

The Complete Guide To Email Marketing For Nonprofits

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Last revised in August 2026

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Why Email Marketing Matters

Email remains one of the most direct ways to stay close to donors between asks, and one of the most effective ways to move them to give. [Nearly a third of donors](#) say email is the channel that most inspires them to give, ahead of social media, a nonprofit's website, or print. Almost half say it's their preferred way to hear updates and appeals from an organization in the first place.

That preference shows up in the numbers, too. [Email consistently drives a meaningful share of online nonprofit revenue](#), and that share keeps growing year over year. Just having a donor's email address on file measurably improves how long they stick around, since it gives an organization a low-lift way to say thank you, share impact, and stay present without waiting for the next campaign.

None of that happens by accident, though. It takes a strategy: a plan for how often to send, what to say, and who should hear which message. Automation, segmenting, A/B testing subject lines, all of that can feel like a lot to take on, especially when the calendar is already full of everything else fundraising asks of a small team.

But building that strategy is worth the time. Email done well doesn't just raise money, it builds the kind of relationship that makes donors want to keep giving. Let's take a look at everything you need to know in order to put together an email strategy that engages your supporters, strengthens your donor relationships, and helps you raise more.

Types of Email Communication

When you think of using email for your fundraising efforts, you likely think of one thing: emailing people to ask for donations. That's definitely a part of it, but, it's only a tiny piece of the puzzle. There are many other types of email you can use outside of just a hard ask for cash. These include:

Welcome Series

When someone signs up for your email list on your site, the first thing they should receive is a friendly email welcoming them to your community. It is recommended to create a [welcome series](#) where over the course of a few days or weeks you welcome new subscribers

by sending a series of emails. Here are some examples of the information you may want to communicate in your welcome series campaign:

- Welcome email from your Executive Director with basic information about your organization, including statistics about impact
- A story featuring one of your beneficiaries (Fun fact: [39% of donors](#) say testimonials from beneficiaries would boost their likelihood to donate.)
- More details about specific programs or staff
- Information about any events they can attend to learn more (virtual or in-person)
- Details about how they can get further involved with your organization
- End with a hard ask to give to your organization

You can set this up as an automation that triggers when people sign up for your email list. Initially they will receive a welcome email as mentioned above, but you can add a heads up that over the next week you are going to send a series of emails to share more about your work.

A	B	C	D	E	F
Donor Nurturing Journey					
While on the journey, the donor is excluded from all other communications					
Stage	Segmentation	Time	Channel	Communication	Content Ideas
Nurture: Welcome	Segment based on type of signup: event signup, peer to peer fundraiser, web signup	On sign-up	Email	Welcome email	The content should be tailored based on sign-up source
		3 days after sign-up	Email	Welcome from the CEO	Welcome from the CEO - introduction to learn more about the organization
			SMS	Welcome from the CEO	Welcome from the CEO - introduction to learn more about the organization
Nurture: Learn About Donor	All	7 days after signup	Email	Survey	Send a short survey over email - ask them why they donated, what are they looking for and the organization
Nurture: Further Engagement	All	12 days after signup	Email	About our organization	More information about your organization, perhaps introduce some staff of this as a digital welcome kit
		21 days after signup	Email	Ways to get involved	Demonstrate ways they can get further involved with the organisation join a facebook group, follow on social media
Convert	All - but segment ask based on their interest	21 days after signup	Telephone + Follow up email	Upgrade	Thank the donor and ask the donor to become a regular giver - explain story. Potentially use information from survey if available to you
At the end of the journey, they may go into the regular newsletter/news journey					

CauseVox [Donor Nurturing Journey](#) email schedule sample

Newsletters

Typically sent on a regular basis (such as weekly or monthly), nonprofits send newsletters to inform supporters about recent activities and achievements, build relationships, and solicit donations. Newsletters are a great place to share stories, program updates, fundraising goals, and ways for supporters to get involved.

Promotions

If you have something specific you're trying to push your subscribers to, this email serves as the launching point to direct them where you want them. Whether you've posted a new blog post or have a new program you want them to check out, these one-and-done messages are sent periodically to update your community about new happenings and announcements.

Winback Emails

A win-back email is simply a message that's triggered by an action. Perhaps a supporter left your site halfway through the donation process, this would then trigger an email reminding them about their donation and encouraging them to come back and finish the process!

These types of emails have been proven to have a big impact. According to [MailChimp](#), 45% of subscribers who received a winback email read subsequent messages.

One-on-One

Occasionally you'll interact with your supporters personally. Rather than being automated templates, these messages are individualized and personalized, and sent directly from you to the recipient. One-on-one emails are especially useful for [major donors](#) or if you have a smaller donor base.

These personalized emails demonstrate a genuine appreciation for your donor's support and enable you to tailor the messaging to the individual's interests and motivations for giving. Ultimately, one-on-one emails make giving feel less like a transaction, and helps your donors feel valued, seen, and a part of something larger than themselves!

From Clicks To Conversion

Understanding these different types of communication and determining which ones you want to utilize for your own campaign is crucial before developing a strategy. That way, you can be sure to incorporate a good mix of messaging, rather than bombarding your community with the same thing over and over again.

Regardless of which type of email communication you choose, it is crucial to have easy ways for subscribers to click and give, which is ultimately the outcome we want from our successful email marketing campaigns!

