

FREE EBOOK

SIX WEBSITE TOOLS YOUR NONPROFIT CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT



INTRO



If a potential donor lands on your website and is met with industry jargon, nonprofit speak and stories about how great you are but no ability to engage or take action, do you think they're going to stick around? Probably not.

Here's a hot tip: Your website should be built for your online visitors, not you.

It's very typical for orgs to build their website from an insider's POV. But the reality is, you should be more interested in your audience's POV—they're the ones you want to cater to because they are the ones who need the right features, functionality and tools to support your cause.

Let's put this in practical terms: Here are six website tools that your nonprofit cannot (or should not) live without—tools that will improve your website's functionality and cater to every person who visits your site, which is ultimately what you want to accomplish.

FIRESPRING CAN HELP YOU WITH ALL 6 TOOLS:



- 1. EVENT REGISTRATION**
- 2. ONLINE DONATION PROCESSING**
- 3. CONTENT MANAGEMENT**
- 4. DONOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**
- 5. DONATION PAGES**
- 6. EMAIL MARKETING**

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1. EVENT REGISTRATION

This doesn't mean offering a downloadable PDF that users can click on, print out, fill out, then mail back to you with a check. That's way too many steps (plus, who still has checks?). Online registration means that people can sign up for events right on your site without printing or mailing anything.

Based on focus groups that Firespring has conducted, *the number one thing that users want from nonprofits is the ability to register online for events*. Why? It's quicker and more convenient.

Let's talk briefly about online registration forms: The most important rule of thumb is keep it short and sweet. One of the biggest reasons for abandoned online registrations is lengthy and confusing forms.

Other tips:

- › Brand them.
- › Make a link to your registration form accessible from multiple spots (emails, social media pages, direct mail, etc.).
- › Use your registration form to collect both registration and fee information.

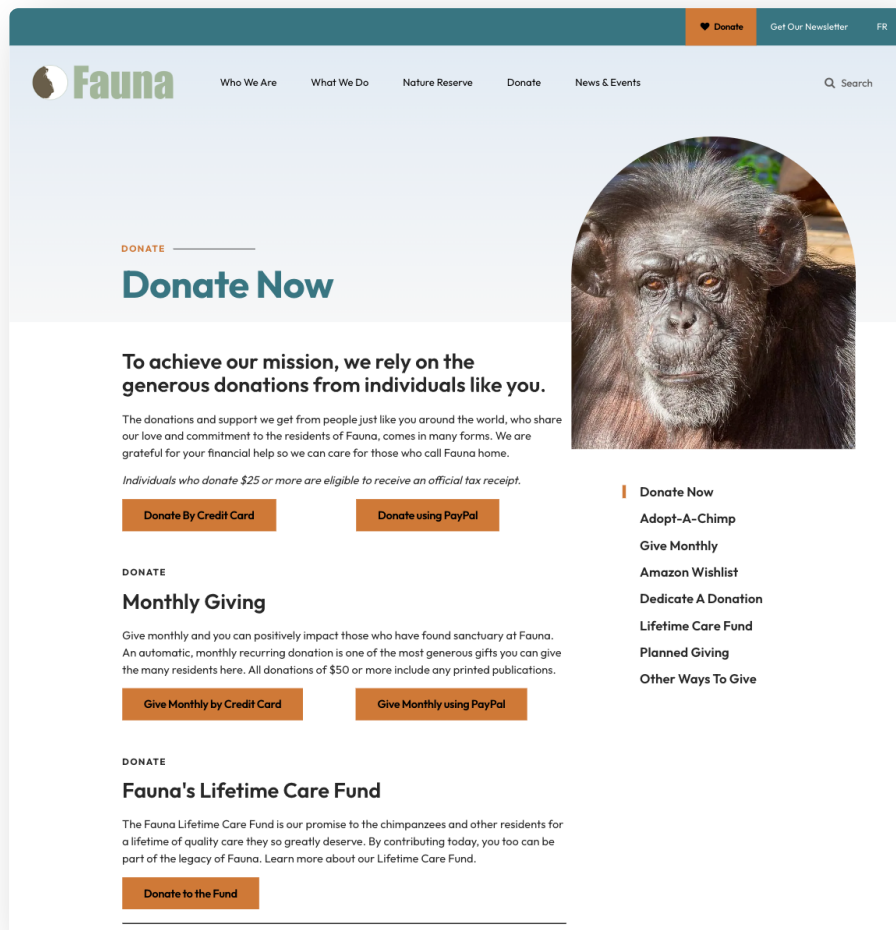
The screenshot shows the 'Events' section of the Great Plains Trails Network website. The main heading is 'Event Calendar' with a sub-heading 'Events'. Below this is a navigation breadcrumb: 'Tickets > Ticketholder Info > Review & Register > Confirmation'. A message reads: 'Select the quantity for the tickets you would like to order. You will be able to enter the individual ticketholders' info on the next page.' There are two ticket options: 'Lincoln Trail-A-Thon 2023 Adult Entry (19+)' for \$25.00 and 'Lincoln Trail-A-Thon 2023 Student Entry (6-18)' for \$10.00. A 'Donate' button is visible next to the adult entry option. At the bottom, there are links for 'Cancel Registration & Return to Event' and a 'Continue' button.

