

Technology Challenges Faced in the Nonprofit Sector, and Solutions

The necessary tools for solving issues
and creating a complete tech strategy

White Paper



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Introduction

Nonprofit organizations have a rising need for updated and more sophisticated technologies. However, determining the right technology investment can prove a formidable challenge. Markets have become deeply saturated, and as such, a [myriad of options](#) from which to choose are now available.

All of these choices can foster a sense of uncertainty within organizations, which can lead to indecisiveness regarding which technological sectors require a deeper focus. For example, should you transfer member information to cloud storage, or keep it locally stored? Do you invest in donor-management tools to create a more streamlined donation process? Do you create apps for volunteer management so you can efficiently track member activity?

Overview

There are [countless options when upgrading technology](#) for nonprofit organizations. This white paper will highlight the tech challenges nonprofits face, and the IT solutions that can be applied to address, or rectify these problems.

Technology Challenges Nonprofit Organizations Experience

Before digging deeper into cost-saving technology, it's better to understand all present issues to analyze the underlying cause. Though the tech challenges nonprofit organizations face can be situationally unique and differ from place to place, the most common technological troubles include:

Outdated or Obsolete Technology

A vast majority of nonprofits are still dependent on outdated techs. They're still paying a significant amount of money to IT staff.

In addition to that, many nonprofit organizations continue hosting their shared drive, emails, website, and software programs on a local server (in-house). Moreover, maintenance is quite expensive, and the risks of cyber-crime are high.

Manual Documentation

For all not-for-profit organizations, documentation is vital and detailed. But at several 501c3(s), they have manual documentation, making it hard to access during emergencies. Additionally, some nonprofit institutions are still unable to automate any of the stages of this tiresome process.

Skepticism Towards Adopting New Technologies

The traditional mindset of many individuals working in nonprofits can be hard to change. As a result, the organizations may not greet new techs cordially that private businesses have been capitalizing on for quite some time.

Possible reasons for this skeptic behavior could be past digital transformation efforts gone wrong or sheer mistrust of these technologies and their provided value.

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Inefficient Fundraising Tools

Some nonprofit organizations rely heavily on donations to operate efficiently and smoothly, thus need [tools to organize fundraisers](#). But when the devices are poorly designed, it becomes challenging to run a campaign and increase and track the money flow.

Challenges Differ By Nonprofits Type

The tech troubles discussed earlier are of varying importance to each nonprofit organization. For example, the leading problems for churches are:

- Changing patterns of privacy
- Choosing contemporary antivirus software
- Lack of credible information about cyber security
- Challenges in e-payments because of poor development

Challenges Faced With Software

On the contrary, various charitable organizations find it extremely difficult to maintain remote systems and technology because they still don't have a dedicated CRM system to help them manage such a vast array of data. They're still functioning without video conferencing apps and online platforms. Instead, some organizations rely on transferring phones manually to their employee's homes during work-from-home situations.

Political entities still employ direct verbal communications to engage with their citizens since they lack tools of digital connectivity. Due to this, it's pretty challenging to manage and track their campaigns during the ongoing pandemic.

IT Solutions for Nonprofits

Choosing the [right tech to upgrade can help nonprofit organizations](#) save money, function more efficiently, engage with their patrons much better, and increase the level of satisfaction of their customers and employees.

How does technology help nonprofit organizations? Here are five cost-saving technologies for nonprofits:

Equipment & Services Specialists

Non Profit organizations that prefer outsourcing their IT departments can still scale on tech upgrades while staying cost-effective. Maintenance services and traditional hosting may still be dependable on pre-cloud tech and charge much more than most modern, scalable SaaS platforms.

Cloud Migration

Everything from project and accounting management software to local servers is [going to the cloud](#).

Cloud migration is when organizations move all or some of their data center abilities into the cloud, typically to operate on cloud-based infrastructures provided by service providers like Google Cloud, Azure, or AWS.

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Some of the benefits include automatic and timely maintenance, free installation, and periodic updates free of charge. However, the main advantage of the cloud is that every employee within your organization can [access almost anything](#), from data to different programs, in one place.

Upgrading/Replacing Old Technology

Desktops operating on unsupported software and outdated operating systems are more vulnerable to cyber threats and malicious attacks, causing a costlier data breach. In addition to that, old technology and systems add extra costs, as you need to recruit workers that maintain them regularly.

