

Deciding to Give Online to Cultural Nonprofits: Affiliation, Attitudes, and Demographics

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Abstract

An online survey using a classical music organization's list of donors, subscribers, and other affiliates was conducted to compare differences in how each stratum made decisions about gift-giving to nonprofit organizations. Using a model of cognitive consumer decision-making to devise their questionnaire, the researchers asked respondents about preferred media for accessing information, the relevance of information available on Web sites, the types of information most critical for decision-making, and actual non-profit giving preferences. The analysis found that concert subscribers and donors differed from more loosely affiliated respondents in the types of information sources they consulted and the types of information they accessed on Web sites. However, there was almost no difference between donors, subscribers, single-ticket buyers, and online store purchasers in the types of information used to make decisions about gift-giving to nonprofit organizations. The sample was further divided into groups likely and unlikely to give online in the future. In this second analysis, there were even fewer differences in information preferences between groups, suggesting that nonprofit fund-raising campaigns can be designed with similar content regardless of whether donors are inclined to make gifts by traditional methods or online. This study has important implications for e-development strategies.

Introduction

The extraordinary fit between the Internet users' modes of operation and NPOs' need for widespread exposure to ensure public support has long been extolled (Burt and Taylor, 2000; Elliott, Katsioloudes, and Weldon, 1998; Lee, Chen, and Zhang, 2001). The mission of many NPOs is to disseminate useful information and services to its clients at minimal cost. That its Web site information and services might be easily linked to its support operations has given rise to the concept of e-philanthropy and e-relationship development strategies (Olsen, Keevers, Paul, and Covington 2001). Te'eni and Young (2003) state that donors can more easily make charitable contribution decisions due to the Internet and charitable organization websites. In fact, Te'eni and Kendall (2004) cited the online giving response to September 11, 2001—more than 10 percent of \$676-million in donations were made through Web sites—as a demonstration of “the enormous potential of online services” (p. 168). Four years later in response to Hurricane Katrina, large scale relief organizations, such as the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, were reporting that 50 percent of their contributions were being received online (Gardner, 23 Sept. 2005; Wallace, Sept. 7, 2005). It is reported that while traditional giving grows by one to two percent each year, online donations grew by nearly 60 percent from 2003 to 2004 (Kintera/Luth Nonprofit Trend Report 2005). Similarly, The Pew Internet and American Life Project surveys conducted in September and October, 2005, reported that online giving, sparked by public response to the two Gulf coast hurricanes, had jumped to 18 percent of all Internet users as compared to 13 percent at the end of 2004 (Horriagan and Morris, 2005; Perry, 2005).

As evidenced by the above statistics, the Internet is growing in popularity as a means for providing support to nonprofit organizations. Holt and Horn (2005) suggest five reasons why nonprofit organizations are increasingly accepting online donations. These include the following possibilities: (a) the online donation creates another giving option and with more options comes more support; (b) as Internet usage continues to increase, a nonprofit may be seen in a negative light if it does not provide this customer service; (c) the Internet provides a means for individuals outside the organization's place-oriented market to give; (d) this technology allows for more regular or consistent giving by providing donation opportunities as part of employee wage deductions for organizations that have e-business relationships with the nonprofit; and (e) online gift processing is more cost-effective than handling paper donations.

While it is well documented that donation behaviors and development strategies have changed due to the Internet, what is still relatively unknown is *how* donors use the Internet to transact donations. In other words, what is a potential donor searching for at the nonprofit's site, and what type of information does a donor deem as important in order to make an online contribution? Furthermore, could we expect there to be differences in contributors' online search and donation behaviors as their level of involvement or identification with the organization increases or decreases? The current study addresses these questions. The information provided here is important for development strategies and especially for those involved in e-development.

Literature Review

Te'eni and Kendall (2004) describe four types of online support services that may be centered at a nonprofit's Web site. They include (a) communication with its constituency through newsletters, email, bulletin boards, and chat groups, (b) online events and fundraising, (c) online donations, and (d) donor analysis. While as a general proposition this description is entirely accurate, non-profits might be separated into two distinct types, which has a bearing on how these supportive services are managed (see Salamon and Anheier, 1996, for international classification systems). Organizations, such as social service and emergency and relief agencies, provide services to one community and draw support from another—necessarily more affluent donor base, perhaps much smaller in numbers. However, many nonprofits, culture and recreation organizations in particular, offer services to clients, the vast majority of whom are also potential contributors.

