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from the Texas desk of  
**Carl G. Hamm**  
Partner

## Building the Machine

I am often asked by board members and staff how they can improve their development programs or, in some cases, how to create a new development operation from scratch. It's challenging to answer with a sweeping generalization, that just doing "this" or "that" will be the magic bullet they're seeking to solve their problems. No two organizations – even of the same type – are the same.

When people describe what they perceive to be a strong development operation, especially if they've not been exposed to or involved with a comprehensive, mature program, they generally think of success only in terms of the bottom line and or the tactics they think their organization should be doing (or doing better). Parties and events, galas, mailings, giving days, grants, corporate partnerships, and, of course, finding and asking rich people for big gifts.

These tactics, and others, can all comprise a successful program and be improved on their own. But the ultimate goal for an effective development operation should consider a variety of factors, such as an organization's culture, mission, constituency for fundraising, and long-term aspirations.

One of the best books I often recommend in response to this question is Mal Warwick's *The Five Strategies for Fundraising Success*. Warwick's premise is that organizations of different types should employ different types of development strategies that can help them set appropriate fundraising goals and implement tactics that strategically advance their organizations most effectively. He outlines five interconnected approaches to consider, using the acronym GIVES to illustrate his point.

- Growth
- Involvement
- Visibility
- Efficiency
- Stability

It's common sense that a nonprofit would go through a continuum of growth to mature into an efficient, stable organization, but each of these fundraising strategies require different tactics to reach their goals. **Growth** requires casting a broad net through direct mail and other mass solicitation techniques to build a large

base of supporters, while **Involvement** could include volunteer-led galas and events, runs, and other ways to involve a core group of supporters. **Visibility** might involve billboards, PSAs, advertising, or other methods to bring awareness to the organization's mission. In **Efficiency**, organizations are positioned to raise the most amount possible through the least expense required, usually through programs such as major gifts, capital campaigns, upper-level donor programs. A strategy of **Stability** relies heavily on planned giving, the creation and feeding of endowments, and similar long-term programs.

Whether seeking to improve their current operation or create a new program from the ground up, boards and staff should consider the organization's current state and fundraising program and determine which strategy and tactics would be most effective, both in the short and long terms. I think a strength of Warwick's book is his distinct, but not mutually exclusive, approaches to be considered at different stages of an organization's life and development, any of which could be the dominant approach for a short term or indefinitely. While we all may want to create fundraising nirvana overnight, he reminds us that there are building blocks that must occur before a development operation blossoms into a fully mature, stable program.

The best development programs are built on a disciplined, systematic approach with mutual agreement on the program's goals and long-term objectives. As you contemplate how to build and strengthen your organization's fundraising machine, we hope you will call on **Alexander Haas** if we can assist you in developing and implementing a strategy that will work best for you.

Until then, we wish you all the best for a restful and productive summer.

Our Team

## Giving Increased the Last 3 Months of 2021 Over the Same Period in 2020

Giving increased 2.7% during the last three months of 2021 compared with that same period in 2020, according to a new release of fundraising data. At the same time, the number of people who gave at the end of last year fell 5.7% from 2020 levels. The share of new donors went downhill, decreasing 15.1%. This is data just released in a new report by the Fundraising Effectiveness Project, a research collaboration between the Association of Fundraising Professionals and GivingTuesday,

Revenue held more or less steady from donors who contributed \$500 or more. On the other hand, dollars given by people who made gifts of \$100 or less during the last quarter of 2021 dropped 9.3%. Revenue from gifts of \$101 to \$499 also fell, 6.1%, from 2020 levels. Just 9.5% of all money raised during the last three months of 2021 came from donors who gave \$499 or less.

Among key findings:

- The share of donors who first contributed in 2020 and then gave again in 2021 grew 26.1% during the last quarter of the year. That's more than double the growth among those donors at the end of 2019.
- The number of donors who made a single donation during the last quarter of 2021 fell 5.9% from 2020 levels.
- Revenue from new donors fell 11.9% at the close of 2021. Among donors who made their first gift to a charity in 2020, however, gift revenue increased 17.7% during the last three months of 2021.
- The number of donors who contributed \$50,000 or more to a charity fell 3.3% during the last quarter of 2021. The number of people who made gifts between \$5,000 and

\$49,999, however, grew 1.9% during the same period.

COP, 4-20

**Giving USA releases data for Giving in 2021, June 21. We will share the news the morning it's released when our President & CEO, David King, presents to the Atlanta Area Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. More to come.**

### Senate to Examine Dark Money in Fundraising

Today, May 4, the Senate Finance subcommittee on Taxation and IRS Oversight will hold a hearing, but no description is offered beyond the title *Laws and Enforcement Governing the Political Activities of Tax Exempt Entities*. Even the witnesses who will testify are uncertain of its focus. It appears likely that subcommittee intends to raise concerns about “dark money” flowing through nonprofits, but Republicans plan to widen the scope of the hearing to highlight what they see as illegal political activities by charities and foundations. Could get interesting. COP, 4-29

### Instagram Adds Donate Button

Meta Platforms Inc., formerly known as Facebook, expanded its offering of fundraising tools and now Instagram users can attach donation buttons to their Reels, turning the short videos into fundraisers. As it does for donations on Facebook and other Instagram content, Meta will collect and pass along the donations to the nonprofits at no charge, paying the processing fees itself.

More than \$6 billion has been donated on Facebook and Instagram since fundraising began on the platforms in 2015. Donations jumped \$1 billion in nine months in 2021, with 100 million creators and donors taking part in fundraising on the social-media platforms. The bulk of those gifts are coming from small donors. The majority of donations on Instagram in 2021 were under \$20. COP, 4-19

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### In-Person & Virtual Event Attendees Both Likely to Donate

Virtual attendees and in-person attendees are nearly equal in saying they would donate more than \$100 during an event, according to a new survey of 1,000 adults who attended a fundraising event.

#### Key Findings

- 21% of virtual attendees said they would kick in \$100 or more on top of event registration fees while 19% of in-person attendees said the same.
- More than a quarter said most events they attended between January 2020 and February 2022 were in-person events. A nearly equal share said they mostly attended events online.
- 96% of virtual event attendees said event experience was good or excellent, but 87% of in-person event attendees gave the same rating to their experience.
- Comedy shows, concerts, and other live events inspired 38% of respondents to say they'd attend in person, while 31% said they'd attend virtually.

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[www.fundraisingcounsel.com](http://www.fundraisingcounsel.com)  
[info@alexanderhaas.com](mailto:info@alexanderhaas.com)

Piedmont Place | 3520 Piedmont Place NE, Suite 450 |  
Atlanta GA 30305-1512 | 404.525.7575