Computer Resources of America's development and hosting platform contains cloud deployment, maintenance, and security, allowing you to [create a complete roadmap](#) for your particular organizational needs.

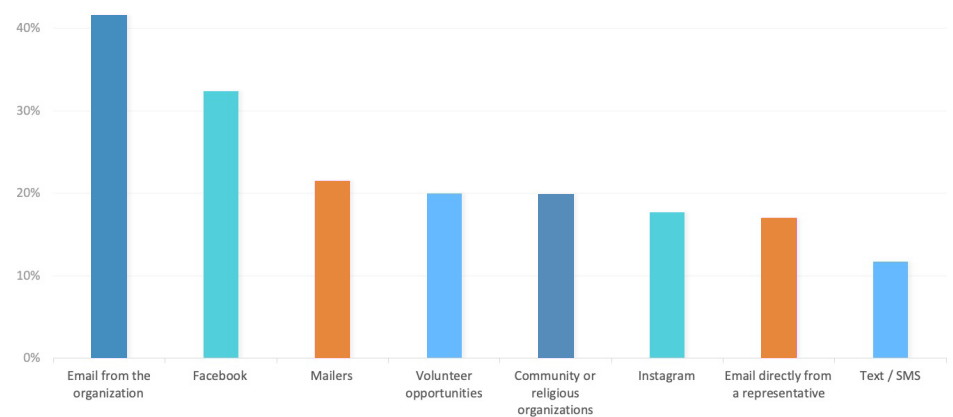
Utilizing Open-Source Tools

Several open-source tools can help nonprofit organizations in their [online engagement pursuit](#). In addition, these free tools can assist you in saving money as you don't need to pay licensing fees.

Since an enthusiastic community maintains it, open-source tech helps to minimize long-term technological expense and allows you to challenge more technologically forward competitors.

Numerous open-source providers are available for nonprofits, such as Eclipse Foundation, Drupal Association, GNOME Foundation, Mozilla Foundation, OASIS Open, etc.

Survey: How do you prefer to hear from your favorite nonprofits?



Source: [The Data-Backed Guide to Nonprofit Marketing](#)

Donor-Engagement Tools

With donor-management tools, nonprofit organizations can maintain their associations with big donors and [collect funds appropriately](#). Computer Resources of America (CRA) has a donor-engagement system that contains numerous free licenses and a set of useful apps for nonprofits. We also provide email tools so you can reach your donor timely.

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Things To Consider When Creating An IT Roadmap

As a nonprofit organization, you must request quotations from multiple solution providers and vendors and compare them to ensure optimum savings. Here are [a few things to consider](#) when creating an IT roadmap:

Subscription Charges

Subscription charges mean the amount you have to pay to other parties before using their services and products. Make sure to ask them about other additional perks and benefits you'll get within the subscriptions.

In addition to that, make sure you understand the subscription duration well: is it recurring payments or a one-time payment? Is there any hidden charge that might apply under specific conditions?

Get a response to every question you ask them, and then match various providers to have a better deal.

Implementation/Maintenance Cost

Another worry after the sign-up is recurrent implementation and maintenance charges. Again, as a nonprofit institution, you should cautiously probe proposals from various providers and vendors and choose the one offering free or minimal implementation and maintenance charges.

Compatibility

What use is a new tech service or product if it's not even compatible with the existing infrastructure and system? Make sure to check your tech upgrades compatibility by administering a demo with your current IT settings to guarantee that it operates smoothly.

Regulatory Compliance

This consideration mainly relates to patrons and their payment information. Confidential data is essential and, therefore, must be kept secret. So, always select an upgrade that ensures the best possible data privacy and security.



Source: [The Benefits of Outsourcing Your Nonprofit Organization's IT Operations to CRA](#)

Computer Resources of America

Now is the ideal time for nonprofits to adopt new, updated technology for their business. With the right technological upgrades, nonprofit organizations can minimize operating costs, increase productivity, open more donors, and raise fundraising efforts.

At Computer Resources of America, we have a [proven history of working with nonprofits](#) and delivering fast and competitive apps. We have more than 25 years of successful experience in offering managed IT solutions to government agencies, midsize organizations, financial services, legal firms, nonprofit organizations, and much more. For more information, [browse our website](#) or [contact us](#) directly to speak to a technician for a free IT evaluation.



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