

*charity*DYNAMICS

# The Impact of On-Demand Support on Event Fundraising Performance



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# Key Findings

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- Participants that utilize support services **raise 133% more** than their peers.
- The segment of participants that reach out to on-demand support services (3%) **raise 12% of total fundraising** for their cause.
- Relative to their peers, participants and donors who use support services are more likely to send emails from their fundraising center (**4X**), update their personal page (**3X**), and make a self donation (**2X**).



**The 'Support'  
Times They are  
a-Changin'**

# Expectations Have Changed

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Consumer expectations when using digital tools continue to grow. E-commerce websites continuously invest in new technology to make the online experience simpler and more intuitive. Nineteen years after Amazon first introduced 1-Click ordering, we know that a customer's ability to easily use the website can make or break a business.

Nonprofit organizations have not been exempt from these increasing consumer expectations. They are smartly making the same types of digital investments as for-profit consumer sites to ensure that their donors, registrants and fundraisers can use online tools to generate more revenue than ever — now 8.5% of all fundraising, according to the 2018 Blackbaud Charitable Giving Report.



of all fundraising is  
from online channels

# Who's Setting the Pace?

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Consumer companies that provide on-demand, high-quality customer support in addition to the online tools and functionality are excelling, while those that rely solely on online tools are falling behind.

It is no accident that *Forbes* magazine has recognized Google, Apple and Amazon for their exceptional customer service. And every person reading this probably has their own story about a good customer service experience that has endeared a company to them, or a bad one where they promised to never use that business's services again.



# Where Does This Leave Nonprofits?

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This untapped fundraising potential represents a big opportunity for non-profits. Smart organizations have understood the importance of donor care teams for a long time now. By simply extending this level of care and support to participants and donors of event fundraising programs, nonprofits stand to capture big returns.

Unfortunately, providing on-demand digital support has not been an area of investment for many nonprofits. And this is costing those organizations in terms of lost donations and registrations. For nonprofits that rely on peer-to-peer fundraising to drive success, the situation is even more critical.

Peer-to-peer fundraisers need to be able to easily use a wide array of online tools to tell their personal stories, ask their friends and families for a donation and thank them in a timely way. Without a quick and simple way to get answers to their questions, many fundraisers just give up, and that is costing organizations millions of dollars a year.

**NEED HELP?**

# Research Findings



# It's Simple — Data Tells the Story

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The nation's leading nonprofits are investing in multi-channel support programs for some of the largest peer-to-peer event programs as well as many regional and single event programs that serve specific communities. Through these engagements, we have had the opportunity to hear from hundreds of thousands of website users by phone, chat and email. We've taken this individual level case data and compared it to key fundraising activities that are occurring within each event program.

Through this process we have discovered incredible insights into the fundraising patterns and behaviors of those who use support services and how attention their needs, on-demand, generates more revenue for event programs.



# Setting the Stage

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In evaluating the impact of on-demand support, we identified three key areas of analysis. First, we looked at participation of donors and participants overall to understand how many of the organizations' key constituents would be expected to use the support service.

Next, we looked at the group that utilized the support service in order to understand their fundraising behavior. Finally, we looked at the impact of that fundraising behavior on the event program overall to understand how important these constituents are to its success.

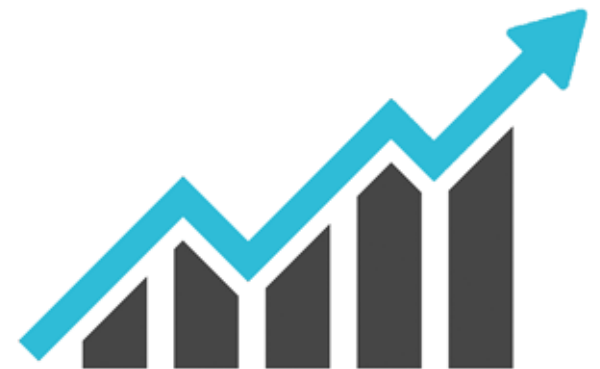
**Usage**



**Behavior**



**Impact**



# Support Usage

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## *Participants:*

In a cross-program evaluation, the average number of participants who use on-demand support by directly opening a case via phone, chat or email is

approximately 3%.

Participants were counted as participating if the case occurred prior to or during registration; however, constituents who inquired about registration but did not ultimately register were not included in the analysis.



## *Donors:*

Donors used on-demand support at a lower rate, with only 1% inquiring about making or following up on a donation. As many participants are self-donors, they were not included in the

analysis.