***ACTION ITEM:** With CauseVox [donation forms](#), donors breeze through checkout with none of the friction that causes people to abandon a gift halfway through. And it doesn't stop at the donation. Every gift automatically flows into your donor records, funds, receipts, and reporting, so the moment someone gives, the next step is already handled.*

Developing an Email Strategy

You may have an editorial calendar for your blog and a [strategy for your social media accounts](#), and crafting a thought-through email marketing plan is equally as important. In fact, [50% of donors](#) say regular updates would increase their likelihood to donate! As they say, failing to plan is planning to fail, so invest the time and effort to create a strategy which helps you:

- **Guide your efforts:** Instead of hitting “send” on a bunch of random messages, each email you put out into the world is part of a larger plan. They’re all pushing you toward an overarching objective, which you laid out in the very beginning.
- **Engage your community:** As mentioned, emails don’t have to be all about asking for money, this is a great time to showcase all the amazing work your nonprofit is doing through impact stories, programs updates, and more! Creating an email strategy can help you find a good balance of storytelling and asking so that donors don’t feel overwhelmed by either.
- **Find the right frequency:** Without an email strategy in place, it’ll be increasingly difficult to keep tabs on how often you’re reaching out to your community. Are you emailing far too frequently? That’ll result in way more unsubscribes than you’d like to see. Or are you emailing once in a blue moon? Your community will have a tough time even remembering who you are. As you may recall, they’re already bombarded by hundreds of messages. But, if you find that sweet spot, you’ll maintain adequate communication without ever being obnoxious.

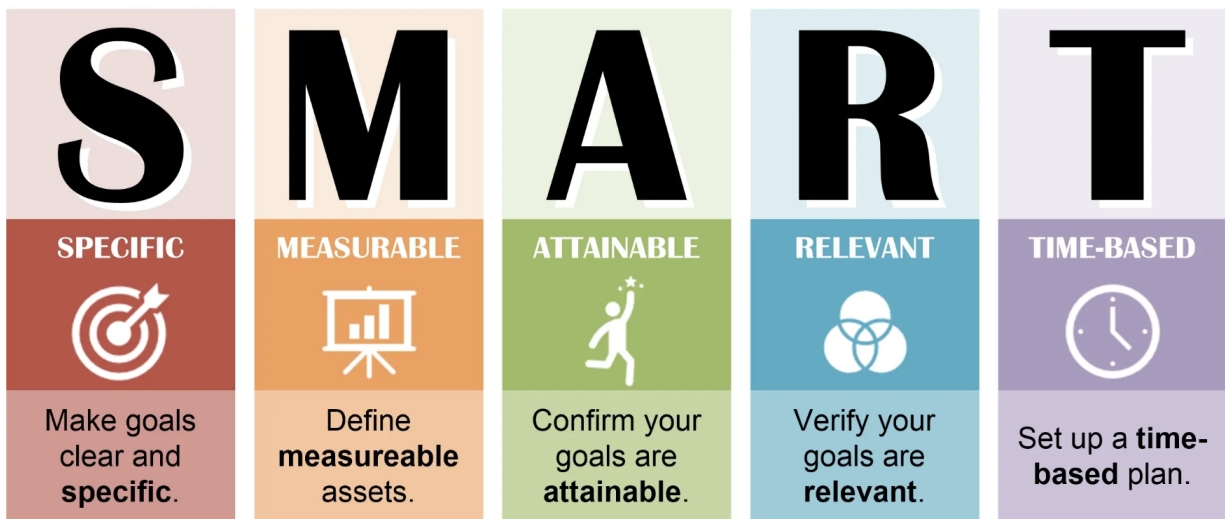
Now that you know you need a strategy in place, how exactly do you go about creating one? Here's an overview of six basic steps to get you started:

1. Determine Qualitative And Quantitative Goals

As with any strategy, you need to have clear objectives in place in order to determine what exactly you're working toward. Separate these into qualitative goals (goals that are felt, more than measured) and quantitative goals (ones that can be measured). Here is an example:

- **Qualitative Goal:** Entice people to visit our fundraising page and donate to our cause.
- **Quantitative Goal:** Increase donations by 25% in the first quarter.
- **Qualitative Goal:** Expand our reach, so that we can talk to a broader audience.
- **Quantitative Goal:** Grow our email list by 1,000 new subscribers each quarter.

We know goal-setting isn't quite as simple as it might initially seem. And, zoning in on meaningful goals that are reachable, while still being motivating, can be a challenge. That is why setting SMART goals is an effective way to give your nonprofit's goals the thought and consideration they deserve. SMART goals are:



If you're interested in digging into this concept further, we wrote an entire blog post about how to set [SMART fundraising goals](#) for your nonprofit.

2. Look At Your Current Situation

Next up, it's time to examine the efforts you've made so far (if any). Taking a magnifying glass to everything you've done up to this point can be extremely helpful in tailoring your efforts moving forward. This exercise isn't meant to frustrate you. Instead, it's designed to bring your future methods and tactics into clear focus. When examining your current email marketing situation, there are a few key things you'll want to look at. Of course, you should plan to dig in beyond just these topics, but these questions will get the wheels turning and set you on the right track:

- How many email addresses do you currently have and where did they come from?
- What does your current engagement look like—how many people are opening your emails or clicking through?
- At what rate are new people signing up for your email list?
- How frequently have you emailed your list in the past?
- Which types of emails seem to perform well? Which ones don't perform well?
- Which other online and offline marketing strategies are you using?

