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Shelter Helpers

Donor Management Software

Introduction

Non-profit organizations are vital resources for helping the less fortunate. Today's fast growing technology has allowed new organizations to quickly adapt to their growing needs. The main need for many growing non-profits is organization of their expanding data. Smaller organizations like youth groups are able to organize their information through several programs such as Microsoft Excel and address book software but Donor Management becomes too troublesome to use multiple software packages when someone is managing hundreds of clients. Donor Management Software allows its users to organize hundreds of donors and their contact information. Today's Donor Management Software has many different features that organize donor information, gifts, and volunteer management. The purpose of this paper is the many features of Donor Management Software and the underlying technology.

Underlying Technology

The main technology of Donor Management Software is database [2]. A database is a structured organization of records. Donor Management Software varies to suit the needs of any size organization; the problem is deciding what type of software and if the organization already has the software [1]. Smaller organizations may not need Donor Management Software like Exceed! Basic which costs \$499, but instead use a free software package like eBase [5]. The other option is to use other programs like Excel and create spreadsheets to organize the data.

Another option to use Donor Management Software is through a online database [2]. A online database allows data to be stored offsite and can be easily accessed from anywhere. The most common access is accomplished through Internet browsers. Both options do not require expensive computers but basically run on any computer that can run Windows XP [5].

Implementation

Donor Management Software works from two different sources. One option is to store data on a computer or a network of computers. A single computer or network is good for smaller organizations that do not have heavy workloads. This option is ideal for youth groups, small churches, and smaller non-profits. DonorPerfect has a software package that installs on a group of computers and organizes all their records into easily

accessed storage [3]. An example is a simple address book to keep contact information, a calendar to schedule volunteers and important fundraising events, and using a spreadsheet to keep accounting information such as donations.

The second option is to use the online database. DonorPerfect has a monthly subscription and its own database that can be accessed through an Internet browser [3]. An online database allows any computer to access the database and allows mobility and simplifies data management.

Donor Management Applications

Donor Management Software has many different sources but the most common features are Donor contact information, Tracking and Accounting donations, and Volunteer management [1][3][4][6].

Features

- Workflow Management
 - Volunteer Scheduling – Volunteer Management
 - Communications – Organizing and confirmations
 - Campaigning – Advertising and Recruiting
 - Proposals – Sponsorships and Budget Meetings
 - Special Events - fundraisers and cooperative events
- Knowledge Management
 - Donor Information – Contact information, phone numbers, addresses
 - Grants – Company sponsors and federal aid
 - Accounting – tracking donations and keeping proper bookkeeping

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