



Technologies that Nonprofits Should
Budget For in 2018



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Trusting Technology

Nonprofit organizations are kicking off the first quarter of 2018 with big plans and aggressive fundraising goals to make this year the best yet. Nonprofit professionals are focusing on answering the ageless question – “How can we maintain relevancy and make an impact on the world?” The key is working smarter, not harder. As much as we want the speed of finance departments to be equivalent to an all-star running back, it’s impossible without the star player—technology.

Technology has come a long way. 25 years ago, we were listening to a dial-up tone to connect to the Internet. Ten years ago, we were getting the hang of social media and smartphones. Today, we’re using technology to make decisions and complete tasks with the click of a button at home and work. It’s all about simplicity, security, and efficiency. The nonprofit landscape is changing, and the most effective leaders will adopt new strategies to remain relevant, improve efficiency, and help people come together to make an impact.

In our free eBook, *Technologies that Nonprofits Should Budget for in 2018*, you’ll learn about leading technology and strategies to make 2018 the best year yet for your organization and those you serve.



Donor Management Platforms

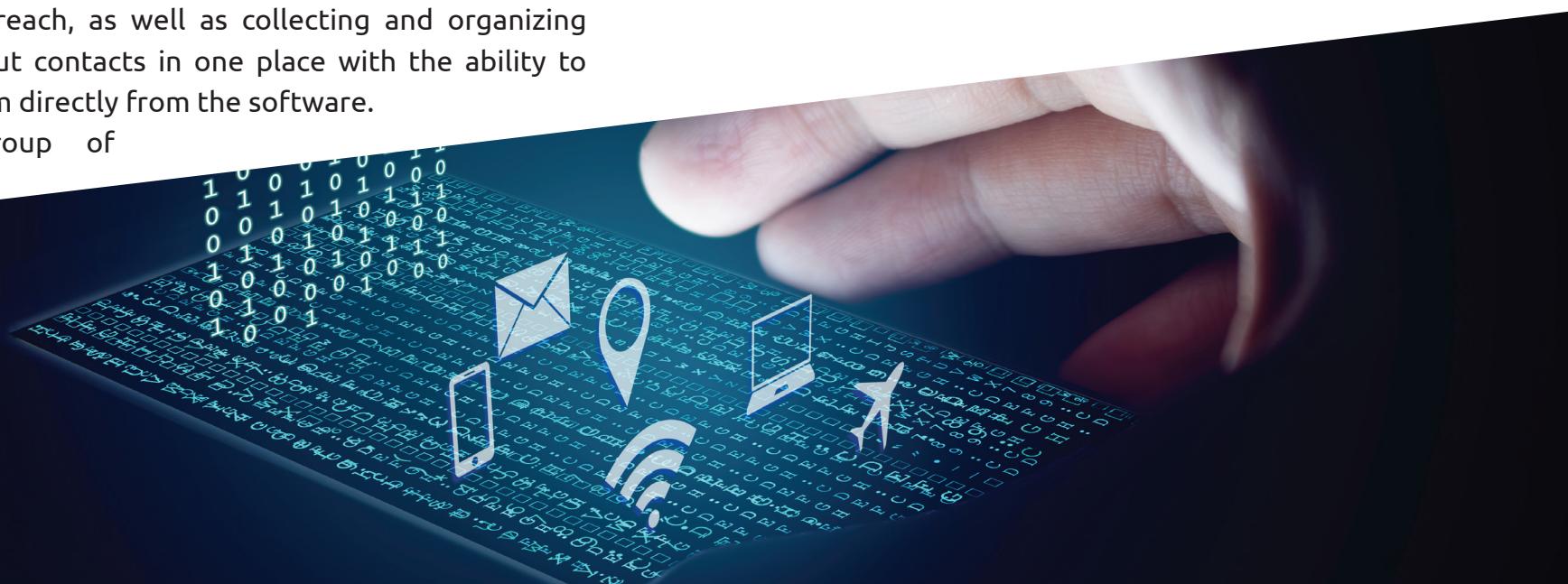
In today's ever-changing technological landscape, it's common for businesses to utilize a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to build and strengthen their network of customers. As community needs change and nonprofits continue to search for better ways to deliver their services, it's clear that nonprofits must invest in similar technologies to manage their contributor relationships. These platforms, known as nonprofit CRMs or donor management systems, are transforming the nonprofit space in exciting ways.