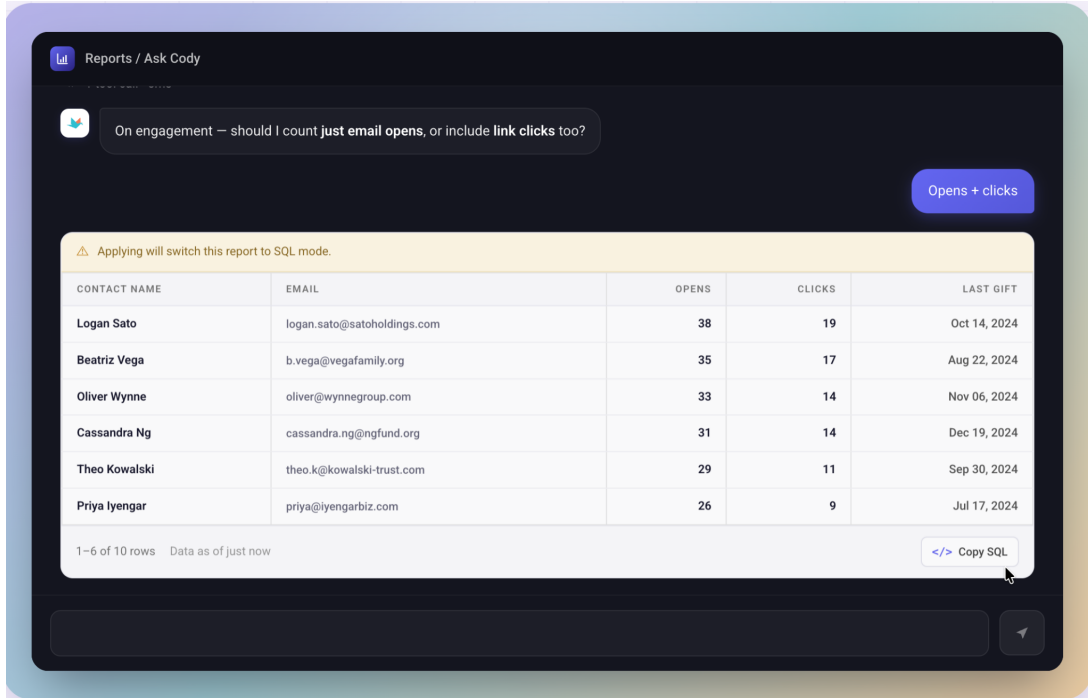
Again, this won't paint the whole picture. But, it's a good start and an important step to take before moving forward with your email strategy. And if you haven't implemented any email marketing before? Well, then this step is pretty easy. You're starting at square one.

If you use an email marketing platform like MailChimp or HubSpot you may have access to really great analytics to give you a data backed answer to these above questions. If not, maybe consider investing (there are also free versions) in an [email marketing tool](#) to help you track and answer these sorts of questions.

ACTION ITEM: The CauseVox CRM gives your team one place to see donor records, households, organizations, and giving pipelines, all updated in real time as gifts come in from your donation forms, peer-to-peer pages, events, auctions, email, and text messages. See what a supporter just did, understand what it means for your relationship with them, and follow up while the moment is still warm.

3. Identify Your Target Market

To craft effective messaging, you need to be familiar with who exactly you're talking to. The more you know about your subscribers, the better you can tailor your emails to suit their needs and interests. So, it's time to dig in and find out all that you can about your target market.



Reports / Ask Cody

On engagement — should I count just email opens, or include link clicks too?

Opens + clicks

Applying will switch this report to SQL mode.

CONTACT NAME	EMAIL	OPENS	CLICKS	LAST GIFT
Logan Sato	logan.sato@satoholdings.com	38	19	Oct 14, 2024
Beatriz Vega	b.vega@vegafamily.org	35	17	Aug 22, 2024
Oliver Wynne	oliver@wynnegroup.com	33	14	Nov 06, 2024
Cassandra Ng	cassandra.ng@ngfund.org	31	14	Dec 19, 2024
Theo Kowalski	theo.k@kowalski-trust.com	29	11	Sep 30, 2024
Priya Iyengar	priya@iyengarbiz.com	26	9	Jul 17, 2024

1–6 of 10 rows Data as of just now

</> Copy SQL

CauseVox's AI report builder helps you identify aspects of a donor persona through data around email engagement or type of giving. Build queries using plain language and let Cody, the AI assistant pull reports straight from your connected donor information.

Take a close look at your current community and website analytics in order to familiarize yourself with your target audience. Basic demographic information is important here, but you'll also want to go past the surface to understand them on a deeper level as well.

- Why do they engage with you? What about your cause resonates with them?
- What other places are they hanging out online? What sort of content interests them?
- What do they expect from you? No engagement is totally one-sided, so what are they getting out of this relationship?

We highly recommend you spend the time and energy going through the process of creating your [donor personas](#). The questions that go beyond just basic age and gender will help you have a better understanding of your target customers, arming you with the knowledge you

need to craft more [targeted emails](#). At the end of the day, this will greatly improve your donor retention as well as your donor experience.

***ACTION ITEM:** Build donor segments to send targeted emails to with [CauseVox reports](#). As your donor data updates, so does the segment, keeping every appeal targeted to the right group.*

4. Choose Your Email Types

Now that you have all of that background information, it's time to roll up your sleeves and start pulling together this email strategy. Before you get too far in with a schedule or detailed plan, you need to decide what types of emails your nonprofit will send to subscribers. Remember, as mentioned [above](#) there are a lot of options, and you can choose several different types to incorporate into your strategy.

Will you only send a monthly newsletter and then the occasional hard ask? Or, will you utilize a combination of all different emails like a welcome series, newsletter, and one-on-one emails to keep them constantly engaged, informed, and interested?

There's no perfect recipe to guarantee success here. Instead, you need to think about those goals you previously outlined and determine which email types best push you toward those objectives.

For example, if your end game is simply to bring in more donations, you might place all of your emphasis on those hard asks, transactional emails, and one-on-ones. But, if you're aiming to build and foster a community around your cause, you'll likely want to implement welcome emails, promotional updates, and a newsletter.

Your key to success with an email strategy is finding something that works for you. So, keep those goals in mind and make all of your decisions based on them.

5. Create A Schedule

It's time to decide how frequently you'll email your list (or lists, for that matter). Your schedule should be a rough guideline that ensures you aren't bombarding your subscribers with messages, but you're not completely forgetting about them either.

