



A NONPROFIT'S GUIDE TO

Recurring Giving



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Introduction

Welcome to A Nonprofit's Guide to Recurring Giving, where we'll discuss why recurring giving is so important and effective and how you can build a strong program at your own nonprofit.

Monthly giving is a hot topic among fundraising professionals. Whether your organization needs to create a recurring donations program from scratch or you have some monthly donors but aren't doing much to strengthen and grow the community, this guide can help. Investing time in developing your program can have a huge impact on the long-term financial health of your organization.

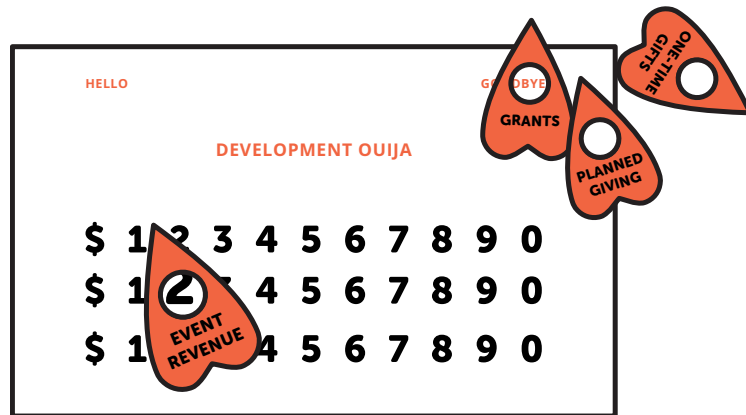
Read on to learn how to recruit donors, promote the monthly giving option, and grow the program over time. Let's get started!

Chapter 1

Why You Need Recurring Giving

Development is the unsung hero at many nonprofit organizations. While there are some organizations that rely mostly on grants and major gifts, most development departments are constantly working to acquire and retain donors. And the process can be exhausting.

In the State of the Nonprofit Sector 2014 Survey, 41 percent of respondents said “achieving long-term financial sustainability” was a top challenge.¹ Furthermore, nearly three quarters of charitable giving comes from individual donations, meaning development teams are always working to keep them satisfied.² Recurring giving is a huge component to building sustainability because it provides stable income that organizations can rely on and plan for.



Development teams must contend with lots of unpredictable revenue sources.

What Is Recurring Giving?

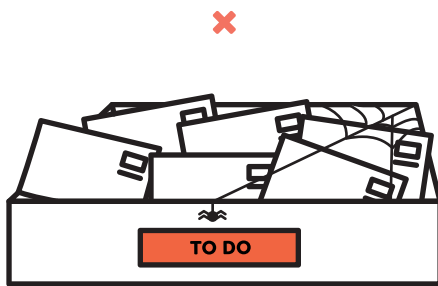
A **recurring gift** is when a donor gives repeatedly to an organization, usually at an interval of once per month. The giver chooses how much they contribute and they can suspend or end their donations at

¹ Nonprofit Finance Fund. "State of the Nonprofit Sector 2014 Survey." http://nonprofitfinancefund.org/files/docs/2014/2014survey_brochure.pdf

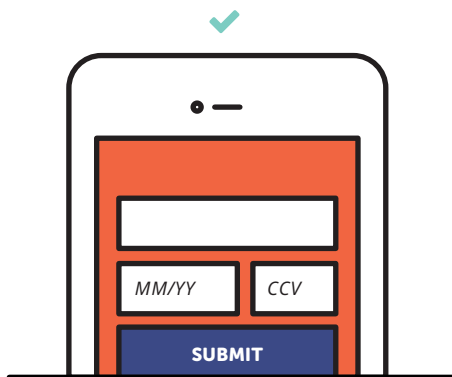
² Charity Navigator. "Giving Statistics." <http://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm/bay/content.view/cpid/42#.VS6rufnF-So>

any time. These are people who have chosen to make an ongoing investment in your work. At most nonprofits, recurring giving is also called **monthly giving**.

In the past, these monthly donations might have been sent through the mail by check, but nowadays a donor can give their payment information once and have the money automatically donated.



Historically, nonprofits might send donors a year's worth of pre-addressed envelopes. Donors could easily misplace or forget to mail them.



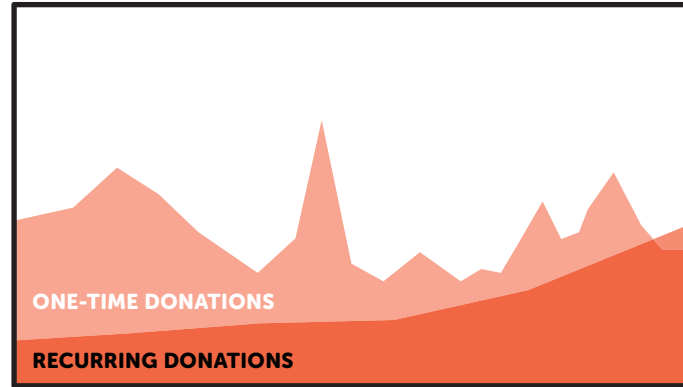
Now, donors need only enter their payment information once to set up an automatically recurring gift.

Bringing Stability to Nonprofits

Nonprofits in all cause sectors have been fundraising with recurring giving programs for decades. Part of what makes monthly giving so important is that it is predictable. Many organizations operate under constant financial uncertainty. With economic flux and the constant need to apply and reapply for grants, nonprofits often can't count on the same large disbursements year-over-year.

Individual giving campaigns, meanwhile, are often seasonal and cyclical. The donations might be plentiful during the holiday season and your big spring campaign, but what about the months in between? Feast and famine is a stressful and dangerous way to operate any organization. An unexpected expense or an unsuccessful campaign could derail your programs and impact.

Think of your own personal finances. Like many people, you probably budget based on your monthly income. What if you only received paychecks three or four times each year? And they weren't even at regular intervals? And you didn't know how much you would receive? You wouldn't be able to plan or budget for anything.



With monthly giving, you have a base income that one-time gifts supplement.

Recurring giving provides a sort of monthly income to nonprofits and helps them sustain and grow their work over time.

Boost Donor Lifetime Value

Having a stable stream of income isn't the only advantage of recurring giving programs. It also helps you maximize the annual contributions of donors and increase donor lifetime value.

Consider how monthly giving might affect the contribution of a single donor. Let's say you have a 20-something supporter named Cindy. In the past year, she has made two \$25 dollar gifts. You could ask her to make a small monthly gift instead, perhaps \$10. In just one year, Cindy would give \$120, more than doubling her annual contribution.


Like a savings account or 401K plan, small monthly donations add up to big sums over time. Monthly donors are also more likely to continue giving year-over-year than one-time donors.³ This means that

³ The Nonprofit Times. "State of the Nonprofit Sector 2014 Survey." <http://www.thenonproffitimes.com/news-articles/keeping-monthly-donors-is-worth-the-effort/>

Cindy would not only give \$120 in her first year, she is also more likely to continue her support next year. Even if Cindy never increases the size of her monthly gift, she has the potential to give thousands in her lifetime.