Donor Management systems organize, analyze, and strategically implement communication strategies with nonprofit supporters to maintain and grow relationships. These cloud-based systems are designed exclusively for nonprofits and help remove a lot of the guesswork when it comes to outreach, as well as collecting and organizing information about contacts in one place with the ability to reach out to them directly from the software.

Knowing a group of

contacts' donation histories, for instance, allows organizations to easily segment them into groups and formulate targeted campaigns that can be sent to specific groups while keeping the messaging personalized. By encouraging repeat giving and leveraging personal connections, nonprofits can maximize the gifts gained from their supporters and ensure that constituents don't receive duplicate mailings.

Many relationship management platforms, like [Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge NXT](#), are customizable and can be integrated with online fundraising, supporter engagement, volunteer opportunities, and marketing functionalities. These comprehensive, cloud-based solutions allow your staff to streamline workflows and consolidate disparate processes, communications, and data into one, easy-to-use solution.



Event Management and Ticketing Systems

Nonprofit organizations need a dependable, comprehensive ticketing platform to sell tickets and manage registration for fundraising events easily. Point of Sale (POS) solutions and mobile ticketing systems, like Eventbrite and [Blackbaud Altru](#), give nonprofits the tools they need to collect dues, raise funds, create events, and setup nonprofit ticket sales with branded event pages to maximize the impact of promotion efforts.

Whether a nonprofit is hosting an event or seeking donations, these technologies can transform the organization by increasing the number of opportunities and options for giving. POS solutions, like [Square's free Point of Sale App](#), turn a smartphone or tablet into a complete Point of Sale. These kinds of apps take care of payments, processing, analytics, and more, so the nonprofit can focus on making the event a success!

Event ticketing providers, such as [Eventbrite](#), help users create a 100% mobile-optimized event pages so they can start selling tickets within minutes of setup. Utilizing the Eventbrite Organizer mobile, users can scan and sell tickets and track entry and sales in real time. Visibility allows event organizers to keep their finger on the pulse of an event and make faster, more informed decisions.

It's important that a POS or mobile ticketing system provides additional features like custom email invitations, built-in social sharing, and targeted event recommendations, so the organization can reach the right audiences and empower supporters to spread the word. Many of these solutions provide seamless integration with the apps many nonprofits already use, like Facebook, Mailchimp, and Salesforce.

By implementing an event and ticketing management system, a nonprofit can automate time-consuming tasks, and focus on the organization's greater mission.



Crowdfunding and Online Giving Platforms

There are so many projects, companies, causes, and products that may have never seen the light of day if it hadn't been for the invention of crowdfunding. A method of raising money through the collective effort of friends, family, customers, and individual investors, crowdfunding was first used by entrepreneurs to attract small investments to for-profit ventures.

Crowdfunding websites such as Kickstarter and Indiegogo attract thousands of people every day, hoping to invest in the next big thing. These sites allow sponsors to post their story - why they're raising funds - along with a project description and concept art of their products to attract donations. Many projects are rewards-based, meaning that individuals contribute to a business venture in exchange for a reward, typically a form of the product or service the company offers.



According to The National Council of Nonprofits, crowdfunding is projected to become a 96-billion-dollar industry by 2025, and will continue to be a valuable tool—not only for for-profit ventures, but nonprofit organizations as well. One such online giving platform is [Blackbaud Luminate](#), which allows nonprofits to take their fundraising game to the next level with tailor-made campaigns based on real-time data, easy-to-use online fundraising tools, and donation forms, complete with Facebook integration for easy social sharing.

