



idealware

CANDID INFORMATION ABOUT NONPROFIT SOFTWARE

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Donate Now:

Selecting an Online Donation Tool

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About Idealware

Idealware provides candid Consumer-Reports-style reviews and articles about software of interest to nonprofits. Through product comparisons, recommendations, case studies, and software news, Idealware allows nonprofits to make the software decisions that will help them be more effective. For more information on Idealware visit www.idealware.org or contact Laura S. Quinn at laura@idealware.org.

Acknowledgements

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More Resources Online!

This PDF report provides a summary of the Idealware online donation tool research, but there are more resources at the Idealware website at www.idealware.org. This website includes a detailed review of every vendor, as well as information about how all of the ratings were determined.

Introduction

There are a number of excellent options that allow even small nonprofits to accept credit card donations on their website. Unfortunately, there are even more options that are over-priced or unimpressive. And it is hard to know which is which: choosing an online donation tool can involve a bewildering array of jargon, fees, and surprisingly unhelpful sales information.

We wanted to get to the bottom of all the options. We reviewed twenty-seven different vendors that offer lower-priced online donation tools that can be used with an existing website. We talked to nonprofit staff members and consultants who have used these tools, read existing reviews, discussed the tools with sales representatives, looked at current clients' donation forms, and played with administration interfaces.

Analyzing all this data required a healthy dose of interpretation, opinion, and consideration of different nonprofit needs. Unfortunately, there was no way to just add up a bunch of numbers to define what tool was best. But there were clear differences between the tools that allowed us to compare them and to recommend a set that, in our opinion, are likely to meet the needs of the majority of nonprofits. What we found was good news: many affordable tools are also powerful, friendly, and flexible.

Who is this Report For?

This report is intended to be used by small- to medium-sized nonprofits with some specific needs: those who already have a website and are hoping to add online donation functionality. While we focus on the needs of US-based organizations, nonprofits outside the US may find some of the tools of use to them as well. For instance, this report may be helpful to:

- ♦ A small grassroots organization that would like to receive online donations without investing a lot of time or money in adding functionality to their website
- ♦ A human services agency that has had some small success with online donations in the past and is looking for a tool that will better support their needs
- ♦ A museum that wants a full featured online donation system but doesn't want to maintain it in-house and doesn't need sophisticated email or outreach tools

But this does not include everyone. There are a couple of key types of tools that are not included. Are you taking in a \$5000 or more per month in online donations? Do you also need substantial functionality for product sales, event ticketing, or member registration? Are you planning sophisticated email campaigns that need to be tightly integrated with your online fundraising? Are you considering redesigning your website or the way you update the text on it? Are you dissatisfied with your current method of storing donor or member data? These are signs that you may need to look beyond the tools included in this report to the wider world of custom and integrated tools.

This report is intended to be a snapshot of the available options as of October 2005. The products available and the features they offer change rapidly; please verify information before relying on it for decision making purposes.

What's Available?

At a basic level, all online donation tools work pretty much the same way. A "donation" button on your website links to a donation form. Donors enter their contact and credit card information into the form and the tool takes care of the rest, first verifying the credit card and then ensuring that the donor's money gets to your organization. Online reporting tools allow you to see what's been donated and export the donation information to another database.

But beyond these similarities, donation tools come in a lot of different packages. Some are intended to stand alone as a donation tool, while some come in suites intended to support much more.

Donation Portals: Vendors like Network for Good are focused around their own donation portal, a centralized website that allows visitors to view information or donate to a wide variety of organizations. You can link your website to your organization's page on the portal, but it's quite clear to the donor that they are leaving your website to go to a different website that will process their donation. These tools are inexpensive, typically charging about 3% of each donation with no other fees.

Donation Specialists: Groundspring DonateNow is in a group by itself, specializing in providing donation functionality that match the organization's website. Because this vendor handles only donations, it is quite reasonably priced for the customization and features it offers, charging 3% of the donation and monthly fees of \$15 to \$25.

