605	\$4,854,320	\$5,346,077



How to avoid pyramid collapse by **prioritizing more and new younger mass donors** who have higher donor lifetime value.

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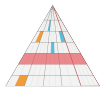
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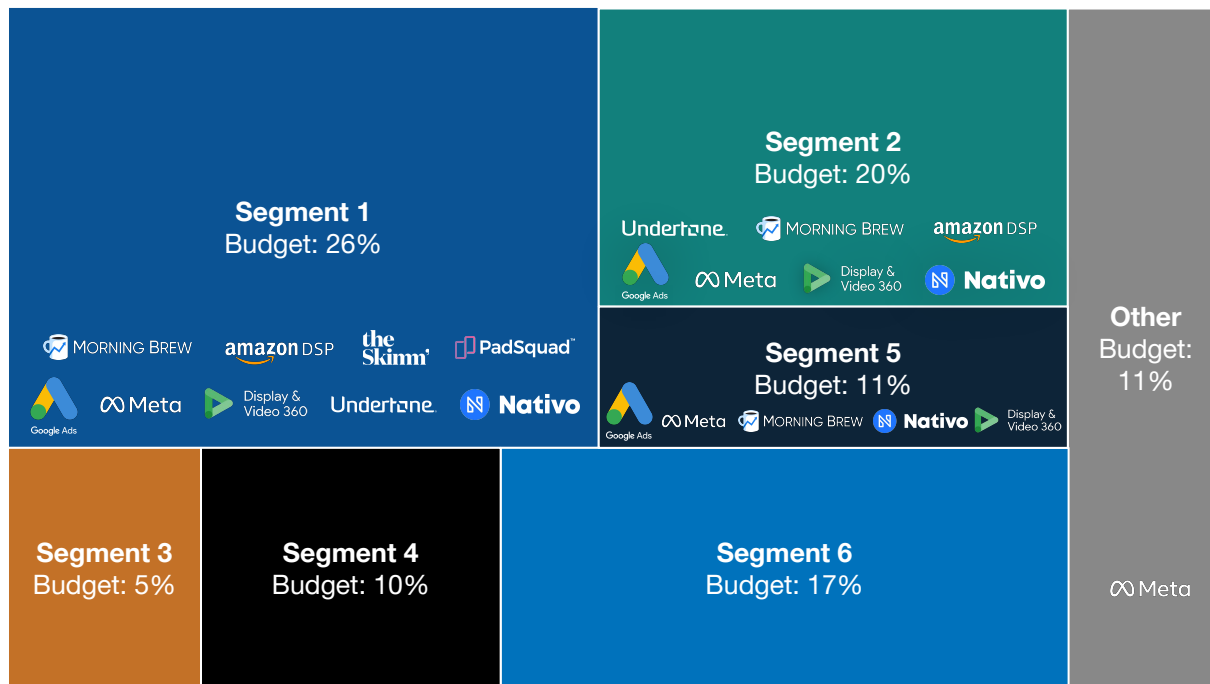
Brand Media – Prospecting across channels

Brand Creative – Story tell at the top of the conversion funnel

Integrating Donor Journeys



Focus Brand Media, on top of the funnel prospecting, guided by an audience-first strategy that's separate from Performance media, with separate but shared KPIs.