We recommend laying out your send schedule each quarter, as trying to map out a year's worth of messaging can be a little too overwhelming, particularly if you're planning on sending plenty of emails.

First, grab your [fundraising calendar](#) so that you can reference any large happenings with your nonprofit (you'll need this to determine which emails to send when), as well as any holidays (sending emails on federal holidays is sure to leave you with disappointing results).

Now, start a handy spreadsheet. This is where you'll outline your send schedule. If your email marketing platform has the functionality, you can likely get this all stored and scheduled directly in your platform. Your email campaigns can align with your social media schedule so you can maximize the use of all the content you create. There is no need to triple your work, you can easily create blogs and social media content from the email campaigns you send, or vice versa.

Make sure your spreadsheet goes in chronological order, as that will make it easier for your entire team to read and follow. Start by putting down the date of an important event or announcement for your nonprofit, and build out your schedule from there.

Sample Quarterly Email Send Schedule

Built like a working spreadsheet: laid out one quarter at a time, in chronological order, anchored to key dates from a fundraising calendar, and mapped to repurpose across blog and social.

■ Welcome Series ■ Newsletter ■ Promotion ■ Fundraising Ask ■ One-on-One ■ Win-Back

October

	TIED TO	EMAIL TYPE	FOCUS	REPURPOSE AS
Oct 3	Fundraising calendar: pre-campaign planning window	Newsletter	Recap a program win, tease the upcoming annual campaign	Blog recap post
Oct 10	New subscriber sign-ups from fall events	Welcome Series	Org overview and impact stats for new supporters	Social carousel
Oct 17	Board meeting follow-up	One-on-One	Personal check-in with major donors ahead of year-end	None, kept private
Oct 24	Volunteer training kickoff	Promotion	Spotlight volunteer opportunities tied to the campaign	Social post + blog sidebar

November

	TIED TO	EMAIL TYPE	FOCUS	REPURPOSE AS
Nov 1	Annual campaign kickoff (hard deadline)	Fundraising Ask	Launch the annual giving campaign, segmented by giving history	Blog announcement post
Nov 14	Mid-campaign momentum	Newsletter	Progress update against the campaign goal, with a clear CTA	Social progress graphic
Nov 28	Skip federal holiday week	Win-Back	Re-engage lapsed subscribers before the year-end push	None, automated send

December

	TIED TO	EMAIL TYPE	FOCUS	REPURPOSE AS
Dec 5	Giving Tuesday follow-up	Fundraising Ask	Thank Giving Tuesday donors, invite others to match their gift	Social thank-you post
Dec 12	Campaign home stretch	Newsletter	Final push update, countdown to campaign end date	Blog countdown post
Dec 19	Skip holiday week	One-on-One	Personal thank-you to donors who gave or upgraded this quarter	None, kept private
Dec 30	Campaign close, budget meeting prep	Newsletter	Quarter recap and thank-you, sets up Q1 planning	Blog year-end recap

Sample schedule for illustration. Pull your own key dates from your fundraising calendar first, then build your send schedule and content repurposing plan around them.

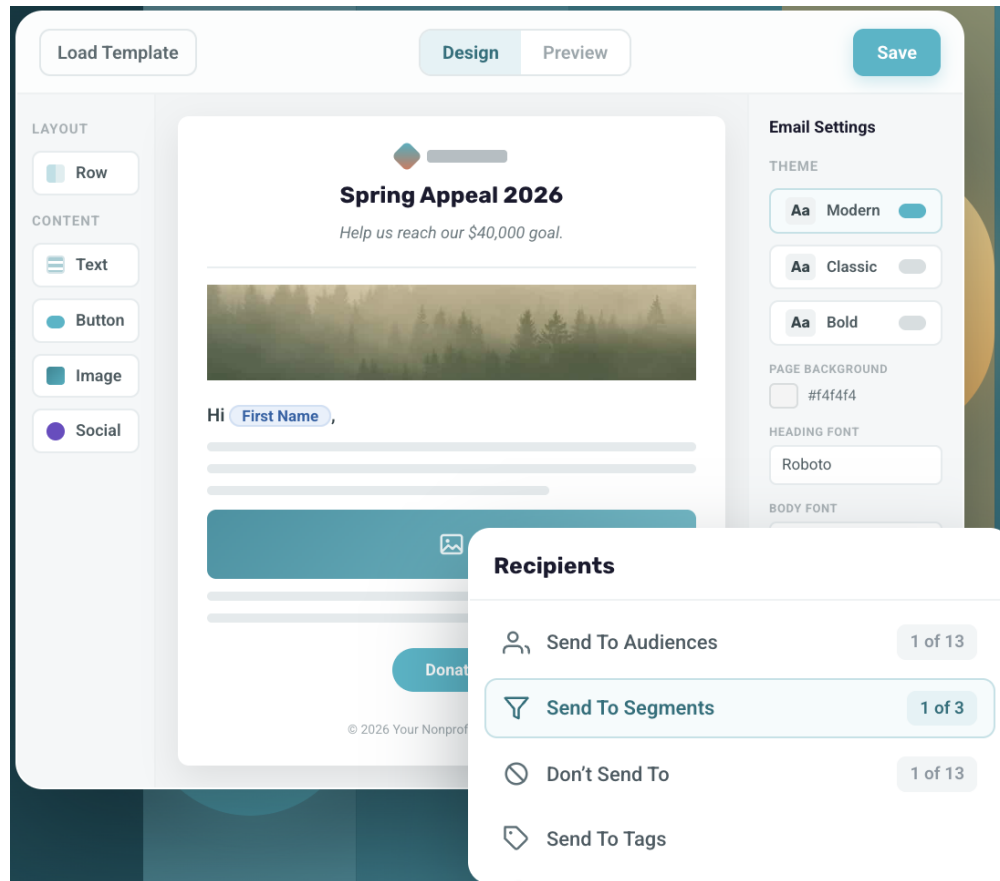
Sample email calendar for one quarter

This is a very basic example—and, it may not include automated emails like your “welcome” messages and transactional emails. Remember, your schedule doesn’t need to be anything overly complex. Find something that works well for you and your team. That’s the most important part.