Online Payment Specialists: GiftTool, Contribute, CharityWeb and others provide support for various online payments: event registration, product sales, membership dues, donations, and more. Many of these tools are a good option even if you only need to take donations, but can be even more powerful if you want to collect additional kinds of payments. Fees vary in quantity and type, but typically include either 3-8% of the amount paid, monthly fees of \$20 - \$50, or some combination of both.

Integrated Online Solutions: A growing number of tools are becoming integrated solutions that support donation, email, website content management, and more, all powered by a central online database. These products, such as MemberClicks, eTapestry, or Democracy in Action are intended to serve as your primary donor or constituent database and provide suites of tools to communicate with and manage your constituents. For instance, Democracy in Action provides tools to process online donations, send bulk email, contact legislators, post news and press releases, and more. These vendors typically charge about 3-8% of the amount collected in donations plus monthly fees ranging from \$15 - \$1000 or more. Note that **we have only included here the**

If You Just Build It, They Won't Come

Regardless of what vendor you choose, donations won't come pouring in just because you can now take them online. Think carefully about how you will encourage potential donors to go to your website. How will they know that online donations are an option? How will you ask them to give? How will you integrate your online donation capacity into your direct mail and offline campaigns? How will you connect with donors after an online donation to make sure they have the receipts and acknowledgement they need? And how will you encourage online donors to become even more involved in your organization?

All of this outreach and integration takes time and resources. While some of the tools may seem virtually "free," any online donation program will require an initial investment to make it pay off. However, even a little planning can go a long way.

Running Credit Card Transactions Yourself

Some services offer to store or send you the donor's credit card number so that you can run the donation yourself, just like you would run a phone donation. This is probably not a good idea, for a number of reasons. It typically doesn't save you much money compared to the effort it takes for your staff to manage the process; remember that you'll be charged 2% or more for any kind of credit card transaction, even if you run it yourself. This method also introduces security concerns: if credit card numbers are stored (no matter how securely), and your staff has access to them, then you are potentially jeopardizing your donors' information. There also may be potential issues with merchant accounts, time lags, and declined credit cards. The bottom line: don't do it unless you're sure you know what you're doing.

less expensive products (under \$100 in monthly non-transactional fees) that make sense for organizations looking only to take online donations from an existing website. A wide variety of powerful integrated solutions merit a report of their own (for instance, GetActive, Convio, Kintera, LocalVoice, and Artez, among others).

Custom Payment Systems: There are two more options that will not be covered in detail in this report. If you are willing to do some coding, consider integrating a **shopping cart package** to process your online donations. If you have a high volume of donations (\$5000/month or more) or very specific needs, it is worth considering **building your own payment system** from component parts. This requires a significant up-front investment (\$2000 to \$10,000 or more) but could well pay for itself over time.

Features and Functions

The donation process begins with a request for donations on your website. This might be a "Donate Now" button or a link with information describing all the good work you do and how you use donors' money. When donors click the button or link, they are taken to a form where they can determine how much they would like give, enter their billing and credit card information, and fill out any other information you request.

The actual look of the form is one of the big differentiating factors between the tools. Some tools - such as PayPal and Network for Good - make it obvious to the donor that they have left your site and are now being asked to donate through a different website. A majority of the tools allow you to tailor the **appearance of the donation form** to match the colors, fonts, and images to your own website. A key factor is whether the donation form can **include the navigation bar** from your website: unless the form has the same global navigation as the rest of your website, it will not look like it is part of the same site.

All donation tools ask the donor to enter their credit card number and contact information, but the other fields shown on the donation form vary substantially from vendor to vendor. Most allow the donor to choose to **target their gift** to a specific program or to **sign up for a newsletter**. Some provide support for **tributes, memorials, premiums** (i.e. thank you gifts) or **employer matching**. **Customizable donation amounts and text** tailor the donation choices shown to the donor. The ability to include **custom fields** in the form allows you to collect organization-specific functionality - or to support targeted gifts, newsletter sign-ups, tributes and other functionality in an alternate method.