Similarly, [Razoo](#), an online fundraising platform for charities and nonprofit organizations, provides a toolbox to get your campaign up and running—from customizable thank you videos to donation tiers that outline the impact of each donation amount.

Crowdfunding enables nonprofit organizations to leverage support from a wide variety of stakeholders, including

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beneficiaries, donors, board members, and staff. It also creates an opportunity to communicate with donors directly and describe the positive impact of their support. A successful online crowdfunding campaign can be used as proof of demand by organizations when pitching to foundations and philanthropists for more substantial donations.

Whether it's [CauseVox](#), [Causes](#), or [Classy](#) there are plenty of crowdfunding platforms out there for nonprofits that want to help their organization create a bigger impact. It's important to keep in mind that all crowdfunding platforms charge a baseline processing fee, and fees vary, so it's important to do homework and find the solution that serves the organization, and its supporters, the best.



Nonprofit Accounting Software



Nonprofit organizations have specific accounting needs that differ substantially from for-profit businesses. Nonprofits must keep precise records of contributions and expenses, especially since the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) has unique accounting standards for nonprofit orgs. Nonprofit organizations often have diverse revenue sources including contributions, fees from programs and services, grants, and investments they need to track separately.

When it comes to an accounting software solution for nonprofits, organizations have historically needed to “re-tool” a for-profit product to meet their needs, which entails building workarounds in Microsoft Excel or other external programs. For example, the ability to customize transaction and balance sheets to keep track of unique revenue sources is vital for nonprofits,

and needs to properly configured based on the organization's needs.

A nonprofit accounting software solution should include tools that allow for such customization and categorization. Providers like [Blackbaud](#), [QuickBooks](#), [NetSuite](#), [Sage Intacct](#), and [Abila](#) help organizations keep track of different sources of revenue and chart future financial strategies.

Nonprofits should ensure that an accounting software provides functionality for fund accounting in addition to the standard general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and time and expense modules. It's also crucial that the accounting software provides a complete audit trail that extends across all modules so users can see who, when, and where transactions were entered and approved.

AP and Payment Automation Solutions

As a member of a nonprofit organization, you must manage competing responsibilities on a daily basis. One of those tasks is making sure all of your bills are entered correctly, approved, and paid on time. The worst part is that the traditional, paper-based accounts payable process is costly and exposes your nonprofit to errors and internal control failures.

Over the last decade, it has become increasingly apparent that automating accounts payable processes can significantly improve an organization's overall financial operations. AP Automation eliminates paper and adds significant value to accounts payable, including real-time visibility into performance and cash flow, increased reporting accuracy, and better compliance with tax laws and FASB regulations.

AP automation solutions integrate with your nonprofit accounting software and mimic your current approval process. No longer does a staff member need to worry about fixing data entry errors or spending half a day chasing down approvers to sign off on an invoice or check. In addition to eliminating paper and the manual tasks associated with it, cloud-based AP and payment automation solutions, like [AvidXchange](#), allow members of your organization to access performance data and reports anytime, anywhere.

CFOs can study financial operations dashboards and see and compare real-time metrics – such as days payable outstanding





(DPO) and days sales outstanding (DSO) – for an unabridged view of the organization's financial health. By carefully examining the overall process and establishing the time associated with each step in your organization's accounts payable workflow, leaders of well-run nonprofits can make strategic decisions on how to eliminate costs from their departments.

If your nonprofit is still receiving paper invoices or paying with paper checks, you're not capitalizing on today's best

practices. You're also missing out on the potential for savings by streamlining processes, reducing operating costs, and creating efficiencies. Research by [AvidXchange](#) shows that utilizing automation technology allows organizations to act more strategically, thanks to improved visibility into cash flow. In addition to saved time, reduce their AP and payment processing costs up to 60% with automation - that's time and money that could go toward your organization's cause instead of its upkeep.