Bottom line: Create a quick and easy registration process that's fully electronic and hassle-free. Your attendees will be pleased, you'll see better event turnouts and you'll lose the headache of dealing with snail mail, paper forms and checks that can get lost or misplaced.

2. ONLINE DONATION PROCESSING

An integrated donation system typically means lower attrition rates; **50–75% of donors abandon a donation form when redirected to a third-party site to complete the transaction**, according to npENGAGE. If you don't already accept online donations on your website, here are three reasons to start.

1. You'll keep donors on your site longer.
2. You'll capture more impulse donors.
3. You can more easily encourage recurring gifts.



The screenshot shows the Fauna website's donation page. The header includes the Fauna logo, navigation links (Who We Are, What We Do, Nature Reserve, Donate, News & Events), and utility links (Donate, Get Our Newsletter, FR). The main content area features a large image of a chimpanzee and a 'Donate Now' section. Below this, there are three main donation options: 'Donate Now', 'Monthly Giving', and 'Fauna's Lifetime Care Fund'. Each option includes a brief description and two buttons for payment methods (Credit Card and PayPal). A sidebar on the right lists additional donation options: Adopt-A-Chimp, Give Monthly, Amazon Wishlist, Dedicate A Donation, Lifetime Care Fund, Planned Giving, and Other Ways To Give.

Donate Now

To achieve our mission, we rely on the generous donations from individuals like you.

The donations and support we get from people just like you around the world, who share our love and commitment to the residents of Fauna, comes in many forms. We are grateful for your financial help so we can care for those who call Fauna home.

Individuals who donate \$25 or more are eligible to receive an official tax receipt.

Donate By Credit Card Donate using PayPal

Monthly Giving

Give monthly and you can positively impact those who have found sanctuary at Fauna. An automatic, monthly recurring donation is one of the most generous gifts you can give the many residents here. All donations of \$50 or more include any printed publications.

Give Monthly by Credit Card Give Monthly using PayPal

Fauna's Lifetime Care Fund

The Fauna Lifetime Care Fund is our promise to the chimpanzees and other residents for a lifetime of quality care they so greatly deserve. By contributing today, you too can be part of the legacy of Fauna. Learn more about our Lifetime Care Fund.