6. Select a Platform and Design Your Templates

Now that you’ve got your roadmap in place, it’s time to actually get started on those emails. If you’re not already set up with an email marketing platform, you’ll need to do that. If you are a CauseVox user, [email and SMS marketing is already built-in!](#)

Once you have your platform, getting started with your emails should be a breeze. Most tools, including CauseVox, offer plenty of pre-made templates or intuitive builders that you can customize with your branding.



Easily create email templates with CauseVox

Segmenting Your Audience

Now that you've got the barebones of your email strategy laid out, you're eager to start sending emails and getting your message into the inboxes of your community.

But, not so fast, who are you sending these messages to? Do you want to send the same message to everybody on your entire list, regardless of whether it's relevant to them or not? No, you don't.

This is where segmentation comes into play. It's a word you hear over and over again whenever people talk about email marketing. And, you know it's important, but you have absolutely no idea how. Don't stress out yet! We've got what you need to know about list segmentation right here.

What Does It Mean to Segment Your Email List?

[Segmenting](#) your list basically means splitting it into smaller sections. This is where your different donor personas are super helpful because you can create a specific persona for each email segment.

Perhaps you picture yourself talking to “Stan”, the middle-aged man who donates once per year for tax purposes. Or, maybe you’re targeting your messaging at “Lucy”, the 20-something college grad who’s passionate about getting involved with causes she cares about.

Segmenting is important for effective email marketing, because it allows you to narrow your focus on these specific groups, meaning your message will be that much more targeted and relevant.

[HubSpot](#) found that the most effective strategy for email marketing campaigns included subscriber segmentation. And, the more relevant your message, the better it performs. Segmented emails drive [30% more opens and 50% more clicks throughs](#) than unsegmented ones.

Additionally, it allows you to tailor the way you communicate in various emails, as your tone and style always differ depending on who specifically you’re talking to. When emailing new donors, you’ll need to provide a great deal of background information. If you’re communicating with supporters who have stuck by you for years? They’ll likely find that information boring, and maybe even a little condescending!

How Do You Segment Your Email List?

As you might guess, the physical act of splitting apart your email list will vary depending on what particular platform you’re using. Your platform’s “help” page should have plenty of information on how to set up your lists and get started with segmentation.

Send to Recipients

SEND TO – SEGMENT

☒ Active donors 1,284

☒ Lapsed donors 342

☐ Newsletter subscribers 512

SEND TO – AUDIENCES ADD A LIST

☐ Spring Gala 2025 attendees +186

☒ Tag Volunteers +58

DON'T SEND TO EXCLUDE

☐ Made Donation to Spring Appeal 2026 -73

☐ Tag Major Donors -38

☐ Unsubscribed from appeals -24

RECIPIENT PREVIEW

1,684

 recipients

Active donors 1,284 + Lapsed donors 342 +

Volunteers 58 = 1,684

HF

Hannah Ford
hford@gmail.com

LM

Leo Martins
leo.m@gmail.com

AK

Aisha Khan
aisha.k@gmail.com

BC

Ben Carter
bcarter@gmail.com

MR

Maya Reed
maya.reed@volunteerhub.org

Live from your CRM. Every number here is your donor record right now — change your mind at send time and it re-counts, with no list to rebuild.

Audience segmentation on CauseVox Messaging

However, now you need to know what criteria you should use to split up your list. This is another personal choice, there's no black and white formula that works perfectly across the board. And, if there's a great amount of data tied to a particular email address, you'll have tons of options for segmentation based on those analytics.

Break up your email list in a way that makes the most sense to you and your team (such as the previous donors and event attendee lists mentioned above). Here's some other criteria you can consider when creating your smaller lists:

- **Demographic Data:** Separating subscribers by age, gender, income, etc.
- **Behavioral Data:** Separate subscribers by the actions they've taken with your nonprofit. Are they previous donors, blog subscribers, volunteers, Facebook followers, etc.?
- **Interest Level:** Separate subscribers based on how engaged they've been with your nonprofit up to this point. Do they donate once per year, or are they actively involved in everything you have going on? Obviously, the way you interact with them will differ based on how invested they are in your work.

6 Ways to Segment Your Donor Base

Smaller, more specific lists mean messages that actually fit the person reading them



Giving History

Group donors by how much, how often, or how recently they've given.

Try: First-time donors, recurring givers, lapsed donors, major donors



Engagement Level

Separate donors by how they interact with your emails and content.

Try: Frequent openers, occasional clickers, unengaged subscribers



Involvement Type

Group by the ways someone connects with your mission beyond giving money.

Try: Volunteers, event attendees, peer-to-peer fundraisers, board members



Demographics

Basic details that shape tone, channel, and timing of your outreach.

Try: Age range, location, household, employer or affiliation



Interest or Program

Segment by which part of your mission someone cares about most.

Try: Program area, past campaign supported, cause-specific sign-up



Relationship Type

Reflect how someone is connected to your organization and to each other.

Try: Household members, solicitor-linked donors, corporate matches

The more specific the segment, the more relevant the message, and the better it tends to perform.

Ways to segment your emails.

Dig into your existing website analytics and [reports](#) for some guidance on the best ways to segment your list. The narrower and more focused you can get these segments, the better your emails will perform!

***ACTION ITEM:** Elevate your fundraising events with live updates on CauseVox through fundraising thermometers, counters, and leaderboards, sparking competition and driving donations.*

Crafting Your Messages

Are you ready to actually write some emails? Great! Let's jump right in and get started.

