



# 2012

## eNonprofit Benchmarks Study

An Analysis of Online Messaging, Fundraising, Advocacy,  
Social Media and Mobile Metrics for Nonprofit Organizations

AUTHORED BY:



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Enormous thanks to our nonprofit study partners for sharing their data. Without them, this study would not have been possible.

### ABOUT M+R STRATEGIC SERVICES

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### ABOUT NTEN: THE NONPROFIT TECHNOLOGY NETWORK

NTEN is a community transforming technology into social change. We aspire to a world where all nonprofit organizations skillfully and confidently use technology to meet community needs and fulfill their missions. We connect our members to each other, provide professional development opportunities, educate our constituency on issues of technology use in nonprofits, and spearhead groundbreaking research, advocacy, and education on technology issues affecting our entire community.

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This report is available for free download online at [www.e-benchmarksstudy.com](http://www.e-benchmarksstudy.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

For all study participants, 2011 was a good year. Overall online fundraising revenue increased by 19% from 2010 to 2011; the number of gifts increased by 20% as well. Advocacy messaging performance showed a distinct improvement over the 2010 rates. Organizations were also able to grow their email lists and hold key email metrics like click-through rates and response rates steady.

For many years, we've seen email response rates decline. So what's behind the improvements? We have a number of theories. Email has developed for nonprofits as a marketing tool. More groups are using best practices online to optimize their programs for better open rates, response rates and revenue. Overall, as the industry grows more sophisticated, and the economy improves, it is perhaps unsurprising that we see a corresponding lift or leveling off in our most important measures of success.

This is the sixth edition of the eNonprofit Benchmarks Study from M+R Strategic Services and NTEN. The data represents information generously provided by 44 nonprofits of various sizes who have partnered with us to provide a snapshot of their online performance in 2011.

This study contains measures of email messaging, list size, fundraising, advocacy, social media and mobile programs. Last year, this study broke out organizations with small, medium and large list sizes. This year, because organizations with small lists were under-represented in our study partners, this type of analysis was not included. Also notably, the sector breakdown in this year's study does not include health organizations due to low participation by nonprofits in that sector. The study continues to examine metrics in the environmental, international, rights and wildlife and animal welfare sectors.

If you have a copy of the 2011 Benchmarks Report, we ask that you do not compare the numbers found there with the numbers reported on here. Because that report uses a different data set, from a different group of nonprofits than are represented in the current study, the numbers will not be comparable. We collected data for 2010 and 2011 from this year's participants where possible, and all comparisons to 2010 in this study are based upon these data, rather than the data collected during past years' studies.

Benchmarks are useful for any nonprofit trying to determine not just how their emails or campaigns perform in comparison with each other, but how they compare with the industry as a whole. We hope you find this study useful in crafting another year of strategy for your nonprofit's online program!

## KEY FINDINGS

- The 2011 fundraising response rates remained at 0.08%, with a negligible increase of 2% on average from 2010 to 2011.
- The advocacy response rate increased by 28% from 2010, to 3.8%.
- Overall fundraising revenue saw extensive gains with an average increase of 19% from 2010 to 2011. International sector organizations – which saw a spike in fundraising due to high profile aid needs in 2010 – represent the only sector that saw a decrease in online revenue from 2010 to 2011.
- The nonprofit email-driven donation form had a median completion rate of 17%.
- While one-time gifts remained the largest source of online revenue for participants, online revenue from monthly giving is growing at a much faster rate.
- Annual list churn was 19%.
- The average nonprofit Facebook fan page had 31,473 users, defined as people who “Like” a fan page.
- Nonprofit Facebook fan bases have seen phenomenal growth between 2010 and 2011, with the average nonprofit increasing its fan base by 70%.
- For every 1,000 members of an email list, the average nonprofit had 103 Facebook fans, 29 Twitter followers and 12 mobile subscribers.