As you continue to engage and communicate with Cindy, though, you can periodically ask her to increase her gift. Monthly donors are more likely to sustain or increase their gifts than decrease them.

YEAR	MONTHLY DONATION	ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION
2015	\$5	\$60
2016	\$10	\$120
2017	\$10	\$120
2018	\$15	\$180
2019	\$25	\$300
2020	\$25	\$300
2021	\$25	\$300
2022	\$35	\$420
2023	\$35	\$420
2024	\$50	\$600



**10-YEAR
DONOR VALUE**

\$2,820

Asking a donor to commit to supporting you monthly can result in huge increases in their donor lifetime value. Network for Good found that in one year, the average recurring donor gave 42 percent more than those who made one-time gifts.⁴

To sum it up, recurring giving can result in

- **Higher donor retention**
- **Bigger annual contributions**
- **Increased donor lifetime value**

Sounds pretty good, right?

⁴ Network for Good. "Why Recurring Gifts Matter." http://www.nonprofithub.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/recurring-gift_infographic.jpg

Your Recurring Giving Program

Although monthly giving has a strong presence in religious organizations and public radio, there are still many nonprofits that don't have a recurring giving program. There are plenty of other organizations who make monthly giving an option, but don't promote and celebrate the program.

Recurring giving is like any worthwhile endeavor—you get out of it what you put into it.

To cultivate sustaining support, you must set goals, define and brand your recurring giving program, create compelling appeals, and offer great donor stewardship.

CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY

- **Recurring giving can bring financial stability to nonprofits** by providing reliable monthly income.
- **Monthly donors are more likely to continue giving** to a nonprofit year over year.
- **Even small monthly donations can add up** and donors can continue or increase their support for years to come.

Chapter 2

Planning: Goals, Audience, and Launch

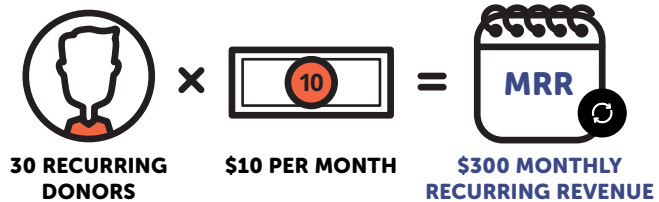
The process of building a robust recurring giving program starts with identifying your goals, analyzing your audience, and planning a campaign to promote monthly giving.

Recurring Giving Goals

Any fundraising initiative should have goals, of which the primary one is usually revenue. This remains true for recurring giving campaigns, but there are other metrics to consider as well. An important step to planning your monthly giving program is to set goals and make a plan to achieve them.

Some ways to measure success are...

- **Monthly Recurring Revenue (MRR).** This is the income you can expect to receive each month from your recurring giving program. For example, if you had thirty donors who each gave \$10 per month, you would have \$300 in MRR. You can also track lost MRR, also called “churn.” This is the monthly income you lose when people cancel their monthly gift.



- **Number of Monthly Donors.** The total number of supporters who make a monthly gift. This number is impacted both by your ability to recruit new recurring donors and your ability to retain them with outstanding donor stewardship.
- **Monthly Gift Increases.** Over time, you want monthly givers to increase the size of their donations, even if it's just by a few dollars. You can track the number and percentage of returning recurring donors who increase their gift size each year. You can also track how large these increases are.

Monthly recurring revenue and number of monthly donors are a good place to start when launching or improving your recurring giving program.

To get started, you might use a certain monthly expense as your MRR goal.

Let's say that a nonprofit called Baseball for All wants to launch a recurring giving program. Baseball for All knows that one of their ongoing initiatives costs them \$1,000 per month. They want to have a stable source of income to support this program so that it can continue operating in between their major fundraising campaigns. They set their goal for MRR at \$1,000.

They can reach their goal of \$1,000 in monthly recurring revenue in a number of ways.

- **10 donors** giving **\$100** per month
- **40 donors** giving **\$25** per month
- **100 donors** giving **\$10** per month
- Or any combination of these gift sizes

While you should give donors the option to give whatever amount they like, offer them some suggested giving levels on your donation form. It helps to link donation sizes to the resulting impact (more on that in Chapter 3).

Who Are Your Donors?

When planning a recurring giving campaign, it is essential to keep your audience in mind. This fundraising strategy only works if people sign up. Spend some time studying your donor base to determine who to target, how to appeal to them, and how much to ask for.

When looking at your audience, there are several factors to consider:

- **Donor personas**
- **Past gift sizes**
- **How they give (in-person, online)**
- **Donor surveys**

To find out how they should approach their goal, Baseball for All looks at their donor personas and their giving data. They find that their average gift size is \$75, although they have several donors who give over \$200 per year. They decide to create multiple donation forms to make sure that supporters receive appeals with appropriate donation sizes.

Thank you for your gift

Select an Amount

\$ 10 \$ 25 \$ 50 \$ 100 Other

Your Donation * \$ USD **One-time** **Monthly**

Donors who gave less than \$100 might be sent an appeal with these suggested donation levels.

Thank you for your gift

Select an Amount

\$ 25 \$ 50 \$ 75 \$ 100 Other

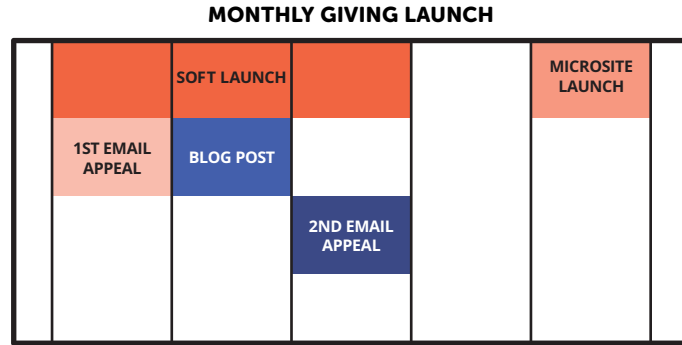
Your Donation * \$ USD **One-time** **Monthly**

Donors who gave more could then be sent to a donation page with larger giving levels.

They can also check to see whether repeated donors favor any particular program and the organization can then emphasize this work in the appeal.

Planning a Campaign

A goal without a deadline is just a wish. And a campaign without a timeline is likely to fail. This is why you should create a calendar to plan the promotion of your program.



A good way to start is with a soft launch. A **soft launch** is when you reach out to your most committed supporters to ask them to be the first to contribute to a campaign. This gives you some momentum when you share the campaign with your whole community. Since a soft launch involves just a small portion of your audience, reach out with a phone call or personal email.

Let them know...