Donate to the Fund

Donate Now
Adopt-A-Chimp
Give Monthly
Amazon Wishlist
Dedicate A Donation
Lifetime Care Fund
Planned Giving
Other Ways To Give

2. ONLINE DONATION PROCESSING

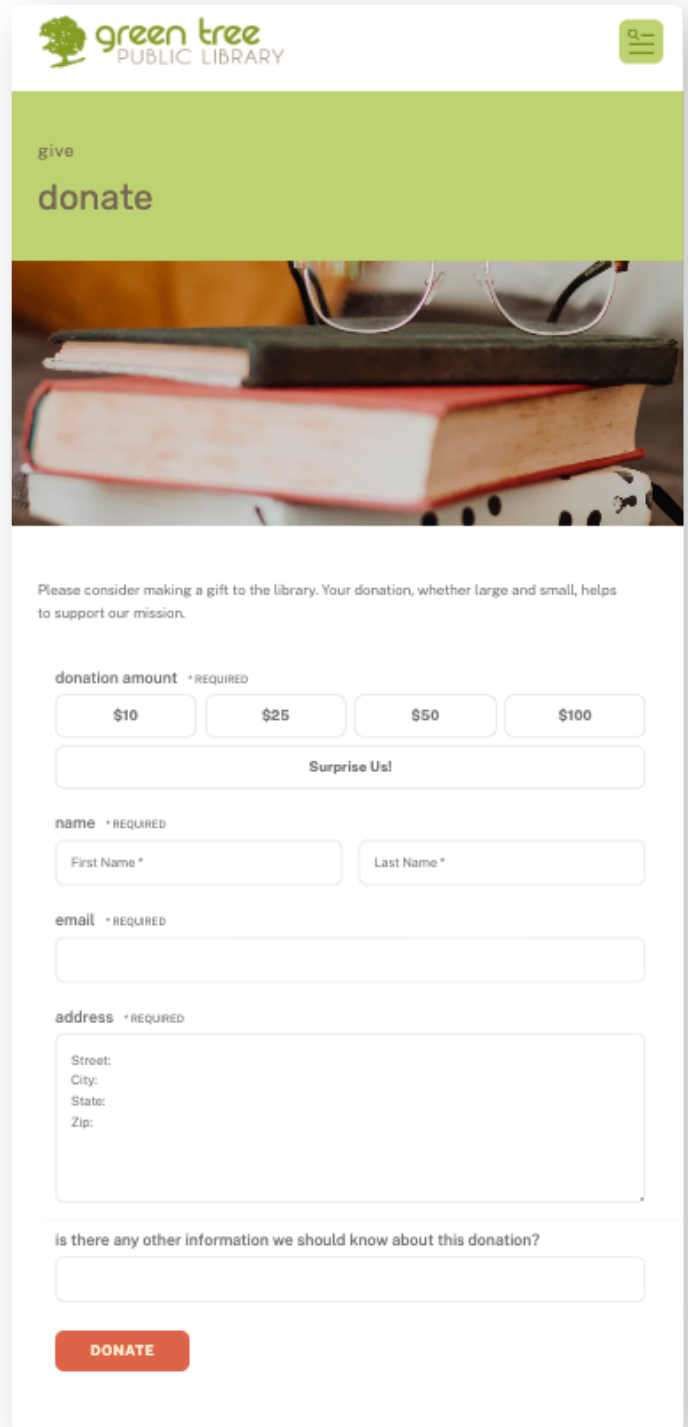
Let's add an important fourth:

An integrated donation processing system instills a sense of trust and security, a game-changing factor when it comes to taking people's money.

Also, did you know that mobile devices now account for more internet traffic than desktops? Google's algorithm heavily favors websites in its search rankings that are mobile-friendly, which means that, if you haven't already, you need to take mobile optimization very seriously in your tech requirements.

Making mobile donations a part of your fundraising strategy is a way of saying, "We know your preferences, and we're happy to adapt."

