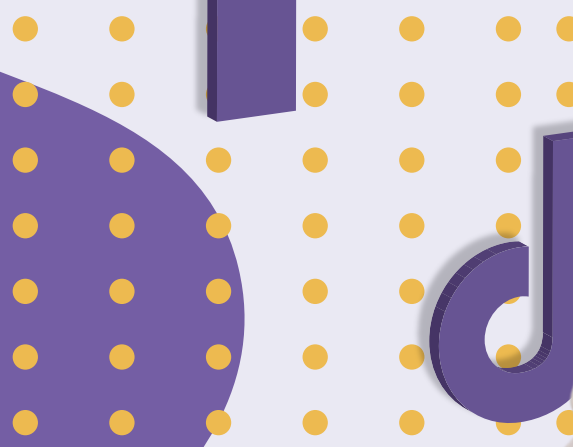
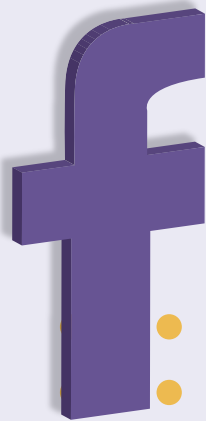


# How to Gain & Retain Donors on Social Media

*Nonprofit Social Media Basics, Going Viral & Everything in Between*

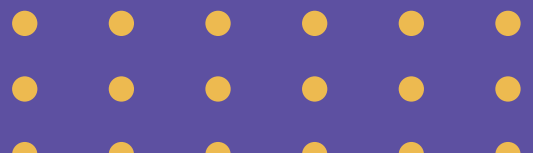




**UncommonGood** is the software platform and community that helps you to think like a nonprofit and act like a business.

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# How to Gain & Retain Donors on Social Media

First off, let's start by saying **there is no quick fix to going viral on social media**. Hate to break it to you, but it's true - there's a reason why "social media manager" and "content creator" are real jobs now. It takes work! However, most viral social media posts/videos have a few things in common besides luck. Let's take a look at the basics first.

Social media has become more than just a chat wall and ranking of your top 8 friends. Social media is a preferred method of communication where people curate a picture perfect life through a collection of cloud-based photos, videos, songs, and articles and engage with other people and brands through likes, comments, DMs, reviews, shares, and saves. These interactions are gamified to motivate and engage people's brains, prompting them to want more and more time on the social media platforms.

According to TechJury, the average person spent 2 hours and 30 minutes daily on social media in 2022. If you think about it, it honestly could be more depending on the person! It's the first thing many people do when they wake up in the morning and the last thing they check on their phones before bed. And while MySpace is no longer relevant, **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Pinterest, Reddit, BeReal** and other platforms have taken up prime real estate on people's cell phones and in their lives everyday.

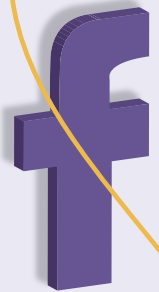
Now before you go and start creating accounts on each of these platforms, you need to take a step back and figure out who your target audience is, which platforms they spend their time on, and which platforms will work best for your nonprofit. You don't need to have them all! Social media is great for nonprofits because it gives you a voice to interact with your donors, form relationships, get noticed by potential new supporters, and it's free! However, social media takes time, strategy, and daily interactions. Here's a breakdown of each platform:

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# Social Media Basics

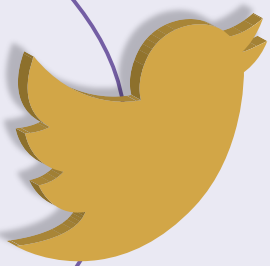
## 1 Facebook

While it's not the OG platform, Facebook has become the biggest social media giant, owning other platforms, monetizing data on people's profiles by running ads, and spanning across generations with gen Z, millennials, gen X, boomers, and even some of the silent generation being active on the network. Facebook is a good starting point if you don't know who your target audience is, if you have a variety of posts you want to share, and/or your typical supporter skews to the older generations.



## 2 Twitter

Twitter is probably the most involved platform as conversations are always flowing in real time! While you can't say everything in one tweet due to character limitations, you can tweet in chains, reply to others, retweet and add comments, send photos and gifs, and take polls. This makes Twitter a great tool for engaging with supporters but it also needs a lot of attention. Twitter could be great for nonprofit organizations that focus on policy reform, education, disaster relief, and more.



## 3 Instagram

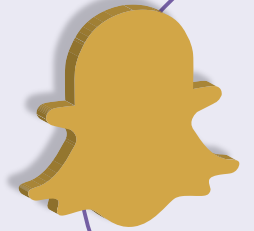
While this platform is owned by Facebook, it's known in and of itself for the ability to share photos (and now videos too). They've evolved to have "stories" that can create more engagement with polls and question boxes but still have limited link sharing capabilities. Instagram can be great for nonprofits that have a lot of visuals and can help tell a story by putting a face to your cause.