Different vendors allow for different types of payments. All support **Visa and Mastercard**; many support **American Express, Discover**, or other cards. **PayPal** is increasingly used as a payment method. Many vendors provide **recurring donation** functionality so that donors can automatically give the same amount every month. **eChecks** (also known as EFT or ACH transactions) allow donors to enter check information and have money automatically transferred from their checking account. Some can also handle **donations**

from outside North America; US-based vendors need a specific setup to be able to verify credit cards issued by foreign banks.

When donors enter their information and click to finalize their payment, the backend payment process begins. The credit card is validated, to ensure that the number is acceptable and that funds are available. Some vendors provide additional checks to try to reduce the number of fraudulent charges: Does the **CSV code** (the three digit code on the back of the card) and/or the **billing address** match the one in the credit card issuer's record? Does the donation match a **fraudulent pattern**, likely resulting in a charge that is not a legitimate donation? If the payment information passes the screening process, the card is charged.

There are two backend entities that facilitate this process. When the money is received from the donor, it is deposited into a type of bank account called a **merchant account**. This merchant account may be in your name or the vendor's name. The actual process of communicating with the credit card company and bank is done by a service called the **payment gateway** (also referred to as an internet gateway or payment processor).

The whole transaction process happens in a matter of seconds. When the transaction is complete, the visitor is shown a confirmation page and sent a confirmation via email. Usually the donor is sent a **tax-ready** receipt via email; some vendors will account for **less than 100% deductible donations** in these receipts (for instance, to account for a thank you gift). A few vendors provide a **donor website** to allow donors to see and edit their donations.

At this point, a record of the transaction contact and donation information is typically available in an **online reporting tool**. A few tools allow you to see a **summary of donation tools over time**, enabling you to compare what you received this month to last month, or this year to last year. More sophisticated **filtering**, when available, can help you analyze your donations. If you will need to include a record of the donations in an external database, make sure you can **export to a text file**. Files that are **compatible with a specific database** or features that allow you **customize the export file** will help to make this data ready to import into your database. Some vendors provide **programmatic access to data**, for instance through secure FTP or web services, that allow you to program a custom routine to automatically pull data into your database.

Actually receiving the money takes a little more time. If the merchant account is in your name, the donated funds will be electronically deposited into your bank account in three to five days. If you are using your payment vendor's merchant account, you will get the money from the vendor by **check** or **electronic deposit** (EFT). Most vendors pay **monthly**; a few pay **twice a month** or even more frequently.

Fraud? Who Makes Fraudulent Donations?

You'd be surprised. There are several reasons why unscrupulous folks might make donations using stolen credit cards. For instance, many use non-profit sites, which they expect to have fewer fraud controls than a e-commerce site, to check which of a long list of credit card numbers are valid. Fraudulent donations cause a big administrative headache, fees when the card owner cancels the charge, and - if they happen often enough - could start to affect people's perception of your organization. Make sure that the vendor you chose can verify addresses or CSV codes (the three digit codes on the back of credit cards). Ideally, the vendor should have a process which will flag odd donations (for instance, someone making three donations in a row from different credit cards or a large donation from Turkey to a small New Hampshire non-profit).

Making Sense of Fees

Online donation tool pricing can be bewildering. Here's a roundup of the types of fees you may encounter:

- ♦ **Setup Fees:** You pay these fees only once, before you start using the tool. What the vendor actually sets up varies widely - check to see if it covers everything you will need to have done.

- ♦ **Monthly or Yearly Fees:** Think of these as the "rent" for the system.

- ♦ **Transaction Fees:** These fees are variable with the number of donations that you receive. They are calculated either as a percentage of each donation, a flat fee per donation, or both (i.e. 3% plus \$0.40 per donation means that \$3.40 would be deducted from a \$100 donation).

- ♦ **Merchant Account Fees:** If you are using a merchant account of your own, there may be separate fees paid to the company that supplies it to you. These are typically more transaction fees, and may include monthly fees or "statement fees" (just a monthly fee by another name).

- ♦ **Gateway Fee:** If you are using a merchant account of your own, there's a chance that you may need to pay an additional monthly fee to an internet gateway provider. You always need a gateway provider, but their fees are typically included in either the vendor's fees or the merchant account's fees. Ask your vendor to be sure.