While donors participated in on-demand support at a lower rate than participants, donor requirements for using the event program website and needs for program information are considerably less than those of participants so a lower utilization rate by donors can be expected.



# Fundraising Behavior

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Participants who use on-demand support raise, on average, 133% more than participants that never open a support case. Some programs see an even larger difference between these two categories of participants, with one event program showing support users raising 272% more than their peers.

The spread remains consistent across every program we looked at with the lowest program showing a 61% difference in fundraising and the median program showing a 65% difference.



# 133%

When using support,  
participants raise more!

# Enhanced Fundraising Activity

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While the overall difference in fundraising results is striking, we can clearly see why the difference is occurring when we look at the fundraising activities that are taking place. On-demand support users utilize website fundraising tools at significantly higher rates.

In the course of using fundraising tools and taking actions that are known to increase fundraising, on-demand support users are asking more questions than their less-active peers and reaching out to get immediate answers so they can continue with their fundraising.

*Relative to their peers, on-demand support users are:*

**2X**

more likely to  
make a  
self-pledge

**3X**

more likely to  
update personal  
page

**4X**

more likely to send  
emails from  
Fundraising Center

# Fundraising Impact

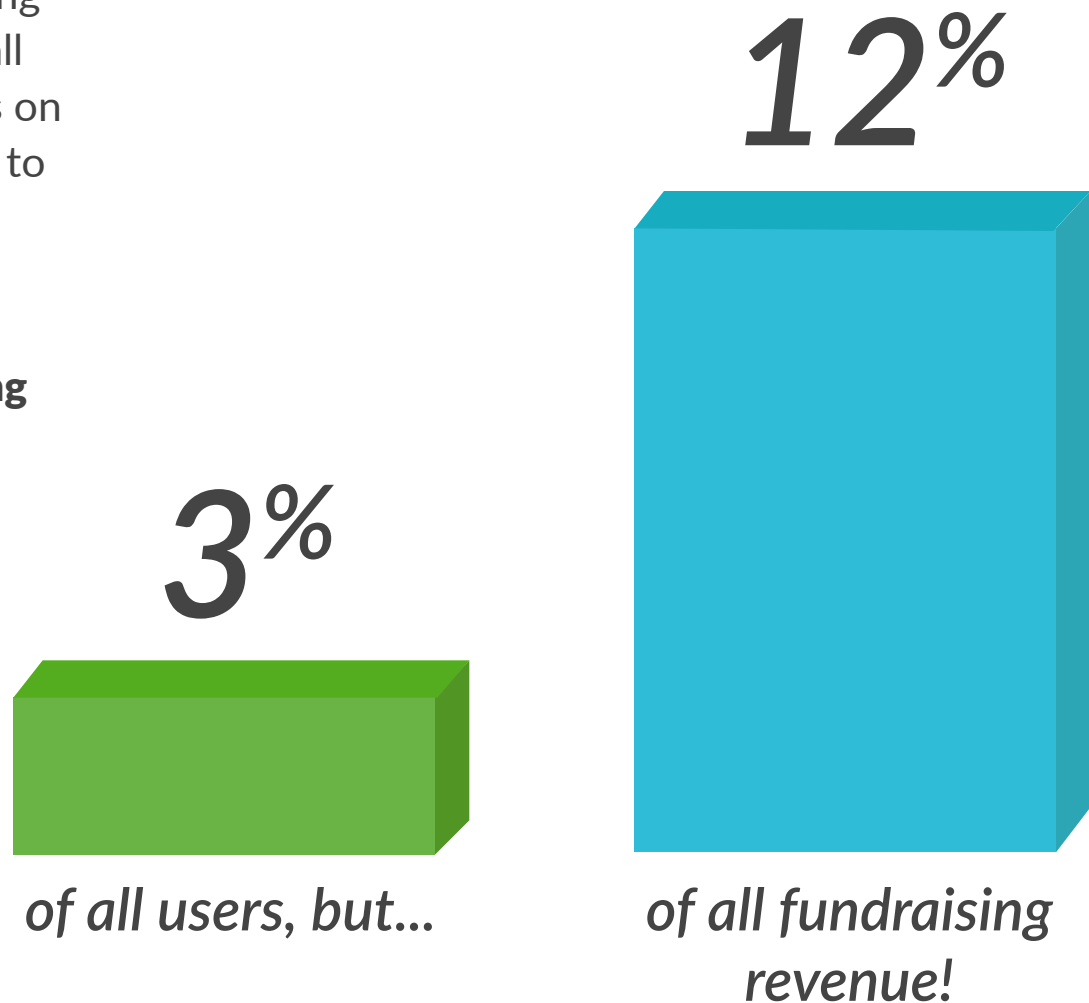
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On-demand support users play an outsized role in the success of event fundraising because they represent a much larger percentage in total fundraising than their non-support-using peers. While only representing 3% of all participants, on-demand support users on average contribute 12% of fundraising to the event program.