## 4 Snapchat

Known for the original disappearing photo/video with a dog filter, you can think of Snapchat as picture-based texting to a singular person or all of your followers. Instagram and Facebook have since stolen this idea and turned it into their “stories” feature which has made this platform less popular but it is still popular with the younger generations.



## 5 TikTok

Some may say that TikTok stole the now defunct Vine’s idea of sharing short video clips to the public and others have never even heard of Vine. Regardless, TikTok has become wildly popular with the younger generations and is known for its dance clips, animal videos, fun facts, tips & tricks, and GRWM (get ready with me) videos.

This platform is a great way for people to learn about your nonprofit but you need to be constantly making videos to get ahead of this unique algorithm.

## 6 YouTube

The OG video platform owned by Google is a great place to host your organization’s videos online. You can use their embed links to put videos on your website, send videos out in your emails, and get noticed by potential supporters searching on Google & YouTube since it’s all keyword based.



## 7 Pinterest

This social media platform is known for sharing and saving links to blog articles & photos so a user can refer back to them later. Things like recipes, crafts, home improvement projects, and outfit inspiration reign supreme here but orgs that have life saving steps, educational content, and lots of resource articles could thrive on Pinterest.



## 8 Reddit

Reddit is a huge chatboard site where users can submit content and others can rate it by giving it a thumbs up or down, as well as commenting on it. Reddit is known for its sarcasm, rants, and sometimes the occasional online word fight. Most businesses stay far away from this platform, so proceed with caution.



## 9 BeReal

The newest social media platform on our list, BeReal is a response to the overly curated and photoshopped Instagram feed.

This platform prompts users to take a simultaneous photo (selfie style and whatever your phone camera is pointing at) and post it to the feed without the user being able to edit the photo. BeReal doesn't allow formal advertising but some big name brands are using it to target the younger generation. It might be tricky to get your mission across here but you never know what will resonate with your audience until you try it.



**Remember, quality over quantity!**

It's better to be strategic and focus on a few platforms than try to do it all. Your staff will be exhausted and your social metrics will be close to zero if you spread yourself too thin.



# Show Your Legitimacy

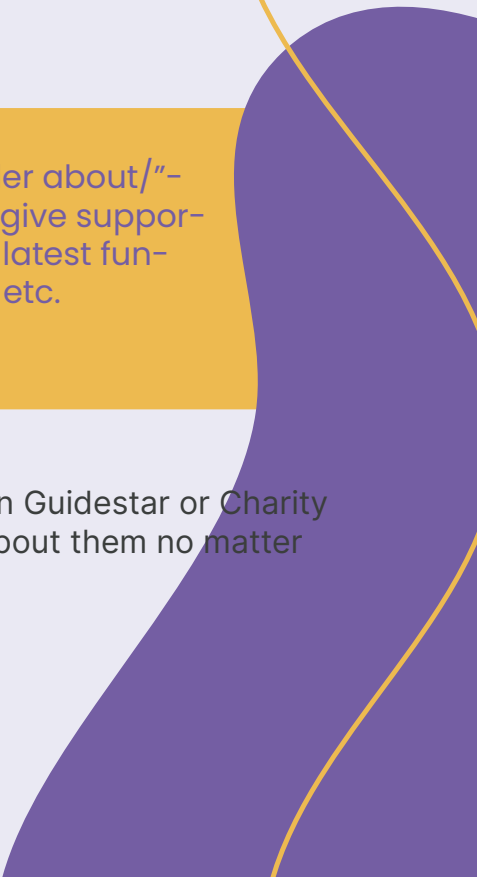
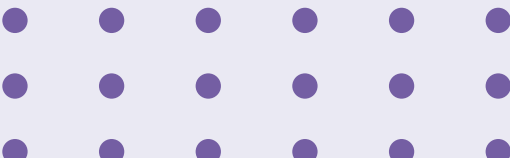
Once you identify the platforms or your org, make sure that you set up your profile as a nonprofit or business account. Some platforms allow nonprofits to access special features such as a donation button, free training courses, or a blue checkmark to show potential donors you're legitimate. Once you are set up on the platform of your choice, complete all of the sections on the nonprofit's profile such as:

- About Section
- Profile Photo and Cover Photo
- Address
- Contact Info (Phone Number and Email)
- Website
- And anything else that is applicable

The more information you give, the more trust you build with your audience. Many potential donors will check out an org on social media to see how informed they keep their supporters and to try to get a sense for how active and loyal other donors are. If a potential donor gets frustrated and can't find what they are looking for, they might think you aren't legit and your nonprofit will miss out on their donation. Just be sure to make all the info short, sweet, and to the point.