- They are one of your strongest supporters.
- Recurring gifts allow your organization to make long-term impact.
- You want them to be the first to become a monthly investor in your work.

Someone has to be your first monthly donor, and long-time supporters, donors, and volunteers are the best candidates.

If you already have some monthly donors, reach out to them to help you get your new and improved program off the ground.

In your message, let them know that their monthly gift is very much appreciated and that you want others to join them. You should also explain that from now on you'll be sending exclusive updates for monthly givers like them.

A couple of ways you can ask these existing supporters to help are to ...

- **Spread the word** by posting to their social media.
- **Send a quote** explaining why they give monthly (to be used in promotions and appeals).
- **Increase** their monthly gift.

Once you've touched base with your existing monthly donors, you can announce and promote the recurring giving campaign. In Chapter 4 we'll discuss in detail how to use email, social media, and other outlets to promote your campaign.

CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY

- **Set goals** for your recurring giving program.
 - **Monthly Recurring Revenue**
 - **Number of Monthly Donors**
 - **Monthly Gift Increases**
- **Use your donor base and past giving records to hone in on your audience** and choose appropriate asks.
- **Create a promotion plan and calendar** for your recurring giving campaign. Start with a soft launch and reach out to existing monthly donors.

Chapter 3

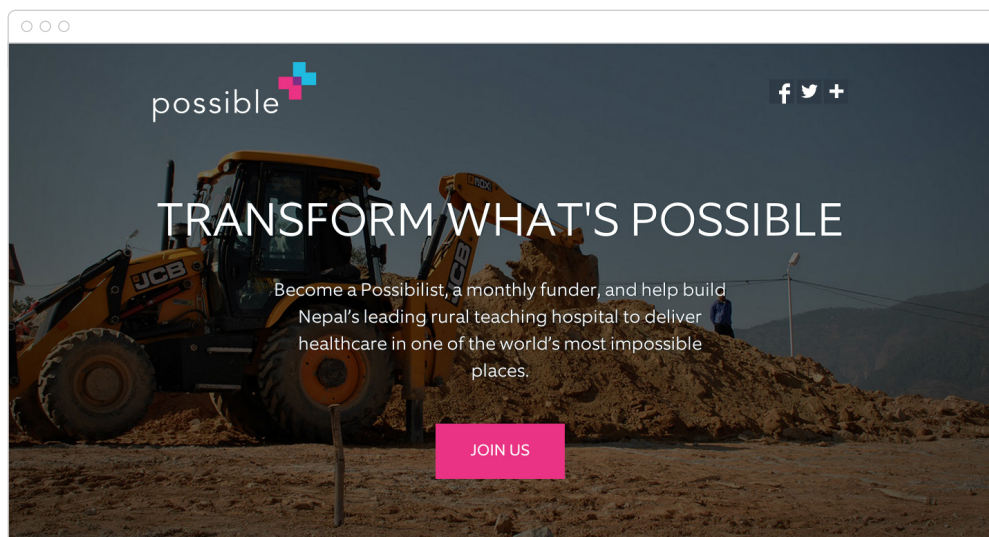
Branding and Presentation

Monthly giving isn't an entirely separate endeavor from your usual fundraising activities, but it should be treated as a special group for donors investing in your work. As you launch or revitalize your recurring giving program, you should pay special attention to how you present it to your community.

Giving your program a name and its own branding helps to set it apart. The imagery should still mesh with your organization as a whole, though. It also helps to present your recurring giving program as an unfolding story, with donors and impact at the center.

Start With Purpose

If you're asking people to make a monthly commitment to your nonprofit, you will need to give them a reason to get involved. In some cases, recurring giving programs exist to fund a particular program or project. Possible's monthly giving program, for example, is funding the construction of a hospital in rural Nepal.



The homepage for Possible's recurring giving program shows the hospital construction that donors are supporting.


For many nonprofits, however, monthly giving funds the organization's general operations. This doesn't mean you can't still create a compelling story and mission.

Pencils of Promise has a monthly giving program called Passport. Like most of their one-time gifts, these monthly donations fund schools and education programs in developing countries. Pencils of Promise sets Passport apart by emphasizing that monthly gifts support students all over the world. While a one-time donor can help build a school in Nicaragua, a monthly giver can help educate children in Ghana, Laos, and Guatemala too. Hence the name Passport.

Collective Journey, Global Impact.

Become a PASSPORT member and automatically support PoP's work around the world. The best part? Every cent goes directly toward our education programs.

PASSPORT takes you on a journey by giving you an exclusive look at our impact in Ghana, Guatemala and Laos. Together we can unlock the promise of millions of children in our partner countries. And it starts with you.



ON OUR WAY TO 1,000 MEMBERS

To identify the story or theme of your program, start by establishing the long-term purpose of your monthly giving program.

- **What impacts do these monthly gifts create?**
- **How is monthly support different from other donations to your organization?**

These details can inspire the name or branding of your program.

Branding and Imagery

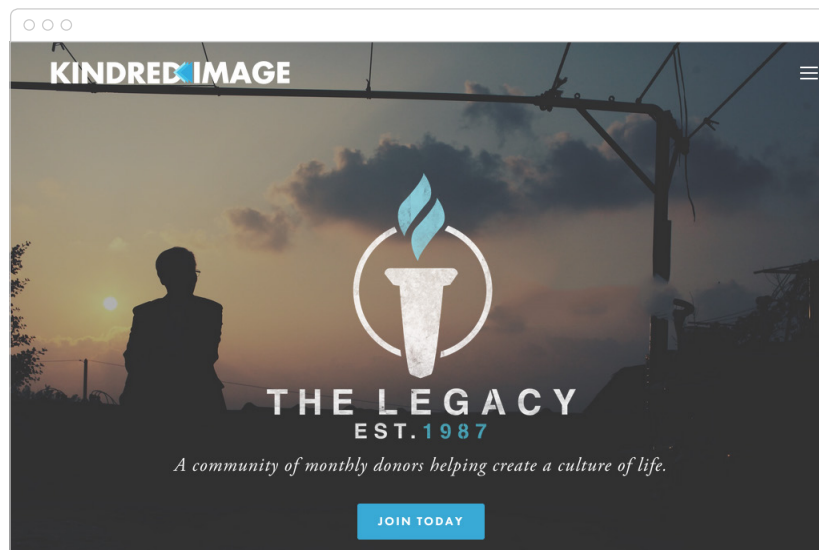
Just as you should with your organization as a whole, pay close attention to the brand of your recurring giving program. To present monthly givers as a special group of donors, give the program a name and imagery to go with it.

When it comes to naming the program or its participants, you can keep it simple by staying related to your nonprofit's name and mission.

Some examples are:

- **Action Against Hunger's** monthly giving program is **Team No Hunger.**
- **Pencils of Promise's** recurring giving program is called **Passport.**
- **Team Rubicon** calls their monthly givers the **Support Squad.**
- **Possible** simply calls their monthly donors **Possibilists.**

You can design a logo or image to represent your program, but it should be in line with the overall branding of your organization.

