

## Giving Tuesday Appeals Raise 27% More Than in 2017

By Heather Joslyn

**\$380 million**  
Amount raised on Giving Tuesday 2018

Giving Tuesday, the annual day devoted to philanthropy, raised roughly \$380 million for charities from 4 million people, organizers said.

The results represent an increase of 27 percent from last year, when donors gave about \$300 million.

New York's 92nd Street Y and the U.N. Foundation started Giving Tuesday in 2012 as a philanthropic alternative to commerce-focused Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Since then, it has raised \$1 billion online.

Reports of this year's results from online gift processors and individual charities were encouraging — and perhaps indicative of a strong fundraising finish to 2018.

Among the results provided by companies that help charities raise money online:

- Donors brought in more than \$125 million on Facebook, up from \$45 million in 2017. The social network has introduced new tools in the past year that make online fundraising easier. Facebook and PayPal together offered a \$7 million match for Giving Tuesday donations and saw that match gobbled up "within seconds" after 8 a.m. Eastern time, a Facebook spokeswoman said.
- Blackbaud processed \$62.6 million in gifts, up from \$60.9 million on Giving Tuesday 2017. The average size of contributions was up, too: \$147, compared with \$134 the previous year. Best of all, says Rachel Hutchisson, Blackbaud's vice president for corporate citizenship and philanthropy, the number of organizations that received donations was up 16 percent over last year's event. "More organizations are sharing in this generosity, which is terrific because that's what Giving Tuesday is supposed to be about," she said.

Twenty-nine percent of gifts were made on mobile devices, according to Blackbaud's data, up 12 percent from 2017's event. Mobile is "the tech trend that will not go away," Hutchisson said.

- GiveGab raised more than \$52 million, up from \$43 million during last year's event.
- DonorPerfect processed more than \$35 million on Giving Tuesday, up 27 percent from 2017. The average online gift was \$185, over 6 percent more than the previous year.
- The Classy software company processed \$15.4 million from more than 128,000 donors, up about 50 percent from \$10.3 million last year. One contribution was \$100,300. Support for human services accounted for about a third of the total raised.

Camp Kesem, a program that offers recreation to children whose families have been affected by cancer, raised more than any other Classy client — over \$2 million, nearly \$1.8 million of it on Classy.

"We're still floating," says Jane Saccaro, Kesem's chief executive. She credits the organization's 5,000 college-student volunteers, who promoted the organization on social media. "Peer-to-peer really fueled fundraising," she says. The volunteers received training months ahead of Giving Tuesday, along with templates, graphics, campaign timelines, and other tools to enhance their campaigns. Kesem also released a video appeal in time for the volunteers to share on their Facebook, Twitter, and other social media.

Volunteers juiced giving with social-media stunts. "They'd say, 'When I raise \$5,000, I'll eat this hot pepper,'" Saccaro says. "They got very creative."

## A Boost for Holiday Giving

Asha Curran, who leads Giving Tuesday at the 92nd Street Y, points to a couple of factors that keep the event growing each year.

"The obvious answer is technology — that this idea can now spread so fast, across borders, across the whole world," Curran says.

In addition, the event remains inclusive, honoring all forms of giving, including nonmonetary ones. "We're seeing an amazing democratization of giving," she says. "Giving is about more than just money. It's only one metric, and not necessarily the most important one."

But having a Giving Tuesday success usually provides a good jump-start to year-end fundraising, she adds: "Our data indicates that organizations that do well on Giving Tuesday do well throughout the whole month of December."

And there's evidence that Giving Tuesday donors are savvy: GuideStar, the online repository of financial and other information about charities, reported that the day saw its highest web traffic, up 33 percent from Giving Tuesday 2017. "Sometimes Giving Tuesday donors get criticism for being too emotive, but I think it indicates that people are doing their homework."

Other promising trends Curran notes include the rise of fundraising collaborations among charities with similar missions ("I found that downright heartwarming," she said) and of communitywide campaigns. This year's event tracked more than 140 such efforts in towns, cities, and states.

For instance, organizers of the Panhandle Gives, in Amarillo, Tex., set a \$500,000 goal. Recalled Curran, "They called us and said, 'We hit our goal. What do we do now?'" The answer: Keep going. The effort eventually raised more than \$833,000.

## How Causes Fared

Following months of hurricanes, wildfires, and geopolitical upheaval, relief charities were on the minds of donors:

- The American Red Cross brought in triple what it raised on Giving Tuesday in 2017, though it did not release specific figures. Giving was powered in part by a \$100,000 match by the home-improvement retailer Lowe's.
- Islamic Relief opted to focus its Giving Tuesday campaign on war-torn Yemen, where millions are suffering from famine. The campaign had raised about \$74,000 on Tuesday, a huge improvement on its goal for the day of \$25,000 — and way up from the roughly \$2,000 it raised during last year's event.

The charity, which works in more than 40 countries, chose to focus on Yemen on Giving Tuesday in response to donors' feedback, said Syed Hassan, an Islamic Relief spokesman. Yemen's famine and civil war have been in the news a lot, says Hassan: "Our donors care about many countries, but it's a country where our donors always want to know what we're doing."

## Getting Attention

Education causes saw support grow on Giving Tuesday. GiveCampus, which helps schools and colleges raise money online, reported that 216 institutions collected more than \$3.4 million on Giving Tuesday. Schools and colleges raised more than 14 percent more money in 2018 than in 2017 and drew more than 17 percent more donors. (For the first time, slightly more than half of donors gave via mobile devices rather than computers.)

Some small private schools did well on Giving Tuesday. Calvert School, an elementary and middle school in Baltimore, raised nearly \$103,000, a 75 percent spike from the previous year. A focus on parents who had not previously given was behind the increase, says Sarah Walton, director of development: Those parents received a text Monday with a simple message, "Please remember Calvert School on #GivingTuesday." A week before the event, volunteers reached out to people who hadn't given to Calvert and appealed for gifts.

Charleston Collegiate School, a pre-K through grade 12 institution in Johns Island, S.C., brought in more than \$96,000, up 290 percent from Giving Tuesday 2017. Students participated in a phone-athon and in competition challenges throughout the day to increase participation, according to Bonnie Scapellato, director of development. Prizes for the classes that got the most people to give included karaoke and pizza parties and a chance to play kickball against a faculty team.

Some organizations focused on simply introducing themselves to potential supporters. Global Girls Alliance, a month-old program of the Barack Obama Foundation that seeks to catalyze more support for girls' education around the world, approached Giving Tuesday as a chance to say, "We are out there; we have launched," says Tiffany Drake, the alliance's director.

The alliance's fundraising has been buoyed by a \$50,000 gift from Procter & Gamble, plus a \$200,000 matching grant from the company. The program was still counting its gifts on Wednesday, though the Obama Foundation reported a 127 percent increase in donations during a 48-hour period that included Giving Tuesday compared with that same period in 2017.

Much of the work of the alliance, a project of former first lady Michelle Obama, is focused on directing more attention and resources toward girls' education. But the program's Giving Tuesday campaign tried to give even young supporters a chance to take action, Drake said. It released a video Tuesday of young American girls telling why the cause mattered to them and directed supporters to a GoFundMe page where they could make gifts to grassroots programs directly.

"Storytelling is a big thing for us, and I think that has resonated with people," Drake said.

*Note: This article was updated November 30, at 2:40 p.m., to add results from GiveGab. It was also updated November 29, at 4:30 p.m. to add a section on holiday giving.*