Brady, Noble, Utter, and Smith (2002) have described these nonprofits as *charitable hybrids* because they can supplement traditional revenue streams with charitable contributions. For such organizations, every visitor to their Web site can be potentially solicited for a donation. Thus, it is in the interest of any charitable hybrid with an Internet presence to examine all its constituencies at varying levels of involvement, not just its list of loyal donors. Online interactions not only provide the basis for defining a non-profit's service-using constituencies, but also the basis for constructing a hierarchy of potential donors. The study reported here attempts to exploit exactly such a situation. We hypothesized that differences in the regularity and depth of interaction individuals have with nonprofit organizations reflect their level of involvement with the organization

and potential level of support. Accordingly, every individual who makes contact with a cultural or recreational organization's Web site—from casual user to loyal contributor—is worth querying.

In this study, we stratified the database of a classical music organization into four tiers to investigate group differences. They included (a) subscriber-donors, who bought both a season's subscription and made an additional cash donation to the organization, (b) subscribers-only, who purchased only the season's subscription, (c) single ticket buyers, who purchased one or more concert tickets online, and (d) online gift buyers, who purchased an item from the organization's online store. We surveyed a sample of nearly equal size from each stratum to investigate how their charitable giving decisions might be influenced by differing priorities when searching and evaluating online information. In particular, we wanted to explore how levels of service experienced within a hybrid charitable organization might offer a path towards higher levels of financial support (Brady *et al.*, 2002).

The study relies on a model of consumer decision-making which is widely accepted in consumer behavior and has been applied in donation behavior studies. While there are different models of consumer decision-making (see Belk, 1975; Bem and Funder, 1978; Kassarian, 1978; Leigh and Martin, 1981) many have adopted and advanced the cognitive approach (Bettman, 1979; Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell, 1968; Howard, 1977; Howard and Sheth, 1969; Nicosia, 1966). As the most well accepted model of consumer decision-making, this approach suggests that consumers are rational decision-makers that process information and use this information to make consumer decisions. The consumer moves through a series of steps including: (1) problem/need

recognition, (2) information search, (3) evaluation of alternatives, (4) choice/decision, and (5) post purchase evaluation. This approach is important to donation behaviors as it distinguishes between different types of decisions, based on varying levels of information processing necessary to make the decision. The amount of information processing that occurs in the search stage is dependent upon one's level of involvement with the person, object, or thing. Specifically, relative to donation behavior, if the donation is for an organization with which the prospective donor is highly involved, the amount of information processing and problem solving will differ from an individual with a lower level of involvement with the nonprofit organization. Situations of high involvement lead most often to increased information processing and thus extended problem solving (EPS) as defined by Howard and Sheth (1969). Conversely, in situations characterized by low levels of involvement with a nonprofit, the prospective donor will most likely engage in very little information search and thus limited problem solving (LPS). Hibbert and Horne (1996) provide the example of making a decision to sponsor a child in a foreign country to represent EPS, while dropping loose change in a charity box on the street as an example of LPS. This hierarchical approach to identifying donors based on cognitive effort has been validated more recently in a qualitative evaluation of consumer responses to a direct mail request. For Supphellen and Nelson (2001), three distinct donor categories emerged from their qualitative analysis of response from an initial sample of 90 consumers: Analysts who exhibited high involvement by delving into information about the organization and its goals; Relativists who were motivated by loyalty to the organization alone; and Internalists who acted on recognition of the

organization alone. The latter two were apt to make decisions without the information processed by Analysts.

Asking for a donation via the Internet, however, may not be as immediately compelling as a face-to-face or highly targeted direct mail appeal. Nevertheless the Internet does provide a vehicle for potential donors to engage a Web site at various levels of involvement from simple recognition of the organization to extended information-seeking and analysis before determining whether the nonprofit organization is worthy of a contribution. It is not surprising, therefore, that prominent nonprofit organizations have presumed the necessity of providing a high level of information at their Web sites. Waters' (2007) content analysis of the Web sites of the 400 top fundraising organizations has documented that the highest tier of philanthropic organizations has responded to consumers' cognitive needs by providing more frequently than others among the 400 annual reports, organizational goals, and mission statements on their Web sites.

While Web sites themselves, because of the unique opportunities for fund-raising they afford, have been investigated in order to help e-development strategists in designing Web sites that encourage donation behavior (Goatman and Lewis, 2006; Sargeant et al., 2007; Wenham, Stephens, and Hardy, 2006), what is equally relevant but generally lacking are corresponding studies investigating how potential donors process online information. Relying on the venerable cognitive consumer decision-making approach (Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell (1968); Howard (1977); Howard and Sheth (1969); and Nicosia (1966)), the current study examines the online search, evaluation, and decision-making preferences of current and potential donors. Specifically:

1. What sources and types of information do individuals rely upon in their search for information to make a decision about giving donations to a nonprofit organization?
2. How do individuals evaluate various types of information when making a decision about giving?
3. How might current contributors to a cultural nonprofit differ from others in their disposition to give to a broad range of nonprofit agencies?