Getting More Out of Tech Means Giving More

Until recently, many nonprofit organizations used paper-based systems. Their volunteers and staff members worked onsite, collecting cash and paper check donations by hand. But today, that is mostly gone. New technology is taking these organizations to the next, innovative level. Nonprofits are attracting innovative tech firms that are investing in new solutions to help organizations reach a wider audience and make a bigger impact.

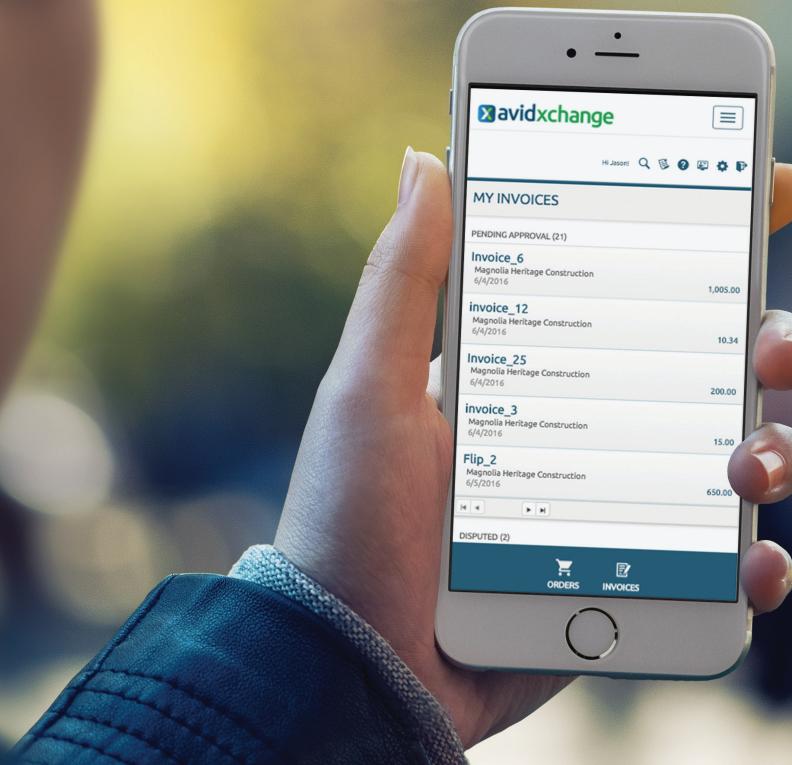
These solutions help a wide range of nonprofits in improving operational efficiency and profitability. Crucially, most of these solutions also enhance the donor experience and drive better relationships, a vital step in a people-focused industry where excellence in customer service and donor interaction means a competitive advantage.

The challenge for organizations is deciding which technology to invest in. The technology landscape is changing so fast that traditional ways of raising funds are being reinvented and made easier. The way forward involves different thinking. It's about bringing together predictive analytics capability, big data, and the cloud; holistic, disruptive technologies must work in harmony with each other and reshape the way work gets done.

For the nonprofit industry to achieve success, it, too, must adopt disruptive technology to remain profitable and efficient in the future.

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Say Goodbye to Paper Checks and Invoices



This guide was created by AvidXchange. AvidXchange revolutionizes the way organizations pay their bills. Serving more than 5,700 clients throughout North America and 400,000 vendors nationwide, AvidXchange is the leading provider of cloud-based, purchase-to-pay solutions for Enterprise and Midmarket organizations, spanning multiple industries including Real Estate, Financial Services, Energy, Nonprofit, and Construction.

Interested in automating your payables and creating efficiencies for your AP team? Schedule a meeting with an AP automation expert to learn how you can increase productivity and protect your business. Our automation specialists will create a customized demo and walk you through the streamlined workflow of an automated AP process.

To schedule a demo, [click here!](#)