How to Choose

Consider whether donations are just a small piece of a larger puzzle. This report is geared to those whose primary concern is adding online donations to an existing website - but that might not include you. Do you need substantial functionality around product sales, event ticketing, or member registration? Are you planning sophisticated email campaigns integrated with your online fundraising? Are you considering redesigning your website, or the way you update the text on it? Are you dissatisfied with your current method of storing donor or member data?

If so, you should consider a tool that addresses those needs as well as donations. Unfortunately, many of the best options for you may not be included in this report.

Decide whether you want to use a vendor's merchant account or your own

To take online donations, you will need to use a bank account that accepts online credit card payments, called a merchant account. Some vendors will allow you to use their account, or you can apply for your own. If you already have a merchant account (for instance, for taking credit card payments over the phone) it is possible that you can use it for online payments as well - but there will still be some verification and paperwork to do.

Why would you use a vendor's merchant account? It is easier to use a vendor's account than to do the paperwork for your own account, and is likely to be cheaper for small organizations. The vendor will also answer donor questions if the donor has concerns about the charge they see on their credit card bill.

Why would you establish your own account? For one, you receive the money faster - generally within five days rather than in bulk once or twice a month. This also assures that your organization's name is shown on the donor's credit card bill, rather than the vendor's (however, some vendors can display your name even if you use their merchant account). If you have a high volume of donations, using your own merchant account is generally cheaper. It also gives you more flexibility to choose the merchant account that has the rates most favorable to your typical donation volume, or even to build your own payment functionality down the road.

In general, it makes sense for organizations that are just getting started with online donations to use a vendor's merchant account, while those who are ready to invest more seriously should consider setting up their own account. Most vendors who require you to have your own merchant account will recommend several with whom they work. In fact, the vendor may limit you to using one of a specific set.

Calculate the size and volume of donations you expect to get

Different vendors use different pricing structures. It's important to estimate the donations you expect - how many donations you expect to get per month, and how large a typical gift will be - in order to compare fees across vendors. Remember that if the vendor does not provide a merchant account, you will need to pay for that separately.

Decide if the donation form needs to look like your website

Some vendors' donation forms look nothing like your website, and some even display prominent logos for the vendors themselves. Others offer forms that are tailored to match your organization's website and navigation - but you typically pay for the privilege. If you are just getting started, it make sense to get your feet wet with a cheaper tool that doesn't allow as much flexibility - a recognized brand like Network for Good or Paypal could even lend additional credibility to your donation processing. However, you will appear more professional and likely raise more money with a donation tool that matches your site's look.

Weigh the time required to import donations into your donor database

If you need to pull the data from the donation tool into another database, consider how much you are willing to spend to save yourself time doing it. Nearly every tool will let you export your data as a text file in order to import it to a separate donor database - an investment of about an hour a week. However, some tools make this data integration process much easier. Some allow you to create a text file that specifically matches your donor database. Others allow you access to your data programmatically so that you can set up an automatic process to synchronize the data.

Use care when considering the online donation tools offered by vendors who specialize in offline donor databases. These donation tools typically allow you to export the data into a text file of the right format, but otherwise have little integration with the offline donor database. For instance, the company that offers GiftMaker Pro also offers an online donation tool. Using the donation tool, you can create a text file that is in a GiftMaker- friendly format, but you then must upload that file into GiftMaker by hand every time you would like to synchronize the data. You will get as much from any tool that supports the creation of custom text files - and often a more robust donation tool as well.

Decide on critical features

Is it vital that you be able to accept tribute or memorial gifts? Support employer matching? Include organization-specific custom fields? Handle recurring gifts, eChecks, or donations from outside North America? Receive the donation money more than once a month? Define what features you can't live without, and narrow the list to those that can support these features.

Do I Need to Register in Every State?