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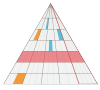
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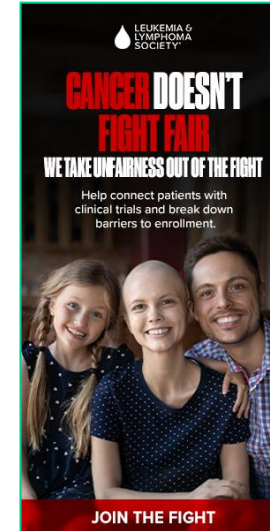
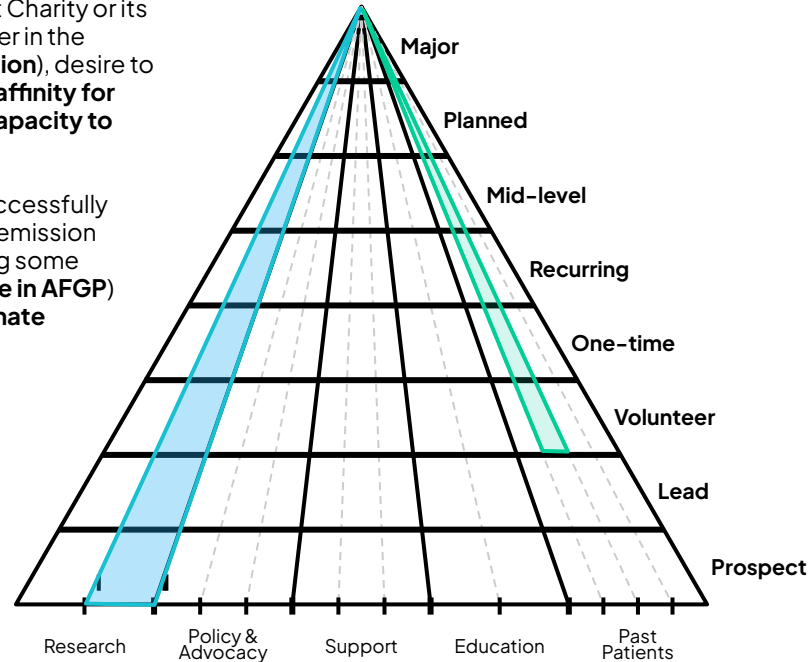
Integrating Donor Journeys



Story-tell with brand creative that's focuses on unique micro-audiences, with an audience-first approach to targeting.

John Smith – low awareness about Charity or its mission, but history of blood cancer in the family (**affinity for the overall mission**), desire to contribute to advancing science (**affinity for the specific pillar**) and high HHI (**capacity to donate**).

Jane Simms – past patient who successfully survived lymphoma and is now in remission (**affinity for the mission**), attending some walks with Charity (**volunteer stage in AFGP**) but has lower HHI (**capacity to donate is lower than John's**).





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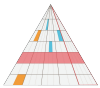
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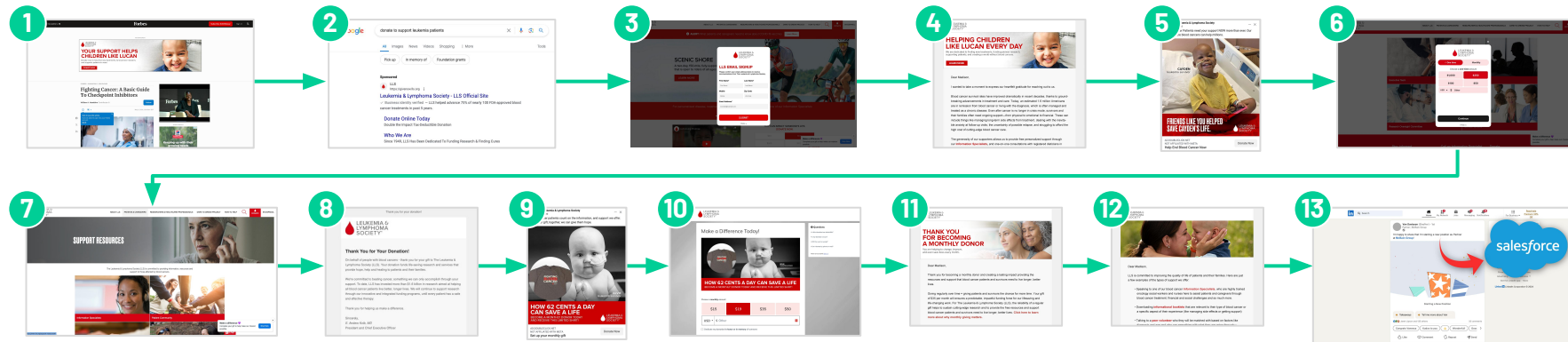
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Integrating Donor Journeys



Consider the complete Donor Journey, across the Audience First Giving Pyramid – **to maximize the value of every interaction**, from the first impression, to a recurring donation.



