



Online Giving to Schools in 2018

INSIGHTS FROM 600+ EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

GIVECAMPUS

INTRODUCTION

This report identifies key trends in charitable giving to non-profit educational institutions. These insights are based on data collected from more than 600 schools that used GiveCampus technology and services in support of a wide array of fundraising initiatives over the last four years, including but not limited to giving days and short-term giving challenges, crowdfunding, reunions and class gifts, athletics development, fiscal year-end and calendar year-end campaigns, and capital projects. The report draws data from schools in 46 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and six foreign countries—58 percent of which are colleges and universities (including several two-year institutions) and 42 percent of which are independent K-12 schools.



REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Schools raised significantly more money online in 2018. This growth was driven by increases in the number of online donors and the average online gift size.
- Online giving was just as popular with non-Millennials as with Millennials.
- For the first time, a majority of prospective donors were on mobile devices.
- Recurring gifts were substantially more valuable than one-time gifts.
- Apple Pay emerged as a popular payment method for donors on iPhones and iPads.
- #GivingTuesday remained a major driver of online giving, even as many schools adopted new #GivingTuesday strategies.
- Peer-to-peer fundraising was as powerful online as it historically has been offline.
- Facebook remained the primary source of social traffic to schools' fundraising pages.

DATA & TRENDS

1. Online giving continues to grow significantly.

In 2018, schools raised 27 percent more money online than they did in 2017. This growth was particularly pronounced during the month of December, when schools raised 48 percent more money online than they did the year before. These substantial increases follow similar increases in 2017, when schools raised 32 percent more online than they did in 2016—including 57 percent more in December 2017 compared to December 2016.

The major uptick in online giving in 2018 was driven by increases in both the number of online donors and the average amount given by each online donor. In 2018, schools received support from 14 percent more online donors than in 2017 (+22 percent during the month of December) and online donors, on average, gave 11 percent more than they did in 2017 (+20 percent during the month of December). Retained online donors (those who gave online in 2017 and again in 2018) upgraded their gifts, on average, by more than 10 percent.

Online giving also increased relative to “offline” giving for the third consecutive year. In 2018, nearly 30 percent of all donations tracked via GiveCampus were online donations. This represents a massive increase from 2017 and 2016, when online giving accounted for only 13 percent and 11 percent of the total, respectively. (Note: In addition to processing

online gifts via GiveCampus, schools use GiveCampus to track “offline” giving that is directed to the same fundraising initiatives and campaigns. Schools typically do not track “offline” major gifts and principal gifts via GiveCampus unless those gifts are being used as a matching gift or challenge gift for a digital fundraising campaign or were made in response to a solicitation related to a digital fundraising campaign.)

2. Online giving attracts donors of all ages and giving capacities, everywhere.

Of all alumni donors to colleges and universities in 2018, approximately half graduated in 2000 or later and approximately half graduated in 1999 or earlier. This even split underscores that online giving is as popular with non-Millennials as it is with Millennials, and it highlights the expanding digital fluency and rapidly evolving preferences of so-called “digital immigrants” (those born and brought up before the widespread use of digital technology).

In part due to this broad demographic appeal, the data shows that donors at increasingly greater giving levels are open to—and in many cases, prefer—online giving. In 2018, the size of the largest online donations (in a single transaction) increased by 16.7 percent compared to 2017 and 40 percent compared to 2016—jumping from \$50,000 to \$70,000 over that two-year period.

Online giving also proved to be a valuable tool for reaching donors overseas. In 2018, donors in 145 foreign countries spread across six continents made online gifts to schools via GiveCampus. Outside of the United States, the greatest number of donors were located in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, China, Germany, South Korea, Japan, France, and Switzerland.

3. Mobile is officially more important than desktop.

Consistent with trends in e-commerce, the prominence of mobile devices increased again in 2018 and for the first time ever more people visited schools' online fundraising pages from their mobile devices than from their desktop and laptop computers. The significance of mobile increased progressively as the year went on, with 55 percent of all prospective donor traffic coming from mobile devices during the latter half of the year (July 1st thru December 31st). Among mobile donor prospects, Apple devices were the products of choice: more than 80 percent of mobile traffic came from iPhones and iPads.

4. Recurring gifts are more than twice as valuable as one-time gifts.

The average first-year value of a recurring gift established on GiveCampus in 2018 was 2.5 times the average value of a one-time gift made during the same timeframe. Additionally, the average first-year value of a recurring gift increased by nearly 35 percent year-over-year (2017 to 2018).