It's unclear. Organizations that are fundraising by direct mail in a particular state must register as a charitable organization in that state, but the laws are hard to apply directly to internet fundraising. No one has been prosecuted for internet fundraising, so there's no precedent to know how the laws will apply. Some online donation vendors that are non-profits themselves tell you they are registered in all applicable states, so you don't have to. Does it help you that the vendor is registered? It's possible. It certainly doesn't hurt. But the law could also be interpreted to mean that both the vendor and your organization (as the entity for which the donations are being solicited) should be registered in any states where "substantial" funds are being raised. It's also possible that none of these laws will be enforced in the foreseeable future, and it will all be moot. Whatever a vendor (or this report) tells you, you should consult your own lawyer and make your own decisions. For more resources on this subject, see the Nonprofit FAQ at <http://tinyurl.com/a6gcl>.

Recommended Online Donation Tools

Go to www.idealware.org to see detailed reviews of each of these tools, as well as details as to how they were evaluated.

If you expect only a few donations, and price is a key concern

If you are simply looking to get started with an online donation program, a lower price tool that is not specifically integrated with your website may make sense.

Click and Pledge (www.clickandpledge.com)

Offering reasonable functionality at very affordable prices, Click and Pledge could be a good choice, especially for organizations who only expect a few donations. The donation form is designed to be integrated into a website as a popup; it can include some custom fields and a top banner, but not the website navigation bar or a tailored background color. The tool also has strong international support. A new release, scheduled for January 2006, offers a number of promising functionalities, including the ability to customize the donation form background color and support recurring donations.

Network for Good (www.networkforgood.org)

Network for Good is a low-cost but completely un-customizable tool that could be a good choice for organizations interested in testing an online donation program. The extensive Network for Good branding gives the donor little doubt that they have left the organization's website to make a donation on the Network for Good website.

PayPal Donations (www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=p/xcl/rec/donate-intro-outside)

With no way to customize the look of or the fields on the donation form, PayPal is difficult to integrate into a website; the user experience is unmistakably PayPal. However, it is widely known and trusted by tech-savvy donors, which could conceivably make the PayPal branding a good thing. The lowest fees among donation tools and some advanced features make this worth a look for organizations with a technically savvy staff-person.

Best values for all around good tools

There are a number of tools that offer solid features and a lot of customization at affordable rates.

Auctionpay (www.auctionpay.com)

Auctionpay is a good option for organizations looking for a middle-of-the-road donation, registration, and event solution at a reasonable price. Their donation form can be integrated into the look of the website to some degree, and is quite flexible. They offer a few features for those looking to use a vendor's merchant account without all the downsides: the organization's name appears on the donor's credit bill (as opposed to just the vendor's), and Auctionpay distributes the donated money twice a month.

Democracy in Action (www.democracyinaction.org)

For those who need an affordable and very customizable donation tool, Democracy in Action is a great choice. It's an even better choice for those who are looking to combine their constituent database, email functionality, and more with in a single tool. A self-serve administration interface allows organizations to set up their own account and make any needed changes down the road. However, the complexity of this setup process means it may not be the best option for those without technology expertise.

eTapestry (www.etapestry.com)

The representative we spoke to emphasized that eTapestry is intended as an integrated online database, but they offer a high quality donation tool that is surprisingly affordable even when used alone. If the online donor database and email functionality meet the organization's needs, this is an even better deal for those who want to integrate donation and email functionality in one package. The organization must have its own merchant account, and the lowest fees include support only via email.

GiftTool (www.gifttool.com)

GiftTool is a solid choice for middle-of-the-road needs, particularly for organizations that need to support events or product sales as well as donations. They offer complete integration of their clean and user-friendly donation form into your website, though it is not currently possible to customize the form with fields that GiftTool has not already considered. As a Canadian company, they offer additional receipt and language options to support Canadian organizations.

Groundspring DonateNow (www.groundspring.org)

Groundspring is an affordable option for organizations that don't need complex customizations or their own merchant account. Their clean and professional donation form can be seamlessly integrated into each organization's website. Several of the consultants interviewed for this report expressed concern about Groundspring's financial stability, but their recent merger with Network for Good may help to stabilize them.