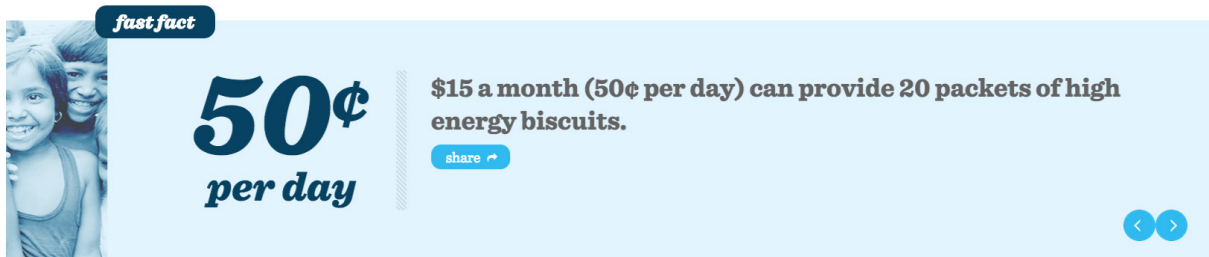


The logo for Kindred Image's monthly donor community, The Legacy, is distinct from the Kindred Image brand, but not incongruous. They also incorporate their signature colors into The Legacy's campaign page.

Where Does the Donor Fit In?

To convince people to join your monthly giving program, you need to show how their help makes a difference. A big part of this is matching donations with the impact they have in the field. You don't pay a bill without knowing what you got for it, so show donors what their gift provides.

One way to frame a particular gift is to highlight the daily cost with the supplies or service it funds.



fast fact

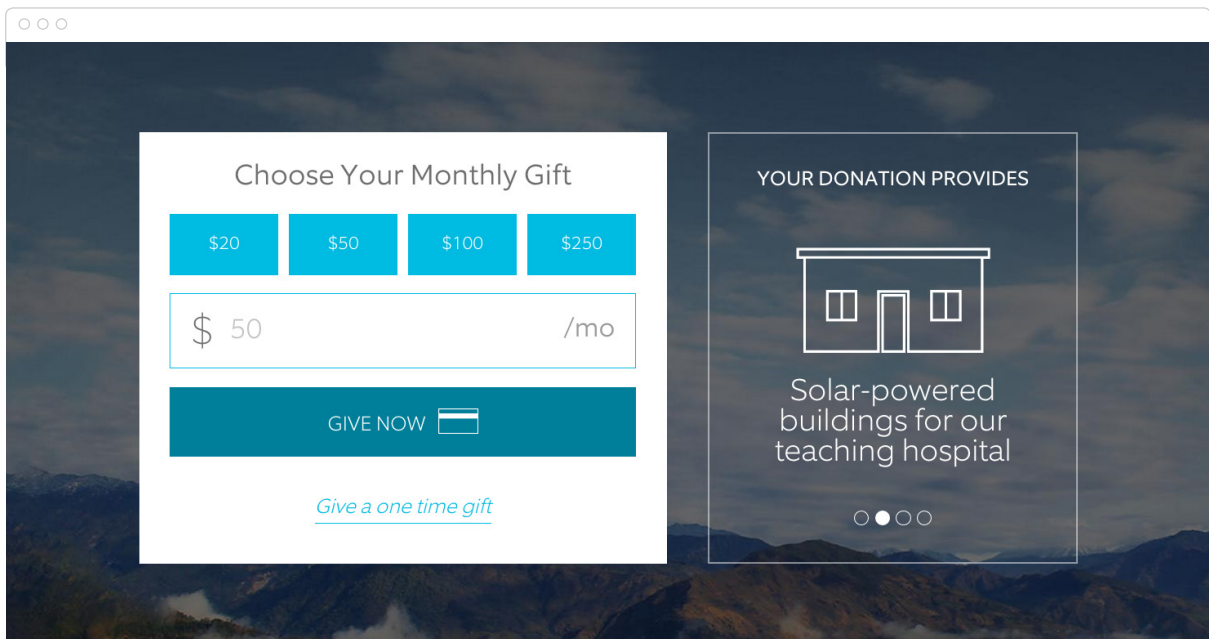
50¢
per day

\$15 a month (50¢ per day) can provide 20 packets of high energy biscuits.

share ↗

< >


UNICEF's website breaks down a \$15 monthly donation to show the minimal daily cost and the life-saving aid it provides.



Choose Your Monthly Gift


\$20 \$50 \$100 \$250

\$ 50 /mo

GIVE NOW 

[Give a one time gift](#)

YOUR DONATION PROVIDES



Solar-powered buildings for our teaching hospital

○ ● ○ ○

Possible emphasizes the impact of monthly donations by putting impact icons and descriptions right next to the suggested gift sizes.

One of the most popular ways to present gift sizes is by linking each one to a concrete result that helps the cause. PCI, a global nonprofit fighting for sustainable community health and development, shows how different gifts can fund education, feed a hungry child, or provide shelter and care to a homeless child in India.



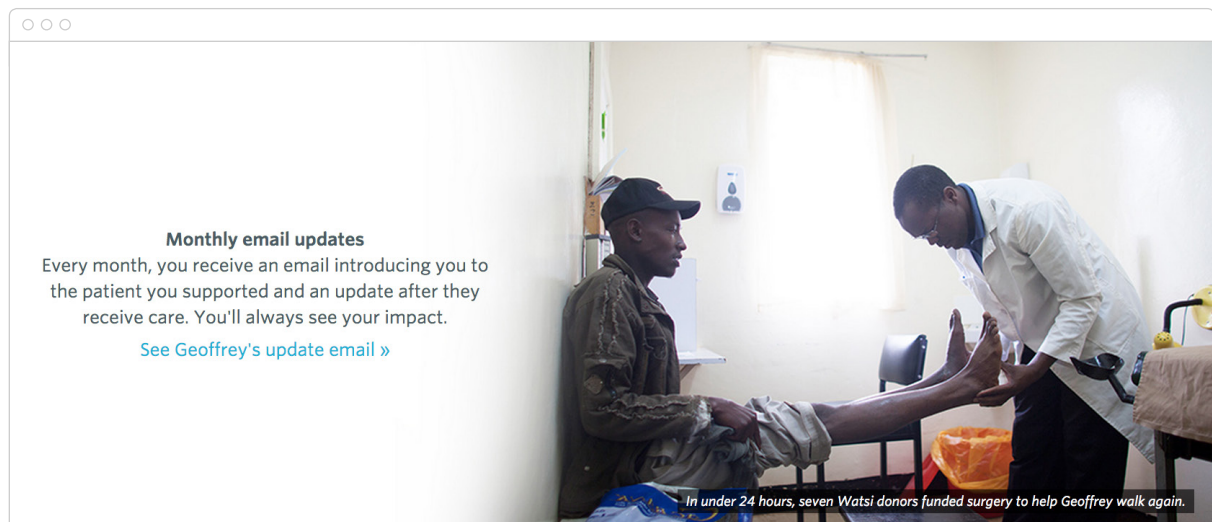
Giving levels and their impact from PCI's Think Forward program.