Our initial analysis compared the differences between the four stratified groups associated with a classical music organization, each denoting a different degree of relational development. A second analysis was conducted by dividing the sample into likely and unlikely online givers and comparing their responses. In the latter case, the sample was enlarged to also include members of a museum consortium, thereby increasing the diversity of the sample and expanding the generalizability of the results.

Methodology

The online survey sample was constructed from the databases of two nonprofit organizations. The classical music organization provided approximately 95 randomly selected entries from each of four strata in its database, distinctively representing various levels of affiliation. The sample included (a) 95 of 343 concert subscriber donors, (b) 94 of 719 concert subscriber nondonors, (c) 98 of 1946 single concert ticket purchasers, and (d) 95 of 3163 online purchasers of merchandise from the organization's retail store. For purposes of comparison, the museum consortium provided an additional set of 94 randomly selected entries from its total database of nearly 7500 individuals. These additional entries were cross-checked for overlap with entries from the classical music organization. Two cases were deleted.

Individuals from all five groups were sent emails in mid-November 2002 announcing that they had been selected to receive the survey and that as an incentive two concert subscriptions with a value of \$244 would be randomly awarded to participants. The respondents were also told that they might opt out of the survey if they wished. Only 13 did. However, of the 474 emails sent, an additional 61 bounced back or were otherwise deemed undeliverable. A week later the survey was administered by email using the application Convio. Throughout the following month (December), nonrespondents were contacted to urge their participation. The final tally included 164 completed surveys for a response rate of 34.6 percent based on the initial sample, including undeliverables, of 474. Concert subscribers were told that if they won the two free subscriptions they could credit their value against their usual subscriptions. They responded at a rate of 38.6 percent. The response rates for the remaining three groups were nearly as high, averaging 31.9 percent.

Components of the Online Questionnaire

The online questionnaire of 50 questions was designed in continuous scroll down form of approximately 12 pages when printed. Aside from conventional demographic data (gender, age, education, income, education, and children in the household), the questionnaire was designed to gather data on four major topics: (a) respondents' search for information prior to making a decision to give, (b) respondents' evaluation of retrievable information, (c) respondents' non-profit giving priorities, and (d) respondents' estimates of online usage, including previous and possible future online giving. The Convio program permitted questions with yes-no, multiple choice (categorical), and five-point scale responses.

As previously mentioned, consumer decision-making involves information search, evaluation of information/alternatives, and choice. The information search items on the questionnaire concentrated on general sources of information (e.g., news media, government agencies, friends and family, etc.) as well as specific types of information that might be made available at an organization's Web site (e.g. mission/vision statements, testimonials, descriptions of performances, etc.). Respondents were asked to rate these items on how likely they were to search for the sources or types of information in deciding whether to give. The scale was comprised of five points: (1) *very likely*, (2) *somewhat likely*, (3) *undecided*, (4) *not too likely*, and (5) *not likely at all*.

With regard to the choice criteria (Howard and Sheth, 1969) used in their decision to give online, respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of various types of information similar to, but not exactly the same as, the types previously listed as appearing on an organization's Web site (e.g. mission statement, board of directors, testimonials, and methods of giving appeared in both sets of questions, but administrative costs, advertising, and annual report had been grouped together as financial information and performance descriptions among the information-seeking questions). The response set for the evaluative items ranged from (1) *very important*, (2) *somewhat important*, (3) *undecided*, (4) *not too important*, to (5) *not important at all*. An additional categorical question asked respondents whether they most often decided according to "thorough research," "looking for some information," "gut feeling," or simply "never make any contributions." Nine indicated they never gave and were treated as missing cases. Only 14 cited "thorough research," so the first three categories were recoded into two—designating *informational* ("thorough" and "some") and *emotional* ("gut-feeling") givers.

Finally, respondents demonstrated the general outcomes of their search and evaluation, (i.e., choice) by rating various organizations in terms of their likelihood of giving to them. Eight types of organizations were specified: health, international relief, social services, animal welfare, educational, religious, police and firefighter and veterans. Respondents rated them on a 5-point scale from (1) *already support such organizations* to (5) *not likely [to give] at all*.