Identifying Your Brand Voice

Of course, all of your email campaigns should match the brand voice for nonprofit. These are part of your overall marketing strategy, so the branding needs to remain consistent.

Before crafting any emails, take a look at your [brand guidelines](#) to make sure that your written communications are falling in line with the identity you want to portray to existing and potential supporters.

Don't have any brand guidelines to reference? That's alright! Take a few minutes to jot down some adjectives that you'd use to describe your overall brand, maybe they're words like empathetic, encouraging, and thought-provoking.

Or, perhaps you're more sharp, witty, and friendly. Then, keep that list near you as you're writing to keep you focused on the personality you should embody. This exercise only takes a few minutes, and it's an important step to take before you start drafting any sort of message to your community.

If you're working with a team, this is also a great moment to bring in [AI](#). Feed your adjectives, a few sample emails, and any past appeals into a tool like ChatGPT or Claude and ask it to build out a simple brand kit: a one-page reference with your tone, do's and don'ts, and example phrases. It gives everyone writing on behalf of your organization, whether that's you, a board member, or a new hire, a shared, common language to work from, so your voice stays consistent no matter who's hitting send.

Your brand voice doesn't only matter in your email campaigns, but needs to be incorporated on your donation page as well. After all, that's where you hope your email readers click the button to go once they finish the email. CauseVox found that [76% of donors are more likely to donate on a professional and branded donation page](#). Ensuring that your email template, your voice, and your donation pages match and are inline with your brand is essential in creating a professional, trustworthy presence.

***ACTION ITEM:** Showcase your nonprofits unique brand with CauseVox's fully branded, customizable fundraising sites. Without any coding you can customize logos, colors, content, and layout effortlessly.*

The Perfect Subject Line

Those first few words that your email subscribers see need to be impactful and attention grabbing in order to encourage people to actually want to open your email rather than dragging it directly to their trash bins.

Your [subject line](#) should match the overall tone and style of the entire email. After all, recipients will likely be confused if an email titled with "HUGE, EXCITING ANNOUNCEMENT!" goes on to explain the dire need for clean water in Africa. It doesn't match up.

Crafting a suitable subject line takes a lot of thought and consideration, arguably even more thought than the entire body of the email does. Here are a few key points to keep in mind when coming up with a subject line for your email campaigns:

- **Keep it short:** Try to avoid going above 50 characters. Long subject lines have been proven to lose a lot of interest.
- **Get personal:** Most email marketing platforms allow you to pull in customized fields into the subject line, such as a person's name or city. These have also been proven to boost engagement!
- **Be clear:** Sure, there are plenty of clever, catchy subject lines that have done well. But, when in doubt, you're better off keeping things blunt. That way, subscribers know exactly what's in your email, allowing them to immediately decide if it's something they should read.

- **Ask a question:** This can be another great way to draw readers in and encourage them to actually read that email you worked so hard on.
- **Be careful with capitalization:** Many people think a subject line like, “IMPORTANT MESSAGE YOU HAVE TO READ!” can be effective. But, be wary of over-using capitalization. Too much, and it just seems like you’re yelling at your subscribers.

Personalize Your Greeting

Sure, you may be sending the same message to a large list of people. But, that doesn’t mean you should skip bringing any customization into the email (instead of or in addition to the subject line). Nearly every email marketing platform allows you to use a tag such as `*[FIRST NAME]*` or something similar in order to personalize the greeting line of each and every email.

Do some investigation to determine how to do this with your own platform. It’s well worth the effort. According to [Campaign Monitor](#), personalized emails achieve an impressive open rate of 29% and an outstanding click-through rate of 41%. And according to [HubSpot](#), personalized greetings are the second best strategy (behind segmentation) for effective email campaigns.

Crafting An Effective Fundraising Appeal

Fundraising appeals are essential for nonprofits to raise support from their email subscribers. These emails should be compelling, concise, and personalized to resonate with donors on an emotional level. You can begin by painting a picture of the impact of the donor's contribution, highlighting specific examples of how their support will make a difference. Use [storytelling](#) to help your donors feel connected to your cause and see the impact of their donation.



Looking for some real life examples? [Well Aware](#) shares some great insights in this article. They discuss how to craft and execute an effective fundraising appeal, storytelling, and your branded donation page.

***ACTION ITEM:** [CauseVox peer-to-peer fundraising](#) turns every supporter into a fundraiser with their own personal page, and every gift automatically credits the right fundraiser, team, and donor record. No spreadsheets, no manual reconciliation, just more reach and cleaner data.*

It's All About The Call to Action

Nearly every email you send to your list will include a [call to action](#). After all, you likely wouldn't be emailing them if you didn't want them to do something, whether that's donate, sign a petition, or read your most recent blog article.

Calls to action in emails hold all the same key concepts as calls to action anywhere else. But, here are a few key tips to keep in mind:

- **Pick one:** As with anything, multiple calls to action are only confusing to your readers. Pick one thing you want them to do, and then stick with it. Don't ask them to donate, read your blog, and "like" your Facebook page. Choose just one specific task.
- **Make it stand out:** Don't let your call to action get cluttered and lost in your email message. Your email marketing platform might have an option that allows you to create a bright button for your specific call to action, which can be extra effective.
- **Use storytelling or infographics to bolster support:** [33% of donors](#) say clear visuals like charts and images would increase their likelihood to donate, and [39% say](#) that beneficiary stories increase their chances of giving. So alongside a clear CTA, provide meaningful data, photos, or stories that encourage donors to give generously.

Your investment will allow us to: Your investment will allow us to:

- **Create a safe space and dedicated time** where women can focus on their own growth — feeling supported, calm, and cared for.
- Offer **practical help for everyday life** — things like parenting support, financial literacy, managing emotions, and learning new skills.
- Bring in **professionals to offer a range of services** based on the needs of the survivors on our team.