Tech

Data

Media

Delve Deeper:

How does Delve Deeper,
a performance media
agency, enable charities
to generate
exceptional revenues
from digital
fundraising?

1. Trends:

Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management .

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**Technology Sales
& Implementation**

**Largest Independent
Google and
Amazon Partner**

**Data Science
& Engineering**

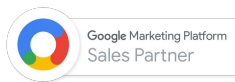
**Google Cloud's
Marketing Analytics
Partner of the Year**

**Performance Media
Optimization**

**\$250M per year under
management across
digital channels**

DELVE DEEPER[▼]

powered by





Marketing Analytics

Google **Cloud Partner** of the Year



Best Use Of Data in **Performance Marketing**

AdExchanger



Performance Programmatic Media Campaigns

Top Programmatic Media Player



Best **First Party Data** Strategy in Digital Media

AdExchanger



Most Effective **First Party Data** Strategy

DRUM AWARDS Digital Industries



Best Use Of **Audience** Insights

DIGIDAY Media Awards



Best Use Of Data By An Agency & **Most Innovative Measurement** Approach

AdExchanger

NOT-FOR-PROFIT



FOR-PROFIT



RECENT WINS



APPENDIX

APPENDIX:

Critical questions for charities to discuss internally:

How to **increase internal alignment and integration**, to generate higher returns from digital fundraising and Individual Giving?

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Over the next several years, established charities may face pyramid collapse. Charities looking to introduce Millennials and Gen Z to their mission, face an increasingly fragmented and cost prohibitive Digital advertising environment. Personalization in messaging enables charities to reflect donors' needs and makes donors feel heard, a key to getting through to younger donors. Donors want to see unedited, raw and authentic creative, but creative costs are high and an audience-driven personalization at scale requires a unified brand and performance media management .

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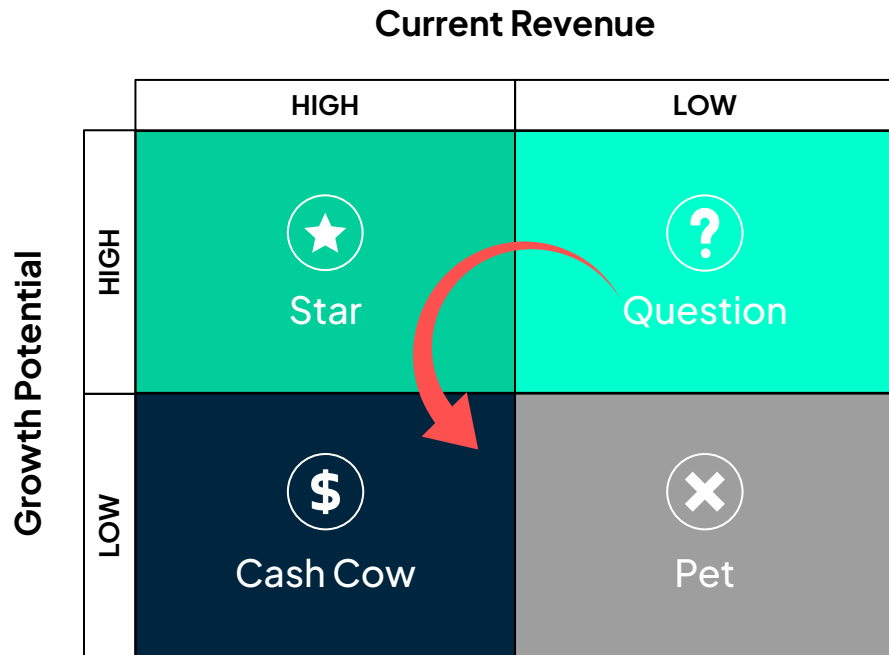
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How do we enable charities to maximize revenues from digital fundraising?

