



# A Donor is a Terrible Thing to Lose

## RESOURCE GUIDE

*How to Keep Your Donors Connected and Engaged – Today and Tomorrow*

**Websites, Blogs, Tools, Articles and  
Research Papers of Interest**

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**“The donor retention landscape is actually lousy at the moment and is going of all accounts, from bad to worse. The latest round of AFP data that came out was made for very depressing reading. We’re continuing to lose donors at a pretty alarming rate.**

**Over 70% of people that we recruit into organizations never come back and make another gift, so we’re caught on this treadmill where we have to spend lots of money on acquisition which most nonprofits lose money on anyway, just to stand still.”**

**Dr. Adrian Sargeant, Robert F. Hartsook Professor of Fundraising at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University.**

## BLOGS AND WEBSITES

### Clairification (My blog)

#### **Suggested articles:**

[Are You Treating Your Donors Like Gumballs?](#)

[Your Secret to Mindblowing Fundraising – Improve Donor Retention Just 10%](#)

[Nonprofit Donor Retention is Not as Hard as You Think](#)

[7 Ways to Build Rapport with Donors Using Creative Thank You's](#)

[THANKS\(for\)GIVING: 8 Mistakes Nonprofits Make When Thanking Donors](#)

[The 'Breakfast in Bed' Theory of Nonprofit Social Media and Fundraising](#)

[How To Get Rid of Apathetic Donors to Your Nonprofit](#)

[What Would Miss Manners Say? Thank You](#)

[Show Me That You Know Me\\*: 5 Things You Must Do To Sustain Donor Relationships](#)

[Where you're Going Wrong with Donor Retention](#)

[9 Key Nonprofit Communications Tools to Woo Donors](#)

[4 Crucial Steps to Develop a Donor Retention System](#), Vanessa Chase

### Agents of Good Blog

#### **Suggested articles:**

[10 Ways to Keep Your Donors at the Heart of it All](#), Jen Love

[How Do I Love Thee](#), John Lepp

### Claxon Marketing Blog, Erica Mills

#### **Suggested article:**

[First Time Donors Kind of like that First Date that Never Calls Back](#), Erica Mills

### Elaine Fogel Blog

#### **Suggested article:**

[Do You Make Your Donors Feel Special?](#)

### Fired Up Fundraising Blog, Gail Perry

#### **Suggested articles:**

[How Your Board Can Increase Donations by 39%](#)

[6 Steps You Can Take Today to Improve Donor Retention](#)

[Happier Human Blog](#), Amit Amin (Not a fundraising or marketing blog, but interesting nonetheless)

**Suggested article:**

[The 31 Benefits of Gratitude You Didn't Know About: How Gratitude Can Change Your Life](#)

[Harvard Gazette](#), Harvard Science

**Suggested article:**

[The Power of Thanks](#), Chuck Leddy (outlines ripple effects of gratitude).

[Katya's Nonprofit Marketing Blog](#), Katya Andreson

**Suggested article:**

[The 10 Vital Rules of Thanking, Pleasing and Keeping Donors](#)

[Ken Burnett Blogs](#), Ken Burnett

[Now, say thank you nicely](#), Ken Burnett

[Explaining better the true cost of acquisition](#), Ken Burnett (not about retention, per se, but about why focusing only on acquisition will get you in trouble).

[Lisa Sargent Communications](#)

**Suggested article:**

[The Loyalty Letter](#) (archive of monthly newsletters all about ways to keep your donors connected)

[New York Times](#)

**Suggested article:**

[A Serving of Gratitude Brings Healthy Dividends](#)

[npENGAGE Stewardship Blog](#), Frank Barry

**Suggested articles:**

[One Thing Most Nonprofits Stink at \(Donor Retention\) and How You Can Change It in 2014](#) (tips from 12 nonprofit experts).

[The 3 Principles to Acquire, Retain, and Upgrade Your Donors](#), Jeffrey Haguewood

[9 Underutilized Emails that Improve Donor Retention](#), Mike Snusz

**The Agitator**, Roger Craver and Tom Belford

**Suggested articles:**

[Why Donors Drop Out](#), Roger Craver (not about thanking, per se, but about the next thing you need to tackle to retain your supporters – donor service).

[Flat Earth Fundraising: Ignoring The Leaky Bucket](#), Roger Craver (especially appreciate the advice to stop treating donor service as a cost center; treat as a profit center).