5. Apple Pay is an increasingly popular tool for charitable giving.

Apple Pay's growing popularity as a payment method for commercial transactions was mirrored by increasing popularity as a payment method for charitable donations in 2018. Between July 1st and December 31st, approximately 10 percent of donors using iPhones and iPads made their gifts with Apple Pay. Use of Apple Pay was especially high during periods when schools were focused on targeting younger donors, first-time donors, and/or smaller-dollar donors. On #GivingTuesday, for example, 16.8 percent of iPhone and iPad donors made their gifts with Apple Pay.

“ The average first-year value of a recurring gift was 2.5 times the average value of a one-time gift. ”

6. Peer-to-peer fundraising is critical: People (still) give to people.

In 2018, more than 16 percent of online donors on GiveCampus gave in direct response to an ask sent to them by a friend or peer through social media, email or text message. (Note: By “direct response” we mean that the donor clicked a link or post that directed them to a fundraising page and they immediately made a donation, without navigating away from the page.) Given the limited reach of individuals (relative to institutions), this highlights the effectiveness of peer-to-peer engagement and the expanded impact that donors can have when they ask their social networks to join them in giving back.

7. Facebook is still the best bet for social media.

One-third of prospective donors who visited schools’ fundraising pages on GiveCampus in 2018 arrived by way of social media. As in each of the last three years (2015-2017), Facebook accounted for more than 80 percent of this traffic—suggesting that negative press for Facebook in 2018 did not harm its popularity with prospective donors. Twitter accounted for 11 percent of social traffic to schools’ fundraising pages, Instagram for six percent, and LinkedIn for one percent.



“ Sixteen percent of donors gave in response to an ask from a friend. ”

8. #GivingTuesday remains important, but strategies are shifting.

#GivingTuesday remained an incredibly significant fundraising event in 2018, accounting for more than four percent of all of the money that schools raised online during the year. Furthermore, schools that fundraised on #GivingTuesday in both 2017 and 2018 saw a 17.3 percent increase in the number of donors and a 14.4 percent increase in dollars raised from one year to the next.

While many schools continued to position #GivingTuesday as an all-out, 24-hour “day of giving” in 2018, a notable number of schools adjusted their approach. Instead of multiple widespread solicitations emphasizing the time-limited nature of the day, some re-framed #GivingTuesday as only the start of the giving season and encouraged donors to give at any point prior to the end of the year. Others launched smaller-scale campaigns, targeted a narrower and more tailored segment of donors (e.g., only those who previously gave on #GivingTuesday), and/or sent fewer solicitations throughout the day. A few chose to forego solicitation altogether and used the day to deliver stewardship messages to existing donors—some of which contained a link to give but no explicit ask.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The data in this report points to the rapidly evolving ways that people young and old are giving. Online giving is growing quickly and, along with it, we're seeing the important role that digital technologies and platforms like mobile phones, Apple Pay, and Facebook are playing. Developing a deeper understanding of these technologies and key trends associated with them can help schools fundraise more effectively.

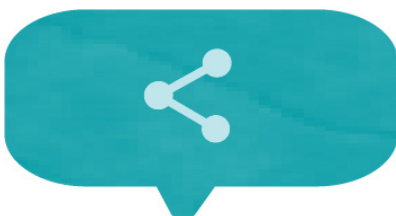
For advancement professionals seeking to get ahead of the curve in 2019, we recommend adopting two approaches in the immediate term:

First, find ways to deliver greater ease and convenience to your donors. We live in an Amazon.com world, and with more than 50 percent of prospective donors now visiting their schools' fundraising pages from mobile devices, providing a simple, seamless, and "mobile optimized" giving experience is no longer an option—it is an imperative. If someone can't easily make a gift in less than thirty seconds, from any device, they probably won't make a gift at all.

Second, focus on recurring giving. If you already have a recurring giving program, enhance it. If you do not, establish one as quickly as possible. As this report shows, recurring gifts are substantially more valuable than one-time gifts. Further, they are proven to improve acquisition and retention and to more reliably facilitate upgrades of existing donors.

WANT MORE?

To request a more detailed set of recommendations based on the data and insights contained in this report, send an email to info@givecampus.com. In addition to expanding on ways that you can deliver greater ease and convenience to your donors and establish or enhance your recurring giving program, an expert from GiveCampus will provide you with a free digital fundraising consultation and a set of recommendations tailored to your school.



ABOUT GIVECAMPUS

GiveCampus is the world's leading digital fundraising and volunteer management platform for non-profit educational institutions. Trusted by 600+ colleges, universities, and K-12 schools, our mission is to advance the quality, the affordability, and the accessibility of education. We provide software, services, and expertise that help schools raise more money, from more people, at a fraction of the cost of other fundraising methods. **Learn more at www.givecampus.com.**