**Uncommongood Hint:** For those platforms with smaller about/"-bio" sections, consider creating a linktree account to give supporters easy access to links on your website such as the latest fundraiser, your 990 form, a news article about your org, etc.

While you're getting started, set your nonprofit profile up on Guidestar or Charity Navigator too! These sites will dig into your org and post about them no matter what, so you might as well let your voice be heard.





# How to **Gain & Retain** Donors

Once your org is set up and ready to go, you need to create a social media strategy. Remember, this is a long-term play, so planning, consistency, and responsiveness are the keys to success.

If you've never created a marketing strategy and content calendar before, check out this free resource. A content calendar broken down by month and day will help you and your staff post content consistently so that you can slowly gain and retain followers that will eventually turn into support with either monetary donations or volunteer time!

According to NP Source, 55% of people who engage with nonprofits on social media end up taking some sort of action. The crucial word here being "engage" - you need to not only post content but make sure that your content is engaging. Here are 6 things your social media content needs to embody to be engaging:



## 6 Essentials Aspects of **Nonprofit Content Creation**

# 1

## Transparency

The number one thing potential donors want is transparency on how their dollars will make a difference.

**Social Media Applications:** create infographics using the **design studio** and post hard facts and figures on your social media platforms. Record an impact story or annual event on social media as it unfolds, allowing supporters to follow along via Reels, LIVES, and other video applications. Post links to your 990 and annual report from your website; it's already out there on the web (IE Guidestar, etc.) so why not just be direct.

# 2

## Authenticity

In line with being transparent and honest, donors more than ever before want companies and nonprofits to be authentic and real with them. They don't want a brand or nonprofit to hide behind a "persona" or put on a fake personality. People want to know what's really happening both the good and the bad.

**Social Media Applications:** be honest when you don't meet a goal or when a new initiative is a flop, be true to your mission and talk about the hard topics, post about your staff and their daily tasks. Create a behind the scenes video or interview staff on a Live broadcast! Get creative and come up with something that truly embodies your org's mission and promote it like crazy!

# 3

## Relationship Focused

Social media is not PR. Again, social media is not public relations. You should not just blast out information transactionally. Social media is social. It is a way to have a relationship with your supporters; it's a two-way street where they can interact with your org and your org can react to them.

**Social Media Applications:** Start a conversation! Ask your followers questions and have them respond in the comments. Take polls, use the question box in stories, and ask them to share your page with friends and family who need your help. If someone tags your org in photos from an event, reshare them. THANK YOUR SUPPORTERS! And most importantly take the time to craft personal responses in a timely manner to each and every comment, DM, or review! The more you engage with your followers, the higher visibility your org obtains due to social media's algorithms prioritizing content that gets a lot of likes, reshares, comments, etc. Think the higher your engagement metrics, the more visibility, and ultimately, more donations coming in.

## 4 Thought Leadership

As a nonprofit with a specific mission, people see you as an expert in the specific sector. They rely on you to keep them up to date on the subject, to know what is a rumor and what is fact, to give guidance in your field, and to help those affected by the issues you support.

**Social Media Applications:** Share factual news articles, interview and/or partner with similar orgs to disseminate appropriate information, create how-to guides or videos, and educate followers about how policies could affect your mission/people you help.

## 5 Variety

According to the State of Modern Philanthropy report, millennials' top pet peeves are coming across the same content constantly (69%) and getting hit with asks over and over again (69%). Make sure that your social media content has variety and don't be the aggressive car salesman always asking for a browser to buy!

**Social Media Applications:** Visually, you should alternate between videos, photos, and graphics while keeping in line with your brand standards. The content topics should be a mix of brand awareness, sharable third-party content, and solicitations. Think 70/20/10 with 70% of content falling in the brand awareness bucket, 20% falling in the third-party bucket, and 10% of the time asking for donations or volunteers.

## 6 Shareability

According to NP Source, 84% of Facebook users share to show their support for a cause and highlight issues that are important to them. Think peer-to-peer here; whether a post is asking for a donation or not, you need to make sure that the content you produce for social media is resonating with your supporters so that they want to share it.

**Social Media Applications:** Check your metrics to see what types of content (educational, user generated, etc.) are being shared the most and focus on producing more of those types of posts. Ask your followers to share your page or a post. Consider a small contest where followers have to share and tag people in a post to be entered to win (make sure you have the right disclaimers to not get in trouble with the law). Tag influencers or celebrities that have ties to your mission.



With these qualities in mind, **take the time to plan** out your social media posts on a monthly basis.

Remember, social **media is fluid and reactive to breaking news**, so don't worry if you don't follow it to a T.