Bottom line: Keeping donors on your own website rather than sending them to a 3rd-party platform to make a donation means more money and better donor engagement for your org.



green tree PUBLIC LIBRARY

give donate

Please consider making a gift to the library. Your donation, whether large and small, helps to support our mission.

donation amount *REQUIRED

\$10 \$25 \$50 \$100

Surprise Us!

name *REQUIRED

First Name * Last Name *

email *REQUIRED

address *REQUIRED

Street:
City:
State:
Zip:

is there any other information we should know about this donation?

DONATE

3. CONTENT MANAGEMENT

A content management system, or CMS, is the administrative system of your nonprofit's website that allows your team to add, update and manage content quickly and efficiently. A CMS can make it easy for your organization to publish new pages, add content and keep your website fresh and relevant. This can lead to increased web traffic, more donations and better engagement—but only if you choose the right one.

There are hundreds of content management systems available, ranging from free to very expensive. Typically the free tools are difficult to use, and it's hard to find help when you need it, so usually the ones that work best are those that cost some, but have support available when you need assistance.

Here are four essential features you should look for in a CMS:

1. Ease of use
2. Ongoing support
3. Flexibility and scalability
4. Clean, fast and SEO-friendly code

Bottom line: You want a content management system that is designed by experts from a company that will offer you ongoing support at a reasonable cost. The effectiveness and future of your website depends on a great content management tool.

4. DONOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

According to Bloomerang, *around 60% of donors only give once to a particular cause*—which means many orgs are spinning their wheels, bringing new donors in one door but watching others leave out another.

So, how do you build a donor retention plan that helps you stay in touch with your supporters and build relationships that foster loyalty? Start with a great donor management tool that integrates with your website. If you don't yet have some type of integrated donor database, here are three things to look for.



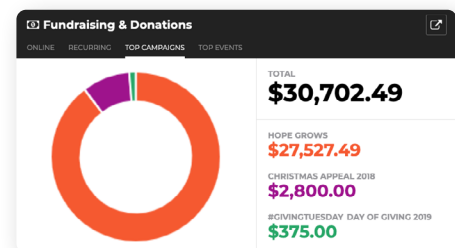
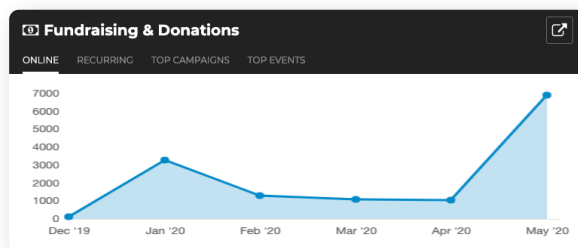
A dashboard with built-in intelligence that provides insight into how constituents are engaging with your organization. You shouldn't have to figure this out on your own—a good donor management tool will do it for you.



Integrated email communication. That way you can send your emails out and communicate with constituents, tracking different aspects of engagement (click-throughs, opens, etc.).



Cloud-based technology. A cloud-based (or internet-based) tool will allow the right people access to your donor database from wherever they are, whether it's on their laptop at home or on their iPad at a conference. There's no limit on how many people can access your donor database. You control that number, not the creators of the tool.



Bottom line: You can improve your retention rate if you find a donor management system that allows you to track engagement, communicate with donors regularly and makes your donor database easy to access across all devices with key staff members.

5. DONATION PAGES

Oftentimes, an organization's donation page is its own greatest enemy in securing donations because it's not designed well. That's why it's crucial to have donation pages (also referred to as landing pages) that are easy to navigate and branded properly. Custom branded donation pages on your website can raise up to six times more money than generic ones, according to Nonprofit Tech for Good.

To optimize them, you want to:



Remove navigation. When a donor lands on a donation page, there should be just one thing for them to do: Follow through with their action.



Keep it focused. Don't cram your donation pages with too much stuff—on donation pages, less is more.



Write a great headline. It should include a sense of urgency because you want that donor to give today and also remind them why their gift is important.



Optimize your call-to-action button. Your CTA button has the power to sway, so use compelling language like Make A Difference, Send Your Gift or Feed A Child, depending on your cause.



