

Ministry Brands®

12 Simple Steps to Optimize Your Ministry's Website to Grow Generosity

In today's digital age, optimizing your ministry's website is essential for nurturing the generous spirit within your community. According to recent M+R Benchmarks for 2023 for nonprofits, only 19% of people who visit a donation page follow through on making a gift. That leaves us with an 81% opportunity to get better. By taking a few mindful steps, you can streamline the online giving experience, making it straightforward and inviting for all potential givers. Here's how:



Before the Giving Page

1. **Words Matter.** Your choice of words can make a significant difference. Select clear action words like "Give" or "Donate" for your giving page. This ensures clarity for your visitors.
2. **Location, Location, Location.** Positioning is key. Place the giving link on the top right of your navigation bar for maximum visibility. Ensure your navigation bar is 'sticky', following the visitor as they scroll down your page.
3. **Stand Out!** Make your giving link pop! Convert the link into a button and choose a color that contrasts with your website's background. This will naturally draw your visitor's eyes to it.
4. **One Click Max.** Accessibility is paramount. No matter where they are on your website, visitors should be able to navigate to your giving page with just a single click.

On the Giving Page

5. **Reinforce the "Why."** Remind visitors of the purpose and impact of their contribution. Outline how your ministry is touching lives in the community and furthering the Kingdom. This area atop your giving form should consist of a compelling headline, brief mention of how their gift will be stewarded well to maximize Kingdom impact specific to your ministry goals and mission, and an actionable call to action that directs them to complete the form below to give now.
6. **Set the Expectation for Recurring Giving.** Emphasize the importance of ongoing contributions. If a visitor opts for a one-time gift, gently remind them of the more significant impact possible with monthly donations. All your giving forms should default to the recurring gift option first.

7. **Don't Distract Your Donors.** Keep the giving page focused. Eliminate unrelated links or distractions. After the donation is complete, then reintroduce them to other facets of the ministry. You may even consider removing the main navigation from the giving form page until after a donation has been completed.
8. **Go With the Flow.** A single-column form simplifies the donation process and works best across devices, including mobile. Prioritize the frequency of donation by pre-filling "monthly" as a default option (changeable, of course), followed by the amount field.
9. **Clear and Concise.** Avoid overwhelming visitors with too many fund options on your giving form and make sure to have your general giving fund selected by default. Be sure to retire old seasonal campaign funds once their purpose has concluded.

After the Giving Page

10. **Be Swift with Your Thanks.** Show immediate gratitude. Automate confirmation emails to show your appreciation promptly. Be sure to start this automated message with "thank you" and use this space to reinforce your ministry's values, linking them to the gift that was given.
11. **Milestones Matter.** There are many milestones in the generosity journey and you can use automations to help personalize this experience for your donors. Examples of automated generosity emails include: first time donor "thank you" emails, recognizing when someone sets up a recurring gift, monetary milestones whether through one significant gift or a lifetime of faithful giving adding up. Tailor your appreciation to the nature and level of their gift.
12. **Be Transparent.** Showcase how gifts have been stewarded well to create Kingdom impact with an annual budget brochure or letter. Highlight the achievements and blessings of the past year, instilling confidence and hope for the future.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. – Ephesians 3: 20-21

