

ARTICLE

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# Nonprofits Need to Include Major Gifts in Their Strategic Plans to Be Successful (Study)

By Maria Di Mento

Nonprofits that include major-gift goals in their strategic or development plans are far more likely to meet those goals than organizations that do not, according to the 2020 Major Gifts Fundraising Benchmark Study.

The report was published by MarketSmart, a marketing software and consulting company that focuses on major and planned gifts, in collaboration with the Association of Fundraising Professionals, the Association of Philanthropic Counsel, and DonorSearch, a wealth-screening company. Melissa S. Brown & Associates conducted the study, which is based on an October 2019 survey of 580 nonprofit professionals in the United States and Canada.

The report also says that whether an organization meets its major-gift goals is closely associated with whether fundraisers have time to develop close relationships with donors, have a good system for identifying prospects, and have a manageable number of prospects in their portfolios. This holds true for nonprofits of all sizes, according to the study.

Among the findings:

- While 80 percent of respondents said major-gift goals are included in their planning, just 43 percent met their major fundraising goals in 2019.
- Nearly half of fundraisers reported being dissatisfied with their pipeline of major-gift prospects, and only 34 percent said they were satisfied. Seventeen percent felt neutral about it.
- Slightly more than 15 percent surveyed said they came close to meeting their major-gift fundraising goal.
- One-quarter said their organization does not have dollar goals for major gifts.

*This article is part of:*

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