Fundamental questions about Internet use—years of experience online, frequency of use from work or home, and home connection speed—were based on formats developed by the Pew (2001) Internet and American Life tracking polls. Questions germane to this study included having previously given online (yes-no), likelihood of giving online in the future (5-point scale), frequency of going online to gather information about giving to a nonprofit (5-point scale), and readiness to share various types of contact information—name, email, postal address, and phone—with other nonprofits (yes-no). For analytical purposes, the question about possible giving online in the future was recoded into two groups—likely (*very* or *somewhat likely*) and unlikely (*not too* or *at all likely*). Undecided respondents were treated as missing cases.

Results

A total of 164 individuals responded to the November-December 2002 online survey. The data analysis was conducted in two parts. The first was a comparison of group differences in decision-making priorities based on the respondents' degree of affiliation with the classical music organization. In this first analysis, 29 respondents who were members of the museum consortium were excluded. The second major analysis was a comparison of group differences in decision-making priorities based on the respondents' stated likelihood of making a gift online. In this latter analysis, 27 respondents who indicated that they were undecided about giving online in the future were excluded.

Differences between Respondents in the Classical Music Organization Sample

The classical music organization sample included 37 subscriber-donors, 36 subscribers-only, 30 single-ticket purchasers, and 32 online-buyers. All were highly educated with 72 percent of subscriber-donors and subscribers-only reporting post-graduate training, and approximately 57 percent of the single-ticket and online buyers reporting the same high level of educational attainment. Thus, the vast majority of participants were equipped with the skills to engage in extended problem solving. Statistically significant differences did occur, however, in income, age, and gender. Median income category for subscriber-donors and subscribers-only was \$100,000 or more while for single ticket and online buyers the median was between \$50,000 and \$75,000 ($X^2(df=9)=28.3, p = .001$). Higher ages were also reported by subscriber-donors and subscribers-only with approximately 80 percent of each group falling within the 50-to-64 and 65-and-over categories while the median age for single-ticket buyers was between 40 and 49 and for online buyers between 30 and 39 ($X^2(df=9)=59.6, p < .001$.) The sample was evenly divided between males (51.5%) and females (48.5%). However, while the distribution of males and females was fairly even for the subscriber-donor and single-ticket buyer groups, 72.2 percent of the subscriber-only respondents were males while 77.4 percent of the online buyers were females ($X^2(df=3)=16.7, p = .001$).

Beyond these demographic characteristics, the primary focus of this analysis—differences in decision-making priorities of these four groups—is reported by contrasting mean scores in Table 1. The items for each decision-making model component are grouped and listed in rank order by sample mean scores, which ranged from (1) *very important* to (5) *not at all important*. Among the sources of information rated most highly, obtaining information directly from the organization other than from its Web site

was the most highly valued source. The organization's Web site was ranked next highest, followed closely by mass media outlets, and then friends or family, research organizations, government sources, and finally financial advisors. The last three fall well below the middle value of the scale. When comparing the priorities of the four groups, there is a consistent pairing of the single-ticket and online buyers in contrast to the subscriber-donors and subscribers-only groups. For every possible source except the organization itself, the single-ticket and online buyers valued them greater than the subscriber-donors and subscribers-only did. There are significant differences in mean scores between groups for the value of the organization's Web site, friends or family, research organizations, and financial advisors ($.032 < p < .001$) as sources of information.

[Insert Table 1 About Here]

Ratings of types of information available at the organization's Web site show a similar pattern (see Table 1). While there are no significant differences between group means for two of the top three items—financial information and tax deductibility—for performance descriptions, mission statement, board of directors, and testimonials, there are differences in valuation between the two subscriber and the two buyer groups that are statistically significant or approach statistical significance ($.087 < p < .001$).

Mean valuations for decision-making priorities are quite different in terms of responses. The total means show that administrative costs figure most importantly in the respondents' determination about whether to give to an organization, followed in turn by advertising costs, the organization's mission statement and its annual report. The last three on this list were the names of the board of directors, methods of giving, and interestingly, personal testimonials with its total mean rating it below the middle of the

scale. However, of these seven possible components in a decision-making model, only the fairly low-ranked methods of giving was evaluated differently by the subscriber and buyer groups ($p = .043$).

Many significant differences occurred, however, in the groups' likely priorities in giving to nonprofit organizations (see Table 1). The older and wealthier subscriber-donors and subscribers-only indicated higher likelihoods of contributing to the most highly ranked nonprofits—educational and social services, followed by religious, police and fire, health and international organizations—than the single-ticket and online buyers did ($.074 < p < .005$). The only type of giving for which the single-ticket and online buyers appeared to report a higher likelihood of giving was for animal welfare organizations, but the difference in means was not statistically significant.