Showing supporters their donations' impact empowers them to get involved and become a monthly supporter.

BENEFITS FOR MONTHLY DONORS

An important step to presenting your recurring giving program as a special subset of supporters is to offer them some type of membership with benefits. Your monthly donors won't feel that unique connection with your work if they get the exact same communications as every other donor.

Because most donors aren't interested in material rewards for donating, modern nonprofits instead offer increased access and exclusive news to monthly supporters.⁵ This can come in the form of quarterly reports, a newsletter, impact pictures, or videos.




When someone becomes a monthly donor to Watsi, an organization that crowdfunds medical procedures for the poor, they receive a monthly email highlighting the patient their gift helped.


⁵ The Able Altruist. "How to Turn One-Time Donors into Repeat Donors." <http://able-altruist.softwareadvice.com/how-to-create-repeat-donors-0214/>

○ ○ ○


Once a Possibilist, you'll receive:




A surprise gift welcoming you to our community



Monthly videos and photos updating you on our progress




Update letters from the CEO on progress and challenges




A chance to win a trip to Nepal for the ground-breaking

○ ○ ○


Once a PASSPORT Member, You'll Receive:




Quarterly progress updates containing stories from the field



Exclusive welcome gift to begin your journey



A surprise end of the year souvenir



Photos and videos of the children and communities you've impacted firsthand

On their program webpages, both Possible and Pencils of Promise feature the special updates monthly donors receive.

The purpose of member benefits isn't to compensate donors, but to keep them informed and engaged with the work they support. This makes sure that their compassion and pride in your work is continuously renewed, not diminished.

Fortunately, information and impact is the favored gift for donors and it is more cost-effective than sending merchandise.

CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

- **Define the brand of your recurring giving program and its role within your organization.** You can start with the program's mission or purpose.
- **Create a name and visual brand** for your monthly giving program.
- **Link monthly donations with impact** to show how the donor can make a difference.
- **Highlight the exclusive communications and access** monthly donors receive.

Chapter 4

Promotion and Appeals

Many nonprofits do have a monthly giving option, but do little to promote or support it. This is a surefire way to see your program flounder.

Like any fundraising campaign, you MUST promote your recurring giving program to see results. Making sure your whole community knows about your monthly giving option expands your program's audience. Even those who do not choose to join immediately will have the idea planted in their consciousness.

Remember that important fundraising commandment: Thou shalt make it easy to support your nonprofit.

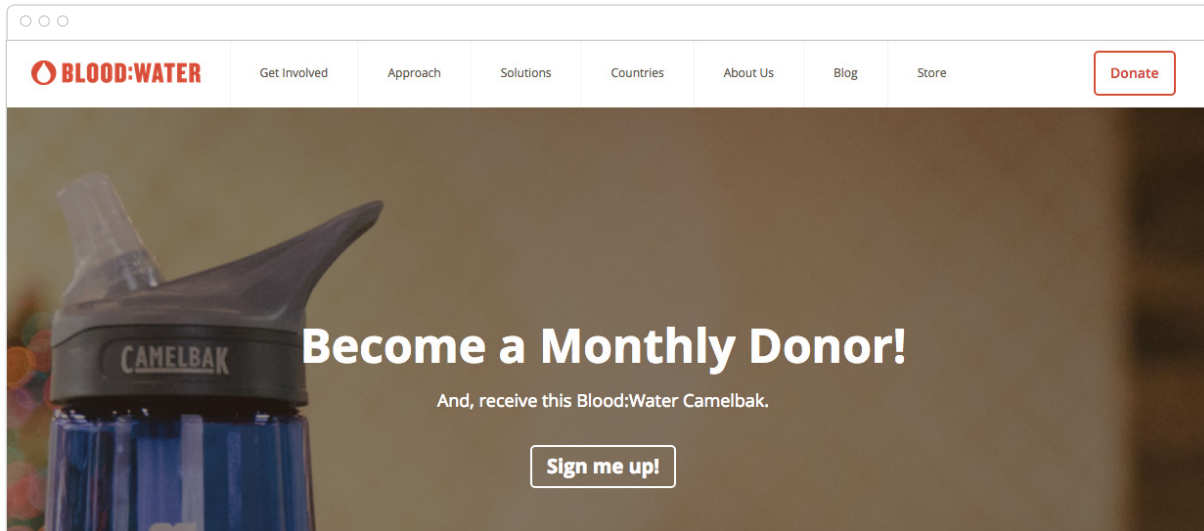
Website: Your Base of Operations

Your website is where most people go to learn more about your organization and monthly giving should have a presence.



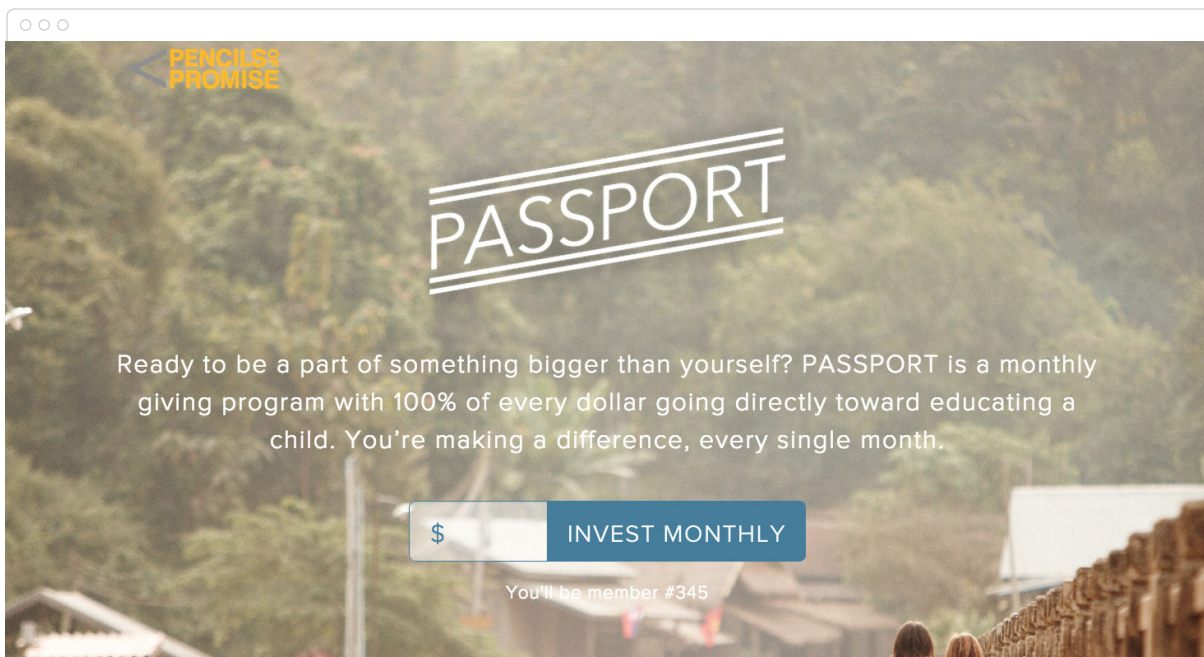
Possible's homepage includes an option to join their monthly giving campaign right next to their main Donate button. The color of the button is muted, so as not to detract from one-time donations, but it's definitely a secondary call-to-action.