APPENDIX: Critical questions for charities:

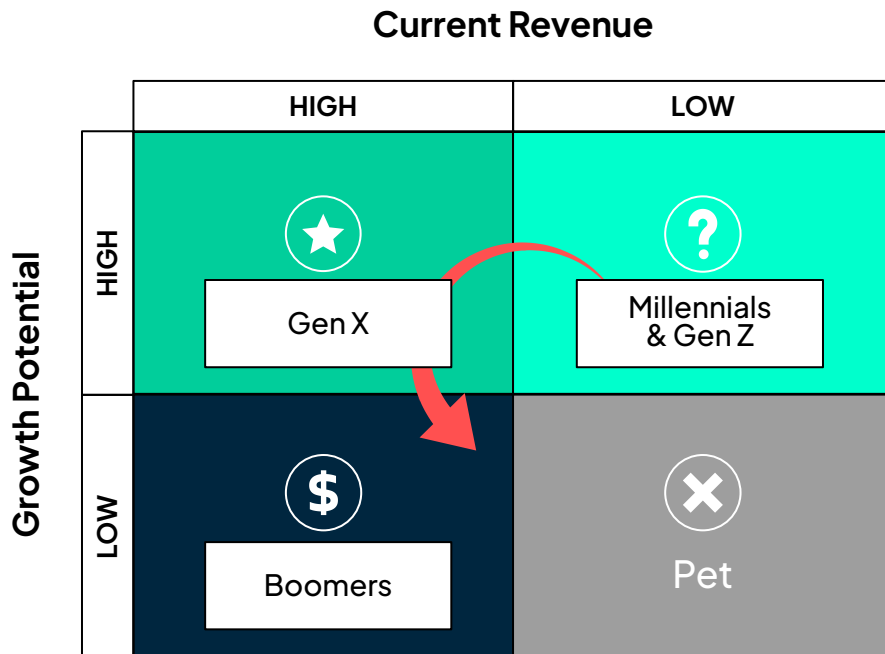
How to increase internal alignment and integration, to generate higher returns from digital investments?

BCG, Revenue Share Matrix



BCG

Age, Revenue Share Matrix



Please discuss internally at your Charity:

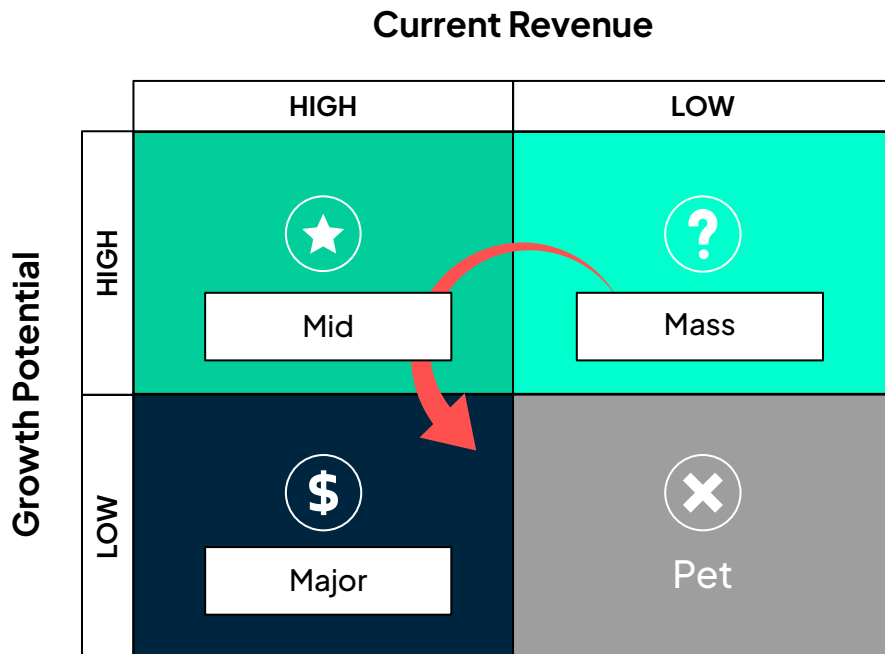
Do we continue to pursue crafting a 30-Year legacy by:

measuring what matters - ie having an explicit target to acquire a certain number of Millennial and Gen Z donors, measuring it separately and treating as importantly as the overall revenue goal,

AND

while continuing to increase share of wallet among Gen X and Boomers to hit immediate Revenue goals?