Enhancing the Sample for Analyzing Likelihood of Online Giving

The survey responses from 27 museum consortium respondents were included to enhance the representativeness of the sample of likely and unlikely online givers in the ensuing analysis. The museum consortium respondents were younger, reducing the median age of the sample to below 50, with more dependent children at home, raising the overall sample percentage from 23.5% to 29.8%. However, beyond these demographic differences, the museum consortium members rated only one source of information—research organizations—more highly than the classical music organization members and indicated less likelihood of making contributions to only one type of organization—religious ones. Otherwise their donor decision-making priorities were not significantly different in any other realm, including the likelihood to give online in the future. Accordingly, the combined survey sample included 164 respondents, 70 of whom were

very or *somewhat likely* to give online, 67 of whom were *somewhat* or *very unlikely* to do so, and an additional 27, who were undecided, and therefore, excluded from the ensuing analysis.

Differences between Likely and Unlikely Online Givers

In demographic traits, the likely and unlikely online givers were similar in terms of education (more than 60% of each subsample had pursued post-graduate education), gender ratios (almost evenly split), and proportion of households with children under the age of 18 (33.8% versus 25.8%). However, age and income were significantly different. About two-thirds of the likely online givers were below the age of 50 while two-thirds of those unlikely to give online were 50 or older ($X^2(df=1)=11.8, p = .001$). In addition, the majority of future online givers (53.8%) earned less than \$75,000 a year while 58.1% of the unlikely online givers earned \$100,000 or more a year ($X^2(df=3)=10.6, p = .01$). A revealing detail of this crosstabular analysis was that only 45 of the 67 individuals who had indicated they were unlikely to give online also responded to the survey income question. By contrast, 65 of the 70 respondents likely to give online did. When it came to Internet use, the two groups varied on just one measure. There was no difference in frequency of Internet use at work nor the type of Internet connection (phone modem, dsl, or cable) at home. However, the frequency of Internet usage from home was marginally higher for likely online givers ($X^2(df=4)=10.36, p = .04$).

The comparison of means for the decision-making model, component by component, is presented in Table 2. Except for the ratings of the values of organizational Web site information types, there are few statistically significant differences in means. Likely online givers rate the organization Web site ($F(1,132) = 9.77, p = .002$) and

research organizations ($F(1,132) = 3.59, p = .050$) more important as sources of information than unlikely online givers. By contrast, the unlikely online givers rate the organization's conventional modes of communicating information as most important ($F(1, 133) = 3.21, p = .075$). Consistent with these evaluations, the likely online givers value all types of information on the organization's Web site more highly than the unlikely online givers. The differences in means for five of them—gift tax deductibility, financial information, methods of giving, mission statement, and testimonial—are all statistically significant ($.000 < p < .029$).

[Insert Table 2 About Here]

When it comes to the decision-point component of the model, only the least two valued items—methods of giving ($F(1,134) = 5.41, p = .021$) and testimonials ($F(1,132) = 2.97, p = .087$)—exhibit differences in means that are or approach statistical significance. Similarly, there are only a couple of differences exhibited among the nonprofit giving preferences component. The likely online givers are more prone to contribute to animal welfare groups ($F(1,134) = 5.83, p = .017$) while those unlikely to give online marginally favored religious organizations ($F(1,135) = 3.07, p = .082$).

Attitudes of Previous Online Givers

Although future intentions to give online provided a better distribution of variance for analytical purposes, the survey questionnaire also asked respondents whether they had previously given a gift to an organization online. Fifty-four (32.9%) of the 164 respondents indicated that they had, providing a basis for analyzing the effect of previous behavior on future decisions. The crosstabular analysis revealed a highly significant relationship between previous online giving and the likelihood of future online gifts

($X^2(df=4) = 69.42, p = .000$). The most notable result was that only a miniscule percentage (3.8%) of respondents who had previously made gifts online were *not too likely* or *not at all likely* to do so in the future.

[Insert Table 3 About Here]

Past practice also turned out to be significantly related to responses to an open-ended survey question that asked participants to provide the single most important reason for not giving a gift online (see Table 4). Although 30% of both groups expressed privacy concerns, almost another 55% of the non-online givers identified the most important issue to them as belonging to one of three categories. They were either (a) resistant to changing their ways of giving, (b) concerned about using their credit cards, or (c) reluctant to make financial transactions online. For the respondents who had already given a gift online, it was noticeably more difficult to categorize their responses. For more than 40% of them, their responses were too varied to compile in any single category except the traditional catchall “other” ($X^2(df=4) = 15.14, p = .004$).

[Insert Table 4 About Here]

Discussion

The two major analyses conducted on these survey data were premised on the notion that, classical music organizations in particular and cultural organizations in general could exploit differences in decision-making priorities in order to more effectively motivate individuals to make gifts online. However, the resulting priorities of the four classical music organization affiliates and the broader analysis of likely and unlikely cultural organization online gift givers revealed a different but more logical set of circumstances than initially anticipated.