It doesn't take much space or effort to show your recurring giving option on your homepage. You can also make a headline or appeal about the program on one of a few rotating main images, like Blood:Water did.

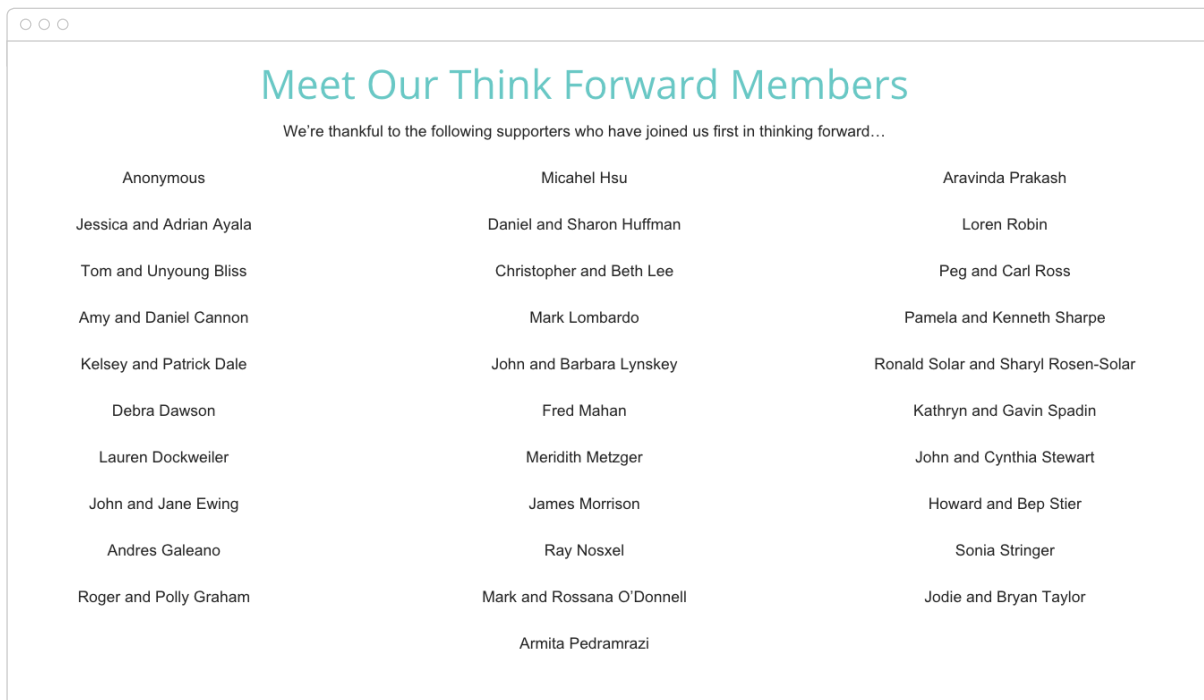


Including monthly giving on your homepage shows it is an important part of the work you do.

Your recurring giving program should also have its own page or microsite. This is where you can explain the purpose behind the program and how monthly gifts help. You can also highlight any special privileges for members here.



This is also a great place to display a “wall of fame” honoring recurring donors.



The value here is twofold. First, it shows your appreciation for existing monthly donors and second, it provides social proof for prospective supporters.

Social Proof. The concept that seeing others perform some action validates it and makes the observer more likely to do the same.

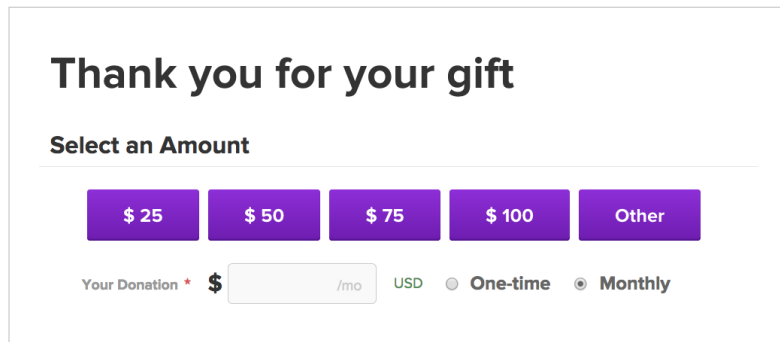
Email Appeals

Your past donors and existing contacts are great prospects when it comes to recruiting monthly donors. They have already shown interest in your work and you can contact them directly through email. But even with your existing supporters, you should be smart about how you ask for help.

FREQUENCY

You don't want to inundate your community with appeals, but that doesn't mean you should ask once and then give up. Just because someone can't or won't make a monthly gift now doesn't mean they won't six or twelve months later.

Every time someone makes a donation to your nonprofit, they should have the option to make it a monthly gift. You can send appeals specifically asking for recurring gifts two to three times per year.



The image shows a digital donation form. At the top, it says "Thank you for your gift" in a large, bold, black font. Below that, it says "Select an Amount" in a smaller, bold, black font. There are five purple buttons with white text: "\$ 25", "\$ 50", "\$ 75", "\$ 100", and "Other". Below the buttons, there is a text input field for the amount, followed by "/mo" and "USD". To the right of the input field, there are two radio button options: "One-time" and "Monthly". The "Monthly" option is selected, indicated by a filled circle.

Remember, though, to always include a thank you for past support with these appeals.

SEGMENTATION

Segmenting is a powerful tool to make your email appeals more effective. Splitting up your broad community into groups of more similar individuals allows you to speak to donors more personally.

In planning your email appeals for monthly donations, you can segment your audience in a number of ways, beginning with gift size. By separating large donors from small ones, you can make sure the suggested giving levels you include are appropriate.

You can also segment by the number of times someone has donated to your cause or even by your donor's preferred program. This allows you to reference past support and even tailor the message to the donors' interests.

CONTENT

If you haven't written email appeals for recurring donations before, remember that they are similar to your everyday asks. You want to efficiently explain the problem and show the donor how they can help solve it.

Some other points to cover in a recurring donations appeal are ...