Add a great image. Close-up shots of people's faces are particularly effective—research shows that when someone sees a face on a page or screen, they are automatically drawn to that image.

One last tip: Be sure your donor pages are optimized for mobile. According to DonorDrive, responsive design doubles giving on mobile devices.

Bottom line: Customized branded donation pages are a crucial part of an effective online fundraising strategy.

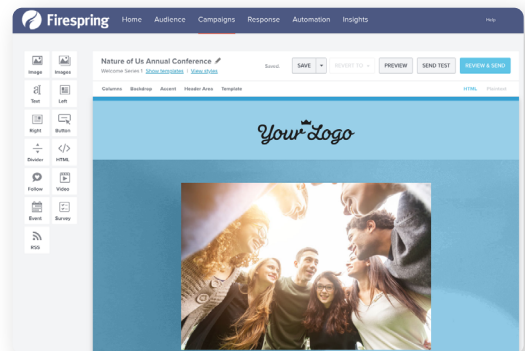
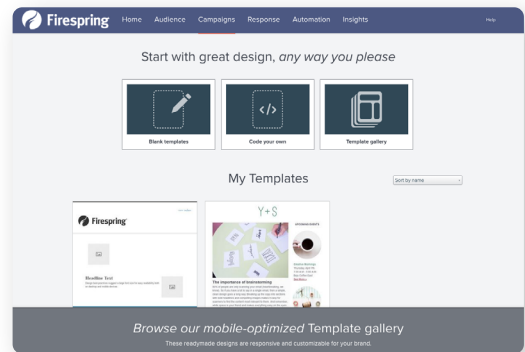
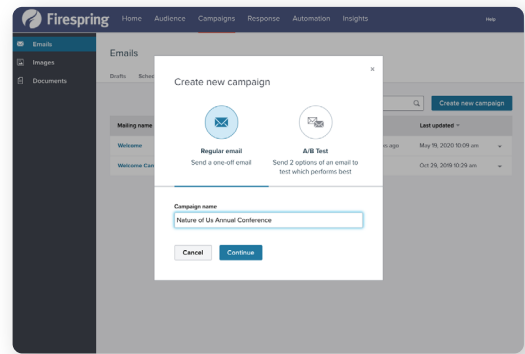
6. EMAIL MARKETING

With 91% of all U.S. consumers checking email daily, email marketing should be a major player in your nonprofit's outreach efforts.

Even though email marketing is nothing new, there are still many organizations that don't quite understand how to use it effectively. It seems like an easy marketing tactic, but don't let it fool you—you can't just push the Send button and hope to get results. You'll definitely want to be familiar with best practices and effective email campaigns, but honestly, a lot of email marketing's success can be boiled down to which tool or email platform you're using.

A good email marketing tool will make it a cinch for you to stay in touch with your subscribers, allowing you to create emails without a lot of hassle, money or time. Plus, it will provide reporting so you understand which campaigns were effective and which ones simply didn't drive engagement. You definitely want to have an email marketing tool that integrates right into your website so you can automate emails, segment your lists and be sure that each person gets the right message at the right time.

Bottom line: The days of sending the exact same email message to every constituent and supporter on your list are gone—with email marketing, customization and segmentation are now the goal so that you're sending the most relevant messages to each recipient. Use an email marketing tool that integrates into your website for ease of use and accurate reporting.



FIRESPRING CAN HELP YOU WITH ALL 6 TOOLS

Implementing these tools into your website doesn't have to be difficult or expensive. In fact, we've built all these tools onto one platform, and we're committed to helping you create a fully functional website at an affordable rate, as well as provide the ongoing support you need in order to use your site effectively.

All six of these website tools can help you increase donor engagement and boost retention rates, drive revenue, gather insight into your online visitors' behavior and ultimately further your cause.

Ask for a free trial website to explore at firespring.org/website.

This could be your website.