Summary of Classical Music Organization Findings

Between the classical music organization subscribers (donors and non-donors) and buyers (single-ticket and online), the differences were more superficial than expected. Summarizing the results in Table 1, what we found, first of all, was that the

mean scores indicating the decision-making procedures of the subscriber-donors and subscribers-only were uniformly comparable. Single ticket and online buyers exhibit comparable means as well. Comparing the means between these two combined groups, one can point at many statistically significant differences; however, the survey data revealed no overall pattern that suggested how to convert single ticket and online buyers into subscribers. While this may be a disappointment, the results did confirm that owing to the growth in the Internet use, this specific classical music organization faces an important new environment for communication with potential supporters. For single ticket and online buyers, the music organization's Web site was a preferred source of information about the organization itself and among the several types of information it might communicate performance descriptions was the most highly valued category and methods of giving was of distinct interest to them. By contrast, subscriber-donors and subscribers-only showed a preference for the organization's traditional (non-Web site) modes of communication. Further, they rated mass media outlets, accessible without computers, higher than the organization's Web site as their second most preferred source of information.

From the perspective of developing a motivational approach to gift-giving, one of the most interesting results in Table 1 was that there was little difference between the subscribers and buyers groups when it came to their decision-making processes. Among the most highly rated choice criteria, administrative costs, advertising costs, mission statement, and annual report, the four affiliation types exhibited virtually no difference in their ratings of each of them. This suggests that decision-making rationales are similar for all four groups. A highly significant pattern of differences does occur, though,

between subscribers and buyers in regard to nonprofit giving preferences. Here the subscriber-donors and subscribers-only indicated statistically significant higher dispositions towards giving to educational, social service, religious, police and fire, and health organizations. For all categories the subscriber groups were more prone to make gifts than the single ticket and online buyer respondents.

Adding the available demographic data into this mix, one is struck by the possible influence of age, income, and education. Higher income levels can account for the higher giving preference values while greater age may be a factor in the specific preferences for non-Web information sources and the generally lower valuations of types of information available at the organization's Web site. By contrast, the similarities in educational status (more than 60% of all respondents reported post-graduate training) may be reflected in the similarities in how all four groups weigh information in their decision-making processes. The most promising aspect of this interpretation is that in regard to these highly educated respondents, time is on the side of this classical music organization. If it maintains its relationship with its younger affiliates, as their income and age increases so might their disposition to make gifts, assuming increased organizational identification (Brady et al., 2002) and involvement (Hsu, Liang, and Tien, 2005) takes place over time.

Summary of Likelihood of Online Giving Findings

The prima facie case for reanalyzing the survey data to determine the decision-making priorities of likely and unlikely online givers is not self-evident, given that adding the museum consortium members to the sample only increases it by a maximum of 29 respondents, and that is before the undecideds are deleted. Nevertheless, the second analysis provides additional perspective while enhancing the generalizability of the

results to other types of cultural organizations. Most notably the overall rankings of sources of information, types of Web site information, choice criteria, and non-profit giving preferences remained unchanged from Table 1 to Table 2 despite a 17.5% turnover of respondents (24 of 137) in the sample.

The second analysis confirmed two other important findings from classical music organization analysis. Among likely online givers, the organization's Web site was the preferred source of information while for those unlikely to make an online gift, conventional organizational sources of information were preferred. This result was further supported by the choice criteria in evaluating Web site information. The mean scores for the likely online givers exhibited statistically significant higher evaluations for five of the seven types of information. In fact, though performance descriptions (Total $M=2.45$) was the most highly rated of the seven types of information, for likely online givers the mean scores for performance descriptions ($M=2.30$), gift tax deductibility ($M=2.30$) financial information ($M=2.43$), methods of giving ($M=2.51$), and mission statement ($M=2.53$) distinguished all of them as equally important types.

Looking at the bottom half of Table 2, the most striking feature is the lack of statistically significant differences in means between likely and unlikely online givers. The choice criteria results reflected the same homogeneity in decision-making processes in the probability of online giving sample as the original classical music organization sample. But more surprising was the lack of any statistically significant differences, except for animal welfare organizations, in regard to nonprofit giving preferences. Such findings have important implications for cultural organizations, because one might infer from them—or at least conclude that there is little evidence to contradict the assertion—

that the determinants of online giving are essentially independent of both one's methods of decision-making and one's overall disposition to give to nonprofit organizations.