\$25 provides materials for on Flourish Friday

\$50 helps us bring in professionals to offer services like TRE, parenting workshops, occupational therapy, etc

\$100 supports a full day of Flourish Friday programming

Double Your Donation

An example of a [matching gift](#) call to action button in an email using [CauseVox Messaging](#).

- **Instill a sense of urgency:** The likelihood of people saving your email and returning to take action later? Very, very small. You want them to click that button right away. So, use strong, action language to encourage them to act now.

The bottom line is to make your call to action both clear and incredibly easy to find. Don't make your audience wonder and search for what you want them to do, make it painfully obvious. Also make your [giving options](#) clear, easy, and seamless. There is nothing worse than a clear call to action and a clunky giving process! Include a link directly to your giving page with clear instructions on how to donate and multiple options of ways to give.

***ACTION ITEM:** Help donors see their impact. With CauseVox, you can illustrate it clearly by specifying donation tiers like "\$50 feeds 5 kids a day." Guide donors with clarity and purpose. [Learn more here.](#)*

Work Smarter, Not Harder

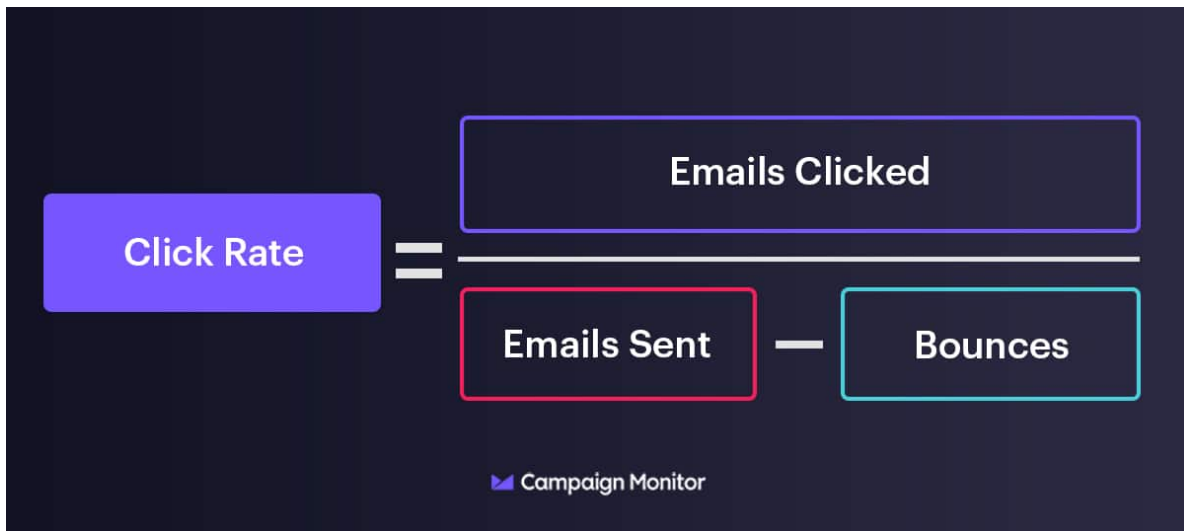
When you are stumped or feel uninspired, [AI tools](#) can significantly expedite the process of email writing! By [following best practices](#), you can harness AI capabilities to save time,

enhance donor engagement, and refine email content. Tools like ChatGPT and Claude also help by optimizing subject lines, tailoring messages to specific audiences, and suggesting content ideas, all of which contributes to a more streamlined communication with your donors.

Measuring Your Success

You want to know that all of that time and effort you're putting into email marketing is paying off. After all, you don't want to continue doing something if it's having little to no impact on your nonprofit.

Your nonprofit has many goals. But, of course, you want to see your email list steadily increase in subscribers. Every month or quarter, calculate your list growth rate using the below formula:

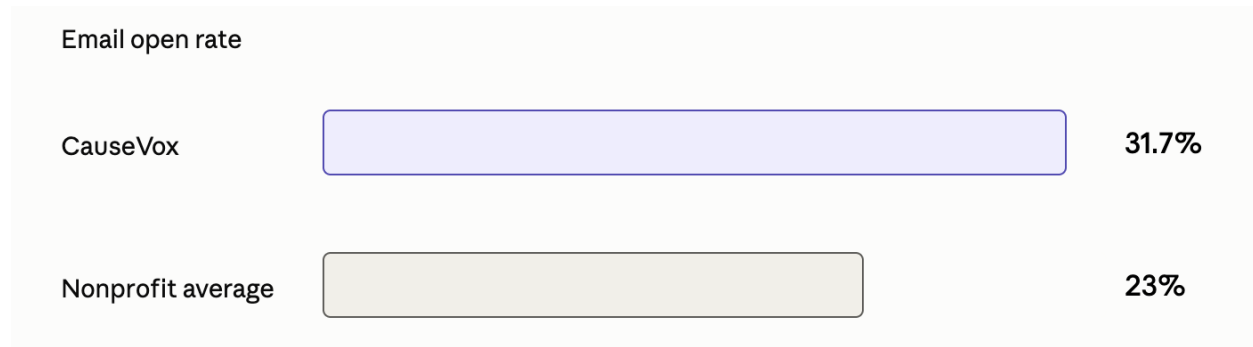

$$\text{Click Rate} = \frac{\text{Emails Clicked}}{\text{Emails Sent} - \text{Bounces}}$$

Campaign Monitor

Your email marketing platform should have analytics reports built right in that will allow you to take a look at how your campaigns are performing. Here are a few key metrics you'll want to keep your eye on when taking a look at those analytics:

1. Open and Click-Through Rates

As you might've guessed, these terms mean how many people are opening your emails and how many people are clicking the link inside, respectively. As you take steps to improve your email marketing strategy, you'll want to take note of these to see how well your emails are performing with your subscribers.