MemberClicks (www.memberclicks.com)

With an interesting approach that provides organizations the tools to build

their own custom donation forms and update them whenever they like, MemberClicks is a good, moderately priced option for those who don't want to go through the vendor every time they'd like to make a change. At its heart, MemberClicks is an integrated database/donation/membership/email solution, making it appealing to those who are looking to integrate donations into a larger picture.

If you are willing to pay more for advanced features

For those organizations that are ready to invest in a tool that can be deeply customized to meet their needs and to integrate with their external database, there are two tools that offer top-of-the-line features.

CharityWeb (www.charityweb.net)

Half an online donation tool and half a web-development shop with a specialty in payment processing, CharityWeb offers custom tailored donation solutions (as well as solutions for membership registration, events, and products). With high setup fees and a merchant account required, CharityWeb is not for organizations just getting started with online donations, but it could be a great choice for those ready to invest in a custom donation solution.

Contribute.com (www.contribute.com)

Contribute takes more of each donation than any other tool reviewed in this report, but they provide a lot for that money. The donation process and forms (which can also support payment processing for events, products, and other needs) can be completely tailored to each organization, and they provide some useful tools to facilitate syncing their data with an external database. As all forms need to be created and updated by Contribute staff in a process that can take six to twelve weeks for each change, Contribute is not a great choice for organizations that will have frequent updates.

GivenGain eTribuo (www.givengain.com)

GivenGain offers extensive support to organizations and donors outside North America, including recurring donations and eChecks from donors in many countries and currencies, making it worth the higher price tag if worldwide support is a priority. Their additional content management and email functionalities may be of interest to organizations looking to combine all these functions under one roof.

Comparison Chart

	Network for Good	PayPal	Click and Pledge	Groundspring	Democracy in Action	MemberClicks	eTapestry	Auctionpay	GiftTool	GivenGain	CharityWeb	Contribute.com
Setup Fee	–	–	–	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	–
Fees when Few Donations	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Fees when Many Donations	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Merchant Account (V=vendor; O=organization; E=either)	V	V	V	V	E	O	O	V	E	V	O	V
Company Background	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Setup and Support	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Donor Form Appearance	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Donor Form Flexibility	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Payment Processing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Reports & Data	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Money Distribution	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Integrated Recurring Donations	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●*	●
Donations outside US/ Canada		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Multiple Donation Forms		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Registration/ Ticketing *		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Product Sales *		●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	
Integrated Email *					●	●	●		●			

* These features may require additional fees

- ◆ **Setup Fee:** How much does the vendor charge to get started with the tool?
- ◆ **Fees When Few Donations:** How much does the vendor receive if there are no or only a few donations in a month?
- ◆ **Fees When Many Donations:** How much does the vendor receive if there are 75+ donations per month?
- ◆ **Company Background:** How long have they been taking donations? Is the company profitable or sustainable? Do they have a sizable number of clients and employees?
- ◆ **Setup and Support:** How easy is it to start using the service? To make updates over time? Is the vendor available to answer questions? Note that vendors could only receive an excellent if we had