Donor Tiers, Revenue Share Matrix



Please discuss internally at your Charity:

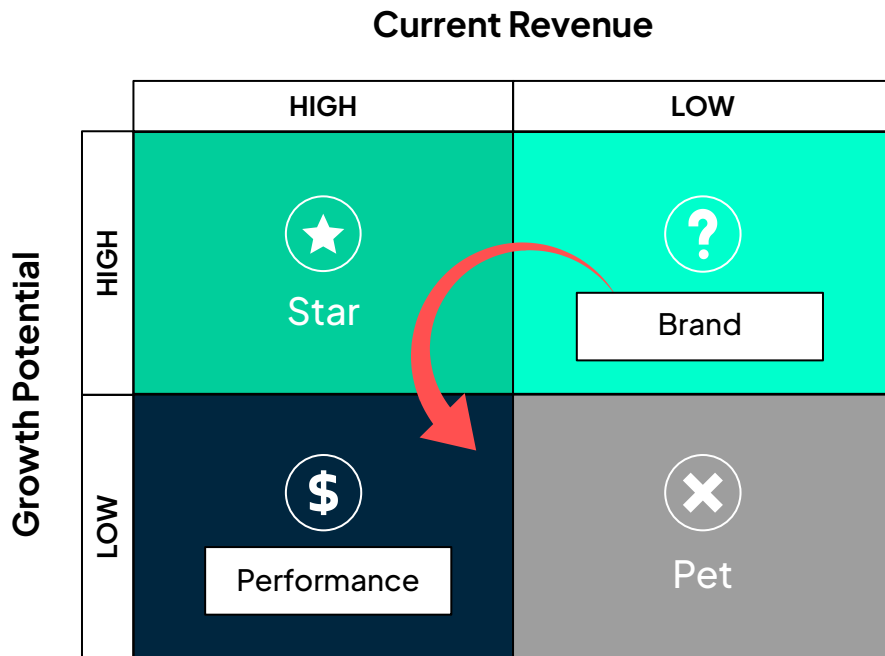
Do we:

Agree that Mid-Level donors are “stars”?

If yes – do we explicitly allocate a share of Digital budget to Mid-level donors, giving them an Individual Giving Officer-like experience, and measure it with different KPIs, as well as showing how people move from segment to segment,

while **continuing to target Mass tier** to drive immediate donations and grow their revenue share?

Digital Media Investments, Revenue Share Matrix



Please discuss internally at your Charity:

Do we:

Separate Brand and Performance KPIs, focusing Brand media dollars on acquiring High Potential Younger Donors,

while continuing to focus Performance media dollars on RoAS target regardless of the audience composition?

Do we also **allocate separate share of the budget to the Mid-level donors** aka “stars”, or do we make it a part of Brand or Performance?

¹ The Wall Street Journal, "[Musk and Ramaswamy: The Doge Plan to Reform Government, Supreme Court Guidance, End Executive Power Grab](#)".

² Indiana University ScholarWorks, "[The Philanthropy Outlook 2024–2025 Report](#)".

³ Philanthropy Circuit, "[Strategies for Building Sustainable Funding Models for Nonprofit Organizations](#)".

⁴ The Modern Nonprofit, "[Maximizing Nonprofit Impact: A Roadmap to Sustainable Fundraising](#)".

⁵ CCS Fundraising, "[How Small Donors Become Major Donors: Analyzing Major Donor Pathways](#)".

⁶ Giving USA, "2024 Report".

⁷ Giving USA, "2024 Report".

⁸ Giving Tuesday, "[FEP Report](#)".