Conclusions

In retrospect, we must admit that this research study was initiated with misplaced optimism that, given the accessibility of the Internet, donations might be more accessible to nonprofit organizations if the right strategy were to evolve from an investigation focused on decision-making processes. In both analyses, however, a similar pattern has emerged. The environment for providing information to *some* potential donors (young and highly educated regardless of gender) has been fundamentally altered, but the potential gift-giver's methods of decision-making have not. This suggests that to the extent that the decision to give and the decision to give online are distinct issues, then future studies of online giving need to focus on specific impediments to the diffusion of this innovation.

The issues we noted in Table 4—resistance to changing methods, reticence in revealing personal financial information on the Internet, and fear of using credit cards on the Web—represent a start. If these attitudes are dissected into their component parts and studied intensively (Olson and Olson, 2000; Schneiderman, 2000), then these new insights mixed with traditional concepts about motivating support for nonprofits (Brady, et al., 2002; Drucker, 1990) could form the basis for a more effective online strategy. Recently Polonsky and Sargeant (2007) have added a new dimension to this mix by highlighting the complexity of the customer relationship for nonprofit organizations when other primary transactions occur. In the case of the two organizations sampled in this study, such activities as the purchase of ticket subscriptions (Hume, Mort, and Winzar,

2006) and the payment of museum fees (Rentschler, Hede, and White, 2007) may be integrated into a future user study to see how those services contribute to attitudes about the organization.

In the meantime, as this research study indicates, a majority of a cultural organization's potential donor base—52% highly likely and another 30% likely in this sample—is already disposed to making an online gift. The evidence suggests they can be induced by traditional arguments to make a gift and then submit it online. This suggests that future research may also focus on whether the organization's Web site is being used appropriately as a new medium such that it is enhancing the organization's other marketing practices (Brodie, Winklhofer, Coviello, and Johnson, 2007). An important caveat, however, is that cultural organizations are most often in the business of providing unmediated educational and aesthetic experiences. We must presume, therefore, that there are limits to the extent that mediated communication via the Internet can substitute for direct personal experiences with the organization and its leaders. In a worst case scenario, mass media aspects of the Internet may heighten perceptions of a nonprofit organization's industrialization (Farruggia, 2007) and diminish perceptions of its dedication to consumer welfare (Peltier, Schibrowsky, and Schultz, 2002).

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Table 1. Oneway ANOVA: Mean Differences in Decision-Making Preferences

Associated with Levels of Classical Music Organization Affiliation

Variables Ranked by Lowest Total Means	Means					F- ratio	d.f.	Prob .
	Total	Donor	Sub- scriber	Single Ticket	Online Buyer			
Sources of Information								
Organization excluding Web site	2.28	2.19	2.31	2.37	2.26	0.166	3, 129	n.s.
Organization Web site	2.68	3.00	3.14	2.40	2.06	5.696	3, 128	.001
Mass Media	2.72	2.78	2.78	2.60	2.68	0.182	3, 130	n.s.
Friends or Family	2.96	3.43	3.06	2.83	2.42	3.694	3, 130	.014
Research Organization	3.43	3.81	3.58	3.17	3.03	3.022	3, 129	.032
Government	3.89	3.97	4.14	3.73	3.65	1.324	3, 130	n.s.
Advisor	4.02	4.19	4.34	3.90	3.58	3.179	3, 128	.026
Web Site Information Types								
Performance descriptions	2.42	2.73	2.75	1.90	2.19	3.155	3, 131	.027
Financial information	2.59	2.92	2.69	2.27	2.38	1.727	3, 131	n.s.
Gift tax deductions	2.70	2.89	2.58	2.53	2.75	0.441	3, 131	n.s.
Mission statement	2.89	3.14	3.11	2.83	2.41	2.237	3, 131	.087
Methods of giving	3.07	3.81	3.25	2.63	2.41	8.228	3, 131	.000
Board of directors	3.28	3.38	3.14	3.45	3.19	0.437	3, 130	n.s.
Testimonials	3.57	3.84	3.83	3.23	3.28	2.856	3, 130	.040
Choice Criteria								
Administrative costs	1.82	1.72	1.75	1.93	1.91	0.392	3, 130	n.s.
Advertising	2.47	2.30	2.47	2.57	2.56	0.482	3, 131	n.s.
Mission statement	2.62	2.68	2.81	2.63	2.34	0.762	3, 131	n.s.
Annual report	2.63	2.62	2.69	2.70	2.48	0.218	3, 130	n.s.
Board of directors	2.89	2.70	2.60	3.23	3.09	1.714	3, 130	n.s.
Methods of giving	2.93	3.14	3.17	2.97	2.35	2.790	3, 130	.043
Testimonials	3.33	3.32	3.58	3.17	3.33	.0763	3, 129	n.s.
NonProfit Giving Preferences								
Education	1.75	1.46	1.54	1.97	2.13	3.397	3, 130	.020
Social Service	1.89	1.78	1.50	2.45	1.94	3.863	3, 130	.011
Religion	2.10	1.73	1.69	2.67	2.47	3.641	3, 131	.015
Police and Fire	2.39	1.84	2.28	2.67	2.90	3.884	3, 130	.011
Health	2.61	2.22	2.22	2.97	3.16	4.357	3, 131	.005
International	2.72	2.30	2.69	2.77	3.19	2.362	3, 130	.074