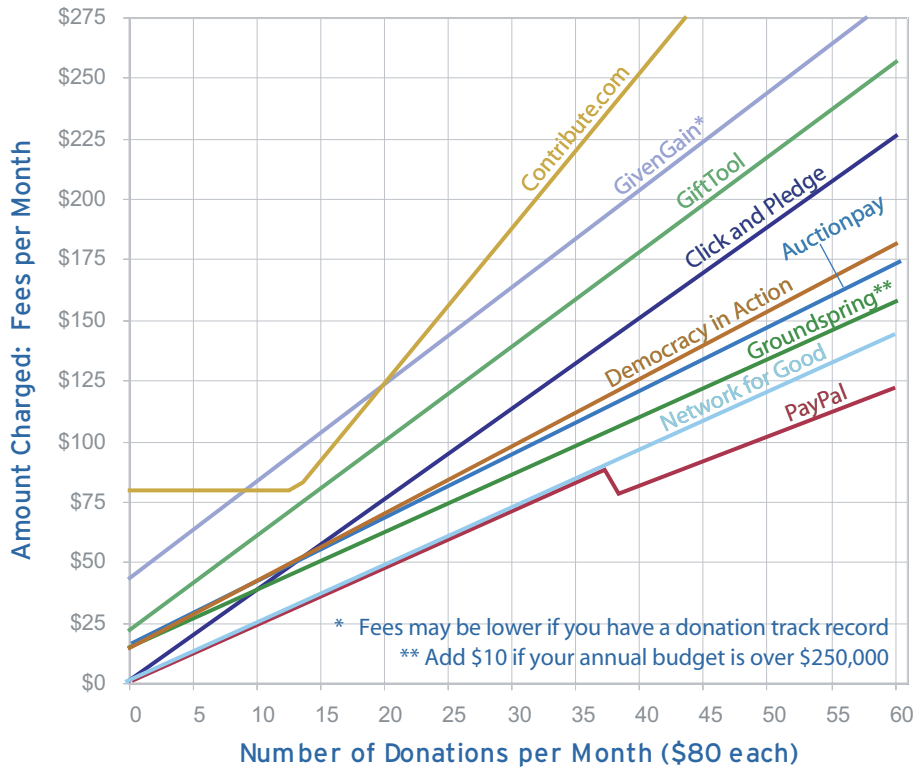
outside feedback about solid service (we were only able to gather feedback for about a third of the vendors).

- ◆ **Donor Form Appearance:** How well can the donation form be tailored to match the website? Does the form itself look clean and professional?
- ◆ **Donor Form Flexibility:** Does the form support more sophisticated features, such as tributes and employer matching? How customizable are the form fields?
- ◆ **Payment Processing:** Does the vendor support sophisticated payment types? What options are available to safeguards against fraud? Is there substantial downtime?
- ◆ **Reports & Data:** How easy is it to see what was donated? To synchronize the data with an offline donor database?
- ◆ **Money Distribution:** How and how often do organizations receive their money?

Go to www.idealware.org to see guidelines as to how the tools were rated in each of these categories.

Fee Comparison

Using Vendor's Merchant Account

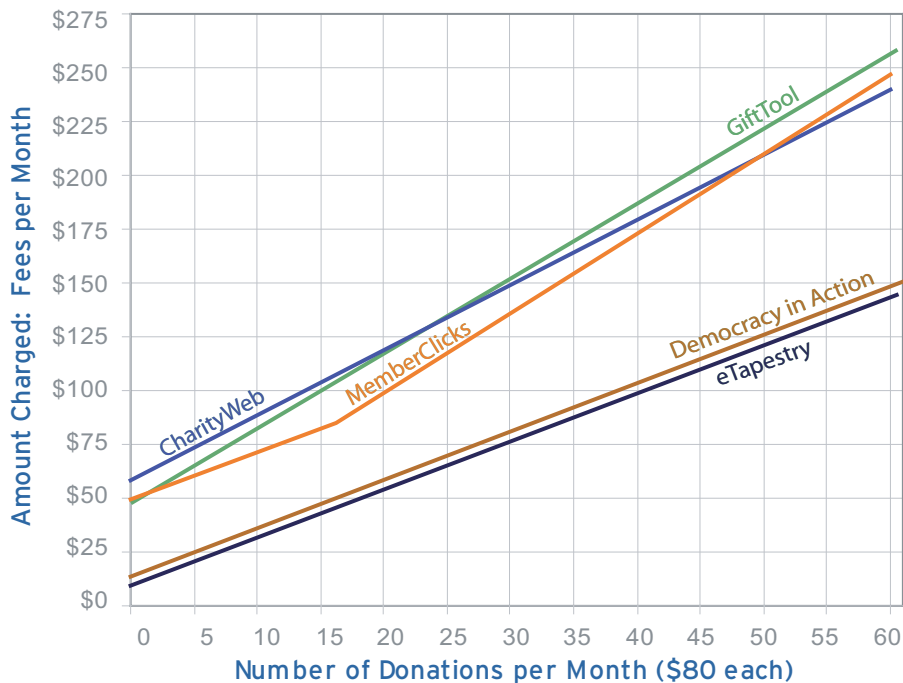


Setup Fees

Network for Good	\$0
Click and Pledge	\$0
PayPal	\$0
Contribute.com	\$0
Democracy in Action	\$100
GiftTool	\$100
MemberClicks	\$100
Groundspring	\$199
eTapestry	\$350
Auctionpay	\$395
GivenGain	\$498
CharityWeb	\$1,295