**Our top-performing organization saw on-demand support users representing as much as 24% of total fundraising.**

In addition, donors who contacted support gave between 65% and 200% more than those who did not contact support across the programs that we analyzed.

*On-demand support users represent:*



# Conclusions

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We now know that making high-quality, on-demand support available to donors and participants is essential. For too long, organizations have seen providing customer support as an expense that was to be avoided whenever possible.

However, through our analysis, we've uncovered the necessity of a paradigm shift. Organizations need to see on-demand support as a key engagement channel for their most committed fundraisers and largest donors, and make smart investments to ensure this channel produces the largest possible impact.



# About the Authors

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**Jett Winders**  
Vice President, Strategic Services  
Charity Dynamics

Jett Winders has more than 10 years of experience in managing high quality customer service programs both within a non-profit directly and with Charity Dynamics. He has seen first-hand how quality customer service deepens the connection between nonprofits and their participants and donors, creating more loyal constituents and increasing fundraising over time.

With an MBA from the University of Texas at Austin, he's passionate about ensuring nonprofit investments translate into meaningful business outcomes. As a certified project management professional (PMP), he understands the importance of efficient and effective operations, especially in a support center environment. He currently leads all of Charity Dynamics professional services as the Vice President of Strategic Services.



**Aleena Antonino**  
Customer Support Manager  
Charity Dynamics

Aleena Antonino has worked with many of the nation's top fundraising event program directors to understand their unique needs and challenges and craft on-demand support solutions to achieve their goals.

She marries her experience with on-demand support programs with a passion for data and analysis which has allowed her to gain novel insights into participant and donor behavior. As the Customer Support Manager at Charity Dynamics, she leads a team of customer service professions to provide high quality support services to more than a dozen simultaneous programs.



# Charity Dynamics' On-Demand Support Services

# Overview

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Access to on-demand support engages your most committed fundraisers and largest donors so that their technology questions are answered right away, empowering them to raise and donate more.

For staff, it frees up their time to focus on the event and fundraising experience. On-demand support services include phone, chat and email support as well as outbound phone campaigns and proactive chat support.

Charity Dynamics provides on-demand participant and donor support solutions to event programs of all types — runs, walks, rides, DIYst and much more.



**Download our new solution sheet to learn more!**

**DOWNLOAD NOW**

# In Practice: Alzheimer's Association

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Interested to learn how one of the nation's leading nonprofits got started on the path to on-demand support with Charity Dynamics?

Noel Beebe, National Director of Digital Fundraising for Alzheimer's Association, breaks it down in the following video by going into detail on:

- The type of support that is currently offered by Alzheimer's Association.
- The impact of support on participants and chapter offices.
- Bonus insights received via on-demand support feedback and actions taken as a result.

Journey to On-Demand Support:  
Alzheimer's Association



alzheimer's association | Noel Beebe  
National Director, Digital Fundraising

WATCH NOW

# What's Next for On-Demand Support?

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Providing avenues for your constituents to reach you on an on-demand basis — such as by phone, email or chat — is critical for engaging your supporters to raise and donate more. But we can't stop there. A comprehensive support program should also include a robust, searchable self-service tool, proactive chat engagement tools and social support to take the support experience to the next level. These types of support services meet constituents where they are on your digital platforms.

We are excited about these emerging support areas and the innovative organizations that are working with Charity Dynamics to use these emerging tools to make an impact. Here are several pilot programs we are excited to be working on:

- 1 Creating a searchable FAQ database with animated tutorial solutions to common questions and problems
- 2 Using proactive chat with live support agents when donors receive errors and declines on a donation form
- 3 Integrating outbound calling into support programs to help constituents complete abandoned registration or achieve key fundraising milestones



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## **About Charity Dynamics**

As a leading provider of on-demand support services for non-profit event programs, Charity Dynamics support 3 of the top 30 peer-to-peer programs as well as many national and regional events. Our boutique support programs are tailored to the unique needs of each nonprofit to ensure a seamless integration with their business operations. We are proud to have had 100% retention of our participant support services clients over the last 3 years.

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