- **Why your organization needs monthly support**
- **How monthly support allows you to create more impact**
- **The simplicity and ease of online recurring donations**
- **The special updates or access granted to monthly supporters**

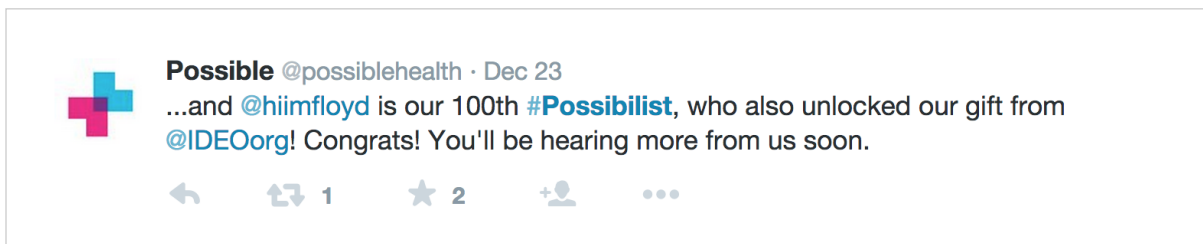
You don't need to write a novel about every intricacy of the program in your email as you can always link to more details. Do, however, include an impact image or case study to make the cause tangible.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND BLOG

Like your website, social media pages and your blog are important places to spread the news of your recurring giving program. It allows you to give quick insight into the program to a large audience.

While social media should not be dominated by appeals, it's OK to explicitly ask for recurring gifts once in a while. More often, however, you should focus on sharing news about the program and recognizing these special supporters.



Calling out individual recurring donors shows your appreciation and keeps monthly giving top-of-mind for other followers.

Blogs are a great opportunity to highlight the power of monthly donations. PCI explained in a blog post how a recurring gift amplified a supporter's impact. You can also feature impact stories and note how monthly giving made the results possible.

It All Leads to the Donation Form

The goal of all this promotion, of course, is to get people to actually make a monthly gift. Whether they click through an email, read a blog, or are inspired by a tweet, the final step will be filling out your donation form. After someone decides to give, you definitely don't want them to get confused or annoyed by this last step, so keep it short and simple.




Like any donation form, those for your recurring giving program should be branded to your organization, but it's even better if you brand it to the program too.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the PCI logo at the top. The main content area has a light blue background with a repeating pattern of icons representing people and agricultural tools. The central text reads: "Thank you for joining PCI's Think Forward recurring gift program!" followed by a paragraph explaining the program's mission and the benefits of recurring gifts. Below this is a "Select an Amount" section with buttons for \$100, \$50, \$25, \$10, and "Other". A "Your Donation" field is set to \$ /mo USD, with radio buttons for "One-time" and "Monthly" (selected). To the right, a "Questions" sidebar lists: "Is my donation secure?", "Is my donation tax-deductible?", "Can I donate with a check?", and "Do I get a receipt?". A "VERIFIED & SECURED" badge is also present.

This creates an immersive experience and the donor knows immediately that they are in the right place.

Make a Lifesaving Monthly Gift Today

We have over 5,000 field staff who assist more than 7 million people each year, but millions of children are still in need of lifesaving treatment. By donating monthly, you help us plan for the future, act faster during emergencies, and save more young lives from deadly malnutrition. Thank you for your support!

		
\$45 a month can save a child's life using therapeutic food.	\$25 a month can cover healthcare costs for at-risk children.	\$15 a month can help a community build a freshwater well.

Select an Amount

Your Donation * \$ /mo USD One-time Monthly

Questions

- Is my donation secure?
- Is my donation tax-deductible?
- Do I get a receipt?
- Can I donate by phone or mail?

VERIFIED & SECURED
VERIFY SECURITY

This donation form from Action Against Hunger affirms that the user is making a monthly gift and even reminds them of the impact the giving levels create.

If someone makes it to your donation form, you want to make it easy and intuitive to finish the process.

CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY

- The primary outlets through which you can promote monthly giving are your **website, email, social media, and your blog**.
- **Use smart timing, segmenting, and compelling content** in your email appeals to supporters.
- **Focus on impact and recognizing donors** when promoting monthly giving on your social media pages and blog.

Chapter 5

Stewardship and Growing Your Program

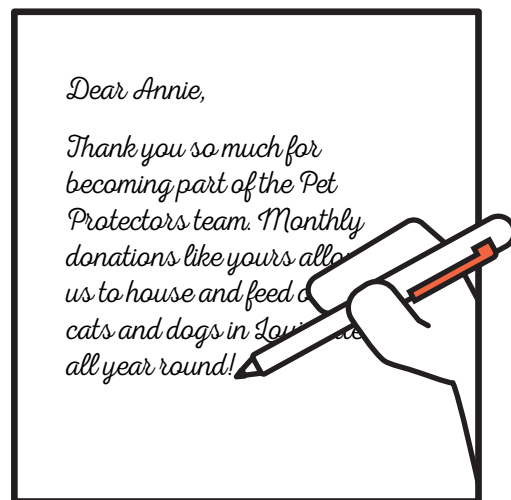
A recurring giving program is most successful when you not only hold onto your donors and continue engaging them, but when you also grow your revenue through new donors and increased gifts. Therefore donor stewardship is hugely important.

Stewardship begins with the very first thank you message you send and continues for years to come. Just as these donors have made an ongoing commitment to your organization, you must make a commitment to keep them connected and involved with your work.

The Initial Thank You

Online donations will generally elicit an immediate confirmation email and receipt. But there should be a more detailed and explicit thank you. This is where you should express your gratitude and excitement for this partnership.

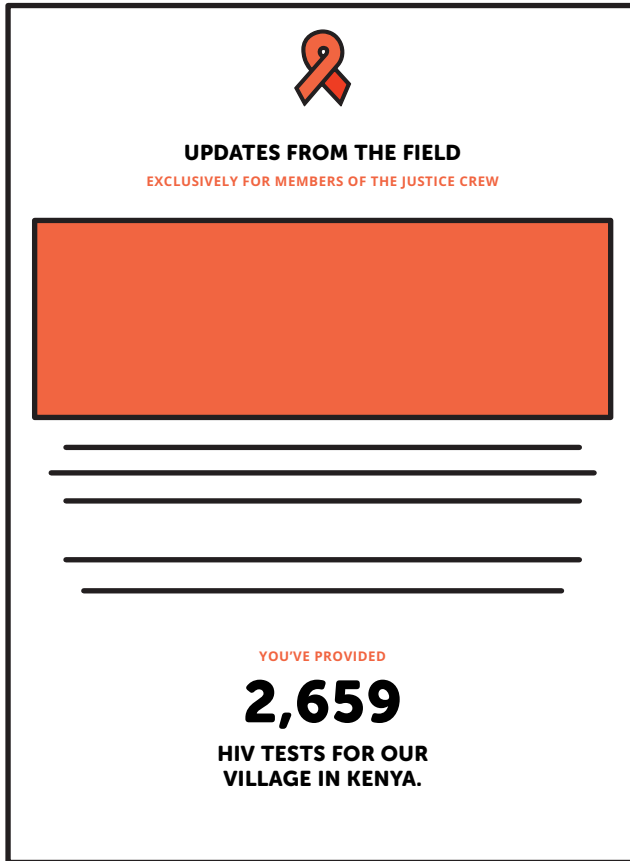
Depending on the size of your organization, it may be worthwhile to send a personalized letter to each monthly donor. While that may not be feasible for every donation you receive, surveys have shown that is the preferred method of being thanked.