Veteran	2.80	2.68	2.71	2.87	2.97	0.292	3, 130	n.s.
Animal Welfare	3.17	3.19	3.47	2.87	3.10	0.806	3, 130	n.s.

Table 2.

Oneway ANOVA: Mean Differences in Decision-Making Preferences for Likely and Unlikely Internet Givers

Decision Model Variables (Ranked by Lowest Total)	Means			F-ratio	df	Prob.
	Total	Likely	Not Likely			
Sources of Information						
Organization non-Web source	2.34	2.50	2.17	3.213	1, 133	.075
Organization Web site	2.66	2.33	3.02	9.772	1, 132	.002
Mass Media	2.77	2.74	2.80	0.086	1, 134	n.s.
Friends or Family	3.01	3.07	2.95	0.276	1, 134	n.s.
Research Organization	3.37	3.17	3.59	3.909	1, 132	.050
Government	3.89	3.93	3.85	0.158	1, 134	n.s.
Advisor	4.09	4.12	4.06	0.079	1, 131	n.s.
Web Site Types of Information						
Performance descriptions	2.45	2.30	2.61	1.726	1, 135	n.s.
Financial information	2.66	2.43	2.91	4.865	1, 135	.029
Gift tax deductions	2.70	2.30	3.12	11.946	1, 135	.001
Mission statement	2.91	2.53	3.31	12.088	1, 135	.001
Methods of giving	3.06	2.51	3.63	25.867	1, 135	.000
Board of directors	3.36	3.32	3.40	0.153	1, 134	n.s.
Testimonials	3.60	3.30	3.90	9.426	1, 134	.003
Choice Criteria						
Administrative costs	1.90	1.89	1.90	0.001	1, 134	n.s.
Advertising	2.46	2.36	2.57	1.210	1, 135	n.s.
Mission statement	2.65	2.56	2.75	0.725	1, 135	n.s.
Annual report	2.75	2.74	2.76	0.005	1, 134	n.s.
Board of directors	2.93	2.94	2.91	0.020	1, 134	n.s.
Methods of giving	2.97	2.71	3.24	5.417	1, 134	.021
Testimonials	3.39	3.20	3.58	2.967	1, 132	.087
NonProfit Giving Preferences						
Education	1.81	1.80	1.82	0.009	1, 134	n.s.
Social Service	1.90	1.97	1.82	0.609	1, 132	n.s.
Religion	2.23	2.47	1.99	3.067	1, 135	.082
Police and Fire	2.41	2.52	2.29	1.845	1, 133	n.s.
Health	2.58	2.67	2.49	0.528	1, 135	n.s.
International	2.69	2.51	2.88	2.339	1, 134	n.s.
Veteran	2.82	2.79	2.85	0.062	1, 134	n.s.
Animal Welfare	3.17	2.86	3.49	5.834	1, 134	.017

Table 3.

Chi-Square: Relationship between Previous Online Giving and Future Likelihood

Likelihood of Making Online Gift	Previously Made Online Gift		
	Yes	No	Total
Very Likely	51.9%	4.5%	20.1%
Somewhat Likely	29.6%	19.1%	22.6%
Undecided	14.8%	17.3%	16.5%
Not Too Likely	1.9%	20.9%	14.6%
Not Likely At All	1.9%	38.2%	26.2%
Total	100% (n=54)	100% (n=110)	100% (N=164)

Table 4.

Chi-Square: Previous Online Giving and Reasons for Not Giving Online

Reasons Not to Make a Gift Online	Previously Made Online Gift		
	Yes	No	Total
I have privacy concerns.	30.4%	30.8%	30.6%
I just don't want to change the way I've been giving.	14.0%	24.0%	21.1%
An online contribution means I must use a credit card.	9.3%	17.3%	15.0%
I don't like making financial transactions online.	4.7%	13.5%	10.9%
Some other reason.	41.9%	14.4%	22.4%
Total	100% (n=43)	100% (n=104)	100% (N=147)