## A Note on **Going Viral**

Like we said before, going viral is a hard goal to live up to and according to Stanford University, the chances of going viral are one in a million. However, your chances of going viral can increase if you stay aware of what's beginning to trend and get ahead of the curve, implement the 6 aspects of content creation, and get creative in executing your messages that resonate with your target audience.

## Tips for **Social Media Success**

Now that you have your social media strategy planned and have created your first month of posts, consider these tips to make your life easier:

- **Pre Schedule your posts:** use a social media scheduling tool (like the design studio from UncommonGood ;) ) to schedule your posts out on a weekly or monthly basis so that you free up your staff's time and don't forget to post. Tools like this will become smarter over time, analyzing the best times of day to post according to your followers' interactions.
- **Ask for follows:** if you're new to social media altogether or you have some new supporters, ask them to follow your nonprofit's profile(s). Email, text, and even cross promote your social channels on other social platforms.
- **Be active in groups:** research Facebook or LinkedIn groups that have a shared mission or cause with your org and join them as your nonprofit's profile. Engage with group members and be a thought leader, sharing relevant info that you and others have created. Just don't be salesy or ask for donations in the group.

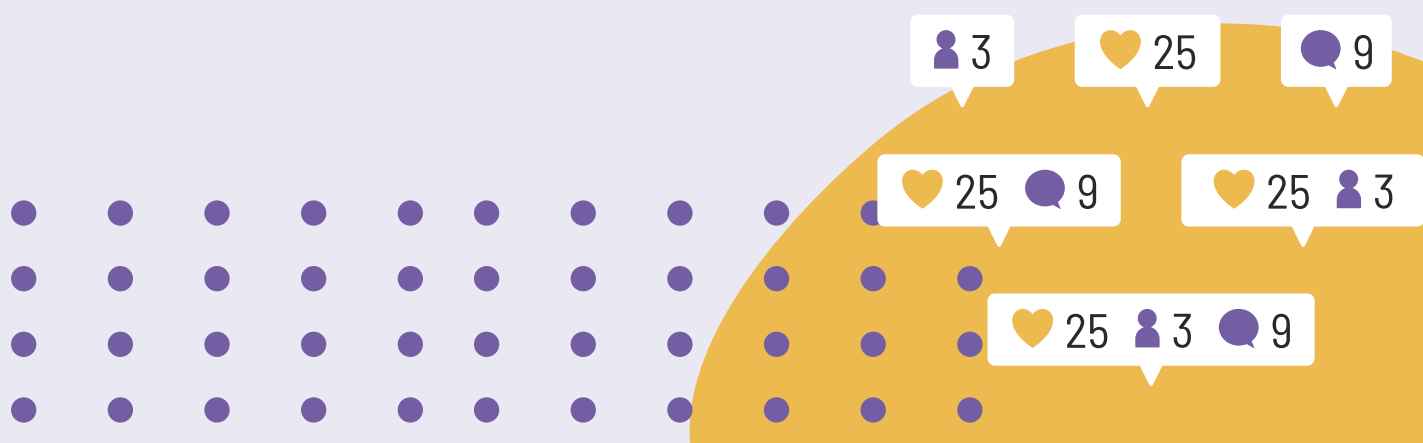
- **Have clear CTAs:** Be specific in your ask and only ask for one thing (money, volunteers, etc.) per post. Make sure that the page you direct people to has an on-page donation form and isn't confusing to a new potential donor.
- **Create events:** According to NP Source, 43% of people attend or participate in charitable events in their community because of social media. Use the Facebook calendar events feature to create both in-person and virtual events. That way supporters can share it and mark themselves as attending, thus spreading awareness of your event and making the social media algorithms work in your favor.
- **Hashtags (#):** depending on your platform of choice, hashtags can be a valuable tool to get your content in front of new people. Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok are the major players in the hashtag space, but you can experiment with 1-3 hashtags on Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube as well.
- **Remember the 3 R's:** repromote, repurpose, and refresh your content. Respond to your supporters - we know we've said it above but we cannot stress how important this is!

## Compliment your Social Media

Social media is a great way to form relationships with your donors and bring in new supporters, but it shouldn't be your end all be all.

Nonprofits should have a modern and easy to understand website where supporters can learn more about your mission. Your website is at the core of your content marketing strategy; it's where you direct people from social media to read a blog, donate, or sign-up to volunteer. Make sure that you optimize your website with an embedded donation form and have clear calls-to-action.

Nonprofits also need to have an omni-channel marketing approach. What this means is that you need to do more than just post on social media and update your website, you need to nurture leads and existing supporters via email campaigns, do outreach to local news stations about upcoming community events, and, if budget allows, run ads to bring in donations and volunteers.



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