⁹ Large Delve Deeper US based charity.

⁹ McKinsey Global Institute, "[The Next Big Arenas of Competition](#)".

¹⁰ Large Delve Deeper US based charity.

¹¹ Nonprofit Resource Hub, "[Nonprofit Marketing Trends for 2025](#)".

¹² Fundraise, "[X Marks the Donors: A Nonprofit's Guide to Creating a Donor Journey Map](#)".

¹³ DeepSync, "[2025 Data and Fundraising Trends for Nonprofits](#)".

¹⁴ Donor Wrangler, "[Create Consistent and Effective Touchpoints](#)".

¹⁵ eMarketer, "[Share of Total US Users on Select Digital Platforms by Generation, 2024](#)".

¹⁶ eMarketer, "[US Podcast Ad Spending, 2019–2024 \(in millions\)](#)".

¹⁷ Axios, "Spotify, The Trade Desk Announce Ad Exchange Partnership".

¹⁸ eMarketer, "[US CTV: Time Spent vs. Share of Ad Revenues](#)".

¹⁹ eMarketer.

²⁰ eMarketer, "[Where US Consumers Start Their Search for Online Shopping](#)".

²¹ Digiday, "[Why the Lines Between Digital Advertising and Direct Mail Are Blurring](#)".

²² Digiday, "[In Rocky Digital Advertising Landscape, Advertisers Reconsider Direct Mail](#)".

²³ Digiday, "[Why the Lines Between Digital Advertising and Direct Mail Are Blurring](#)".

²⁴ Digiday, "[Why the Lines Between Digital Advertising and Direct Mail Are Blurring](#)".

²⁵ eMarketer.

²⁶ 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer, “[Global Report](#)”.

²⁷ Nonprofit Fundraising, “[18 Motivations for Donors to Give to Your Nonprofit](#)”.

²⁸ RallyUp, “[The Psychology of Giving: Understanding Donor Motivations](#)”.

²⁹ The Charity CFO, “[The Psychology of Fundraising: Why Do Donors Give?](#)”.

³⁰ McKinsey & Company, “[The Value of Getting Personalization Right – or Wrong- Is Multiplying](#)”.

³¹ McKinsey & Company, “[A Technology Blueprint for Personalization at Scale](#)”.

³² Forbes, “[The Future of Personalization Depends on First-Party Behavioral Data](#)”.

³³ Adobe, “[Fuel Personalization at Scale with a Unified Data Foundation](#)”.

³⁴ DSC, “[Seven Common Funding Headaches for Charities and What You Can Do About It](#)”.

³⁵ CAF, “[Challenges and Opportunities Facing the Charity Sector](#)”.

³⁶ Menzies, “[Charity & Not for Profit Key Challenges](#)”.

³⁷ Forbes, “[The Do's and Don'ts for Creating an IT Budget That Wins Executive Buy-In for Nonprofits and Higher Education Institutions](#)”.

³⁸ The Wall Street Journal, “[Sorry, Mad Men. The Ad Revolution Is Here.](#)”.

³⁹ The Wall Street Journal, “[Advertising Firms Omnicom and Interpublic Nearing Merger That Would Reshape Industry](#)”.

⁴⁰ Forbes, “[How Generative AI Is Disrupting Today's Advertising Agency Model](#)”.

⁴¹ Forbes.

⁴² HuffPost, “[Millennials Want Brands to Be More Authentic](#)”.

⁴³ Social Media Today, “[Survey Finds Consumers Crave Authenticity and User-Generated Content](#)”.

⁴⁴ eMarketer, “[Authenticity Key to Reaching Gen Z Consumers](#)”.

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Thanks for reading.
How can we help?

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*"Well-orchestrated digital strategies can mitigate and reverse pyramid collapse by attracting younger donors, **doubling or tripling digital fundraising revenues (within a 12 month period)** with flat media investments, and knitting internal and external teams together to leverage resources more efficiently."*

–Anton Lipkanou

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Creating exceptional value through
performance media.