## EMAIL MESSAGING

### EMAIL RATES BY MESSAGE TYPE

	OPEN RATE	CLICK-THROUGH RATE	RESPONSE RATE	UNSUBSCRIBE RATE
All	14%	2.1%	-	0.19%
Fundraising	12%	0.5%	0.08%	0.22%
Advocacy	14%	4.2%	3.84%	0.16%
Newsletter	13%	1.6%	-	0.17%

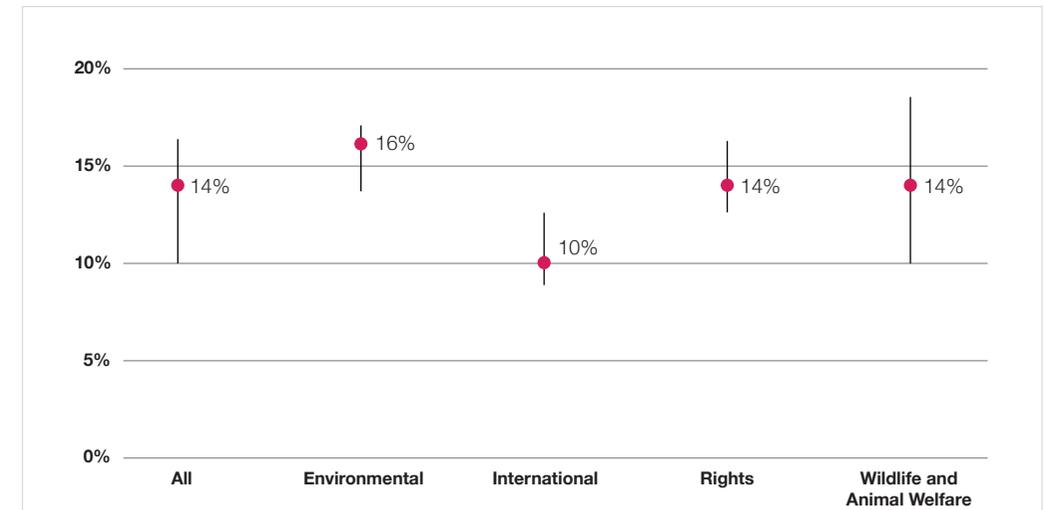
We evaluated all email messaging for each sector using three major buckets: fundraising, advocacy and newsletter messages.

Advocacy messages had the highest open rates, click-through rates and response rates – as well as the lowest unsubscribe rates.

Between 2010 and 2011, email open rates remained basically flat, with an increase of 3%. Fundraising response rates also held steady, with a similarly small lift of 2%. On the other hand, advocacy response rates increased by 28% from 2010 to 2011, a fairly substantial bump.

This chart provides a snapshot overview of these metrics, but we will be exploring these message types more thoroughly later in this study.