Even if you can't send a handwritten note, remember to include these elements in your thank you letter:

- **Name of donor**
- **Past involvement**
- **Size of gift**
- **Signature from a staff member**
- **Name of campaign**

You should also make sure that donors can easily share their experience with their friends and family. Include social sharing buttons on their confirmation page and follow buttons in your emails.



Ongoing Engagement

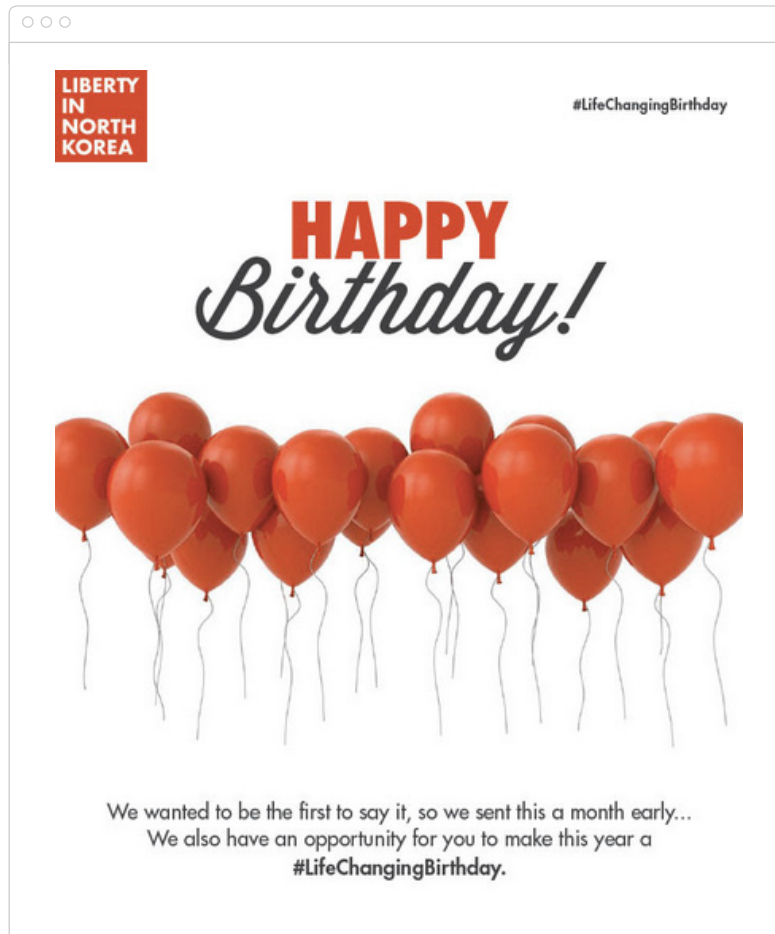
Many programs will make impact updates one of the incentives to become a monthly donor. Consider creating a monthly email or newsletter specifically for recurring donors. It doesn't even have to be extremely exclusive, but you can gather the most important, compelling updates for your supporters. You can also share your best content, like videos and blogs.

Remember to brand the email or newsletter to your organization and recurring giving program and send the message from a personal email

address (*emichaels@baseballforall.org* instead of *info@baseballforall.org*). It's a good idea to designate a specific staff member for monthly givers to contact with questions and concerns.

Growing Your Program

Needless to say, after someone becomes a monthly donor, they shouldn't receive any more appeals asking them to join the program. Instead, you should periodically ask them to increase their gift.



Once or twice a year ask them to increase their gift, even if it's only by \$5. That's an increase of **\$60 a year**. Even if they decide not to, they will most likely continue their monthly donation.

Another great way to help donors get more involved is to ask them to fundraise. This person has already shown an ongoing interest in your work, so they may be excited to share the cause with their social network.

Birthday campaigns in particular have gained popularity. Four to six weeks before their birthday, send an email with your CTA. "Since this cause is important to you, share it with your friends and ask them to help."

Creating a Lifetime Partnership

Keeping monthly donors happy and excited to be involved will be a rewarding effort for your nonprofit.

Thanking monthly donors, showing their impact, and giving them chances to advocate for your cause can lead to years of reliable support.

The most important element of engaging monthly donors is to continually express your gratitude. The majority of your communications should NOT be appeals and asks, but rather messages of appreciation.

You should also be on the lookout for any dissatisfied monthly donors. Take special notice of any emails, phone calls, or even social media comments you receive from these supporters. Responding promptly shows how much you value their support.

Lastly, don't let your organization lose monthly donors because of an administration issue. Every month, check to see if the credit cards of any donors are expiring. That way you can get in touch to get their up-to-date information.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY

- One of the biggest assets of a recurring giving is long-term support. **Stewardship and retention is vital for success.**
- **Send monthly donors a sincere, personalized thank you letter** along with monthly updates and content.
- **Periodically ask monthly donors to increase their gift size.** Also highlight peer-to-peer fundraising opportunities.
- **Be aware of unhappy donors or expiring credit cards.**

Conclusion

Recurring giving is a tried and true path to sustainability, but you have to work for it. It starts with creating an exciting program that people want to be a part of. Then you must deliver the communications and show appreciation to keep donors engaged and involved.

Whether you're starting from scratch or revitalizing a dormant program, investing in recurring giving is a smart way to set your nonprofit up for long-term sustainability and growth.

Classy

Calculate your own recurring donor potential.

How can a recurring giving program secure and grow your nonprofit?

Donors who commit to a monthly gift have higher retention rates than one-time donors. Plug in some numbers to see it in action!

2659 **YOUR NUMBER OF ONE-TIME DONORS IN 2014**

75 **YOUR AVG ONE-TIME GIFT (INDUSTRY AVG IS \$136)**

12 **TARGET YOY PROGRAM GROWTH RATE (AIM FOR 10-20%)**

Calculate

Wowza!

Here's a quick snapshot of your nonprofit's recurring revenue potential. If you converted only 5% of your one-time donors into recurring ones, you could secure **\$11088** in predictable annual revenue from 433 supporters at about \$25 per year.

[Learn More & Calculate →](#)

Find out how recurring donation programs can transform your organization and then calculate your potential with our new fundraising calculator.