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Title: 3 Fundraising Technology Predictions for the Coming Years

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To coin a cliché, change is here to stay. Like it or not — and most people don't — the pace of change means that many jobs being filled now did not exist 10 years ago (search engine optimization specialist anybody?).

Schools are now teaching students how to find stuff out rather than stuff itself — the skills necessary to find out what they need to know. So even though today's students may not be leaving education knowing the capital of Kazakhstan*, they should at least be equipped to find it out ... and therefore have the skills to progress in the modern world.

So what changes will we see in fundraising over the coming years? And what does that mean for the technology we use? Here are a few predictions.

Fundraising will be social

Organizations need to understand that their constituents, even the older ones, will expect to communicate with the charity and with one another online, using social media to do so. Nonprofits should not bury their heads in the sand, afraid of losing control of brands, but instead should be ready to equip donors to represent their causes on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#). And maybe provide a private social network to provide added privacy and a sense of community.

Fundraising will be all about the donor

Modern consumers expect to be able to research and buy online, and they'll expect their chosen causes to offer a similar experience. Imagine you are setting up a brand-new company to sell books and music. Would you (a) rent a store, buy stock, employ staff to work in the store and have a computer system to process the orders; or (b) build a website for customers to browse, buy and download your products for themselves without you needing to intervene? I'd guess the latter.

This model, when applied to nonprofits, changes the historical emphasis from back-office fundraising database solutions to solutions that seamlessly blend website and database with the emphasis on the online donor experience. It's not necessarily the end of more traditional forms of fundraising, but think about what it would mean to give your donor the tools to donate, register, buy, fundraise, communicate, recommend and learn more about your cause online. And then think about the implications of not doing it.

Fundraising will be about innovation

Nothing new really, but new kinds of innovation are possible as new technology opens up. The much-publicized poster child for Twitter-based fundraising is the [charity: water Twitter-driven fundraising campaign](#). However, it was successful not only because

of the medium, but also the creativity and innovation behind its use. So organizations have to be as original, as creative and as innovative as that campaign. Whether that's dreaming up new kinds of corporate partnerships, writing an [Android](#) app or giving your donors the tools to ask friends to donate, it's the idea that counts — and then the appropriate technology to support it.

** Astana. Yes, I looked it up.*

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