[More on Personal Touch](#), Tom Belford

**The Fundraising Coach**, Marc Pitman

**Suggested article:**

[Why Donors Stop Giving](#), Jay Love

**The Good Steward**, Dan Blakemore

**Suggested article:**

[3 Simple & Impactful Ways to Thank \(and Steward\) Your Donors](#)

**Wild Woman Fundraising**, Mazarine Treyz

**Suggested article:**

[4 Steps to Making Your First Donor Retention Calendar](#)

**Also be sure to check out**

[Donor Retention Fundraising Ideas and Free Webinars](#) from npEngage

[Nonprofit 911: Turn First-Time Donors Into Repeat Donors](#) archived presentation with Tom Ahern and Jay Love.

[Welcome Pack Showcase](#) from SOFII.org

[Thank You Letter Clinic](#) from SOFII.org

[November 2011 Nonprofit Blog Carnival - The Quintessential Guide to Giving Thanks](#) with links to other blog articles and resources

[November 2013 Nonprofit Blog Carnival - Giving Thanks and Gratitude](#) with links to other blog articles, case studies and before/after letters.

[Clairification Gratitude - Nonprofits Say Thanks Pinterest Board](#) My own collection of creative videos and ideas from other nonprofits.

## RESEARCH/PAPERS

Mid-level donors & prospects  
(\$1000-\$10,000) represent  
significant income potential  
and greater retention stability  
AND  
...Neglect of this segment of  
donors may very well be  
fueling the donor retention  
crisis.

- The Missing Middle - neglecting mid-level  
donors is costing you millions

[The Missing Middle](#), released March 19, 2014, by Alia McKee & Mark Rovner of Sea Change Strategies. A white paper discussion retention of \$1,000 - \$10,000 donors, which constitute roughly 1% of the donor population but give one-third of the dollars. Like middle children, these donors are prone to neglect.

[2011 donorCentrics™ Internet and Multichannel Giving Benchmark's Report](#), Target Analytics, a Blackbaud company; by Helen Flannery and Rob Harris (particularly of interest is data about donor retention rates through different giving channels and characteristics of online donors).

[Growing Philanthropy in the United States](#), Adrian Sargeant and Jen Shang

[Donor Retention and Loyalty](#), by StudyFundraising.org, Professor Adrian Sargeant and Professor Jen Shang

[APA Psycnet Study](#), Explaining why gratitude expressions motivate pro-social behavior. Grant, Adam M.; Gino, Francesca

## **BOOKS**

[Attitudes of Gratitude](#) 10th Anniversary Ed.: How to Give and Receive Joy Every Day of Your Life M.J. Ryan

[Donor-Centered Fundraising](#), Penelope Burk (no nonprofit guide dealing with donor acknowledgment would be complete without this groundbreaking book; it changed my entire approach to fundraising – read it!)

[Thanks!: How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier](#), Robert Emmons

[Building Donor Loyalty: The Fundraiser's Guide to Increasing Lifetime Value](#), 2011 Adrienne Sargeant and Elaine Jay

[Keep Your Donors: The Guide to Better Communications & Stronger Relationships](#), 2007, Tom Ahern and Simone Joyaux (includes sample of a D-I-Y welcome kit you can create from existing materials).

[Relationship Fundraising: A Donor Based Approach to the Business of Raising Money](#), 2002, Ken Burnett

[The Fundraiser's Guide to Irresistible Communications](#), Jeff Brooks

[Tiny Essentials of Donor Loyalty](#), 2010, Adrian Sargeant

## If you found this helpful:

- ◆ You may be interested in my complete [How to Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude and Keep Your Donors](#) special guide from which these resources are excerpted. It includes additional guidance about donor acknowledgment policies and procedures, sample thank you letter and email thank you templates, new donor welcome protocol and welcome package and much more to assure you retain your donors and raise more money each year. See more [here](#).
- ◆ If you'd like a compendium of ways to show your donors some love throughout the year, check out [50 Ways to Move Your Donor - A Relationship Building Solution Kit](#).
- ◆ If you're interested in getting started on Pinterest – which I happen to think can be a fabulous way to WOW your supporters as well as engage new prospects – check out my [Pinterest 'Hop on the Boards' E-Book](#).

## CONNECT!

I truly want to help you succeed with your integrated marketing and fundraising strategies. That's why I offer a [FREE 15-MINUTE PHONE CONSULTATION](#) to answer any burning questions you may have. I've found sometimes that's all it takes to kick-start an idea you've been noodling around. And, honestly, I'd rather chat than try to answer every question I get via email. My fingers get tired!

If you're as passionate as I am about finding ways to create a culture of philanthropy so that you, together with your constituents, can repair the world -- then let's chat! I'd absolutely LOVE to help you keep your donors and get more and larger gifts.

That's all there is to it. There's no obligation. Simply find a time I'm available by clicking [here](#).