



Online Platform Helps Catholic Charities Simplify Online Donations

The Catholic Charities of Central Colorado sees growth in online giving and recurring donors after switching to a user-friendly fundraising platform.

Catholic Charities of Central Colorado offers critical services to the poor and vulnerable in central Colorado. They offer programs that cover everything from adoption services to a soup kitchen to immigration aid, and they do it all from two offices that cover a 10-county area. Their array of programs and services are funded largely by individual donors. Janet Hutchinson, Chief Development Officer of the Central Colorado chapter of Catholic Charities, estimates that 35% of the organization’s funding comes from individuals. As online giving becomes increasingly popular among today’s donors, the chapter has teamed up with Qgiv, an online donation platform that builds branded donation forms for charitable organizations, to offer their burgeoning Internet donor base an easy, intuitive way to give online.

Catholic Charities of Central Colorado started offering online donation options ten years ago, when donors slowly started adopting online giving as their preferred donation method. The chapter originally accepted donations directly through their merchant processor, and they sometimes used a card reader to process in-person transactions. As they attracted new donors, it quickly became apparent that they needed to find another fundraising platform. “[The original platform] was very basic,” Hutchinson said. “I don’t think it was very user-friendly.” There were other, more critical concerns, too, and Hutchinson noted that their IT department brought up some concerns about the platform’s security.

Their new system, the chapter decided, would need to address the concerns that their merchant processor couldn’t solve, and it would need to be able to accommodate their growing online donor base. At their IT consultant’s recommendation, Catholic Charities of Central Colorado began using Qgiv. Qgiv maintains level-one PCI compliance, which handled the security issues, and switching platforms also came with a number of other perks. “We changed because we were able to save some money,” Hutchinson noted. “We also had the capability of allowing donors to schedule recurring gifts, and we had more flexibility being able to change our online form as needed.”

“*We changed because we were able to save some money. We also had the capability of allowing donors to schedule recurring gifts.*”

Their original solution was especially inconvenient for people who wanted to set up recurring gifts online, noted Hutchinson, and Qgiv’s recurring gift function has proved invaluable. “We have a lot of recurring donors who mail in checks,” she said. “But more and more people were asking to do it online.” Being able to cater to those recurring donors was an important part of the chapter’s decision to move to Qgiv – recurring donors make up 16% of their individual donor base, and that percentage is rising.



The move to Qgiv's platform has done more than just facilitate recurring donations; the platform has also helped the organization manage the growing number of individual donors who are moving online. The chapter has seen steady growth in their online giving since teaming up with Qgiv. In their first three years (2011-2014) with Qgiv, they experienced a 170% increase in online giving.

Taking a close look at their donors' behaviors – both those of recurring and one-time donors – shows that online giving is becoming increasingly popular among the chapter's supporters. More donors are giving more frequently online; the number of transactions processed on the organization's Qgiv form has increased 116% from 2011 to 2015. People are also using the forms to make larger gifts, with the average 2011 donation equaling \$189.54 and shooting up to \$212.55 in 2014.

Hutchinson expects those trends to continue. "Looking at our trends over the past 10 years, our online giving has increased every year," she said. She expects the number of recurring gifts to increase, too, and notes that the nature of being a faith-based charity lends itself to attracting recurring donors. She and her staff also plan to emphasize online giving in future e-mail campaigns.

As Catholic Charities of Central Colorado plans for the future and anticipates increased online donations, Hutchinson notes that Qgiv is making the process as easy as possible. "I feel like I don't have any stress about online donations," she laughed. "And that's good!" Whether the chapter is working on e-blasts to attract new recurring donors, maintaining their donor base online, or accommodating new supporters, Catholic Charities of Central Colorado knows that Qgiv will be there to help them grow.

“ I feel like I don't have any stress about online donations! ”

Produced in cooperation with **VISA**