Using Organization's Merchant Account

Assumes a merchant account that charges 2.8% of each donation and no monthly fee; \$25 gateway fee where applicable. As you can typically tailor merchant account rates to your donation volume, the fees for these tools cannot be compared directly with those above.



Other Tools

Possibilities for Specific Needs

Looking for something more specific? There are a lot of other donation tools out there. We feel the following are less likely to be useful to most organizations as the ones we have recommended, but they might meet your specific needs. Go to www.idealware.org to see a detailed summary of each.

Campagne Associates Donation Tool (www.campagne.com)

While it is not possible to include the website navigation bar in the donation form, WebCampaigns otherwise offers solid functionality. It is relatively expensive for what it is, however, especially for organizations who take in more than a few donations. It provides a data export format that integrates with GiftMaker Pro, making it a possible choice for those using this database. Others will find better tools at a cheaper price.

CatholicFS (www.catholicfs.org)

CatholicFS is a very affordable but very new service (as of August 2005) that appears to be similar in concept to PayPal. Individuals and organizations can transfer money or setup a donation form with at least some minimal organization branding. Difficulties in reaching the vendor and their lack of a track record make us nervous about recommending them in the short run, but they may be worth a look as they get established, particularly for Catholic organizations.

Charged Contribution (www.chargedcontribution.com)

Charged Contribution is a solid tool, but expensive for what it offers, particularly if using their merchant account. It specializes in conservative causes, which may make it worth consideration by those who have trouble working with other donation tools that focus on progressive causes. For most organizations, there are better options.

Donate.net (www.donate.net)

Donate.net offers solid functionality but an unusual default donation form setup that may discourage donors. It provides a data export format that integrates with DonorPerfect, making it a possible choice for those using this database. Others will find tools with more standard donation forms a better bet.

Entango (www.entango.com)

Entango is a useful and reliable service with strong online reports. However, it is limited by the appearance of the donation form and prominent Entango branding throughout the donation process. Organizations must pay extra setup costs to add custom fields. For most organizations, there are better options.

Knowledge Messenger (www.knowledgemessenger.com)

With a model built to provide many integrated functions for websites, such as events, polls, newsletters, and blogs, KnowledgeMessenger is quite expensive when used solely for donations. The price for the features and amount of customization don't compare well to other tools. However, the fees you pay

for donations include nearly everything else they offer, so the tool is worth a look if you need to support more than just donations.

Sporg (www.sporg.com)

Sporg is a solid tool, but somewhat expensive for what it offers. . Both the donation form and administration tools are geared more towards facilitating event registration than donations, and the donation form does not typically include the site navigation bars. It might be worth a look for event or member registration, but there are better choices if you only need donation processing.

The Rest

We reviewed a number of other online donation tools for this report, which we felt were less likely to be useful to those reading this report. There were a number of reasons that we felt these tools were not competitive with the other tools listed above. Many were comparably priced to other options but had considerably fewer features. Others had aspects that we felt were less-than-desirable, such as poorly laid out donation forms or payment processing in batch rather than in real time.

The other tools reviewed were:

- ◆ Community Resource Network Donation Tool (www.crn.org)
- ◆ ECHO MerchantAmerica (www.echo-inc.com)
- ◆ eServicesCorporation (www.eservicescorp.com)
- ◆ ezDonor (www.ezdonor.com)
- ◆ JustGive (www.justgive.org)
- ◆ MakeaDonation (www.makeadonation.com)
- ◆ Verisign PayFlow Link (www.verisign.com)