[Open rate data](#) for industry standard vs CauseVox

[HubSpot](#) found that the average email clickthrough rate is 2.6-3%, while the average email click rate is 7-9%. So if you are averaging more than that, well done! Don't be disappointed by seemingly low percentages.

Your nonprofit has many goals. But, of course, you want to see your email list steadily increase in subscribers. Every month or quarter, calculate your list growth rate.

2. Conversion Rates

This takes things a step further than your click-through rate. Your click-through rate will simply tell you how many people opened your email and clicked that "Donate Now" button at the bottom. In contrast, your conversion rate shows you the people who not only clicked that button, but also went on to actually donate funds.

ACTION ITEM: [CauseVox AI](#) takes the busywork off your plate, cleaning up duplicate donor records, guiding you through setup, and building custom reports from a plain language request. Less time on cleanup and searching means more time actually connecting with the donors behind the data.

3. Bounce Rates

The bigger your list gets, the more likely you'll have invalid email addresses cluttering it up. When an email is unable to be successfully delivered, it "bounces". There are two different types of bounces: a soft bounce and a hard bounce.

A soft bounce means an email was unable to be delivered due to a temporary issue, such as a full inbox. However, a hard bounce simply means the address is invalid and those messages will never be delivered successfully. Any hard bounces should be cleaned out of your list immediately.

Use A Lead Magnet to Grow Your List

A [lead magnet](#) is essentially an incentive offered to potential supporters in exchange for their email address. This incentive can take various forms, such as downloadable guides, e-books, templates, or exclusive access to webinars or events related to the nonprofit's mission. By offering valuable content or experiences, your nonprofit can attract individuals who are genuinely interested in their cause and eager to learn more.

Lead magnets also allow nonprofits to segment their email list based on interests and preferences, which of course enables more targeted and personalized communication. This can significantly increase the effectiveness of email marketing campaigns, which in turn makes your email marketing campaigns more successful and makes your donors feel more seen and understood.

Other ways of growing your mailing list and driving more email subscribers from your website include:

- Use popup subscribe options on your website to capture attention.
- Promote the benefits of signing up to your list on social media.
- Do a giveaway or partnership on social media and have entrants sign up for your email list as part of the requirement to win.
- Create dedicated landing pages on your website that encourage viewers to subscribe.

Keep It All in One Place with CauseVox Messaging

Everything covered in this guide, from your welcome series to your subject lines to your segments, gets a lot easier when your email tool already knows your donor data.

With [CauseVox Messaging](#), you can build campaigns with a drag-and-drop editor, start from customizable templates, and segment your audience using the same donor records that live in

your [CRM](#). No exporting a list from one tool and importing it into another, no hoping the fields map correctly, no wondering if that segment is already out of date.

Because your email lives alongside your donation forms, peer-to-peer pages, and reports, every send is grounded in what's actually happening with your donors: who gave last week, who hasn't opened an email in months, who's ready for a bigger ask. That's what makes it easier to build the kind of email strategy this guide is all about: one that keeps your supporters engaged and your fundraising connected, from the first welcome email to the next appeal.

Wrapping Up

There you have it, a quick rundown of the basics you need to know to get up and running with email marketing for your nonprofit. We know we just threw a ton of information at you, so let's wrap things up by reviewing a quick summary of everything we covered in this guide:

- 1. Types of Email Communication:** There are numerous different types of emails, from newsletters to promotional messages. Your nonprofit doesn't need to implement them all. But, get a good handle on the different types in order to determine which ones best suit your needs.
- 2. Develop an Email Strategy:** Follow our six steps outlined in this section in order to outline your own strategy for email marketing.
- 3. Segment Your Audience:** It sounds like a fancy term, but the concept isn't anything too complicated. Split your email list into smaller, more focused lists so that you can better target your messaging.
- 4. Craft Your Messaging:** Write the perfect email by using a short, attention-grabbing subject line, personalizing the greeting, and making sure your call to action is clear and obvious.
- 5. Measuring Your Success:** Keep a close eye on key metrics in your analytics in order to determine how effective your email campaigns are.

Now you're armed with the knowledge you need to get started with your own email marketing campaign for your nonprofit! Use this ebook as your guide, and you're sure to be on the right track. Best of luck!

Unlock Modern Fundraising With CauseVox

Email marketing is just one piece of your digital fundraising strategy. Step up your game and use our fundraising platform to take advantage of:

- **One Donor Story, Not Five Different Tools:** Donations, events, peer-to-peer, and email all update the same donor record automatically, so you see each supporter's full history instead of piecing it together across platforms.
- **Effortless Donations:** Streamline giving with modern options like Apple Pay, Venmo, and ACH, alongside fully-branded pages built for a fast, friction-free donor journey.
- **Distinct Branding:** Showcase your mission with fully branded, customizable fundraising sites, no coding required, so every page reflects your organization at a glance.
- **Peer-to-Peer Empowerment:** Give supporters their own personal fundraising pages, with every gift automatically crediting the right fundraiser, team, and donor record.
- **Connected Email & SMS:** Build and send campaigns with a drag-and-drop editor, then segment your audience using the same donor data already in your CRM, no exporting or re-uploading lists.
- **AI That Clears the Busywork:** Let CauseVox AI clean up duplicate records, guide your setup, and build custom reports from a plain language request, so your team spends less time on cleanup and more time with donors.
- **Data-Driven Insights:** Track gifts, campaigns, and donor engagement in real time, all in one place, so every decision is backed by the full picture instead of a fragment of it.

Transform your fundraising strategy with CauseVox. Discover how we can help you leave a lasting impression on your donors by signing up for a demo today.

[Book a demo here.](#)