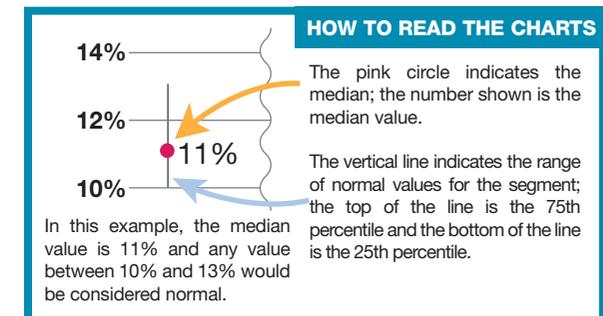
### EMAIL OPEN RATES



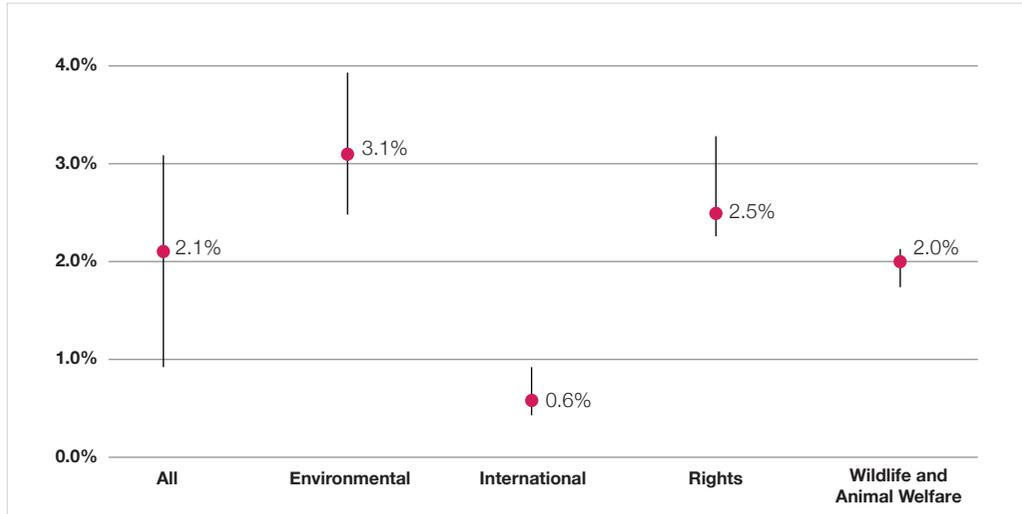
Overall, email open rates held steady between 2010 and 2011. This bucks a consistent downward trend we have observed over the last few years. Considering that list size has increased, and that older names will often grow stale, a year-over-year rate that remains flat is actually quite positive.

In 2011, the median email open rate was 14%. With the exception of the international sector with a median open rate of 10%, sectors' median open rates were largely uniform.

We've seen some nonprofits increasing their open rate through the use of a few different tactics, including using more sophisticated audience targeting, incorporating localized content and adding new active supporters to the list.

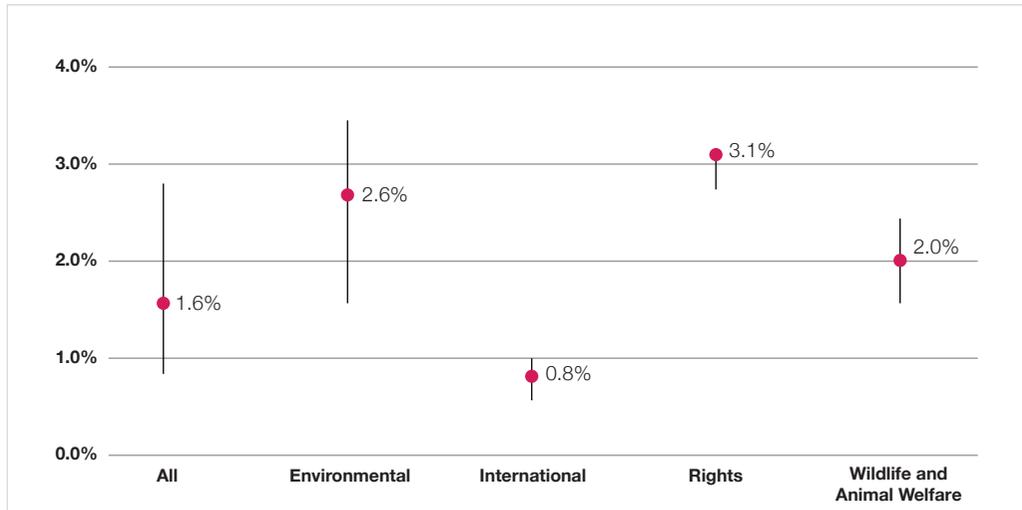


## EMAIL CLICK-THROUGH RATES



Click-through rates averaged 2.1% for all message types and all sectors. The median click-through rate for an advocacy email was 4.2%; the median rate for a fundraising email was 0.47%.

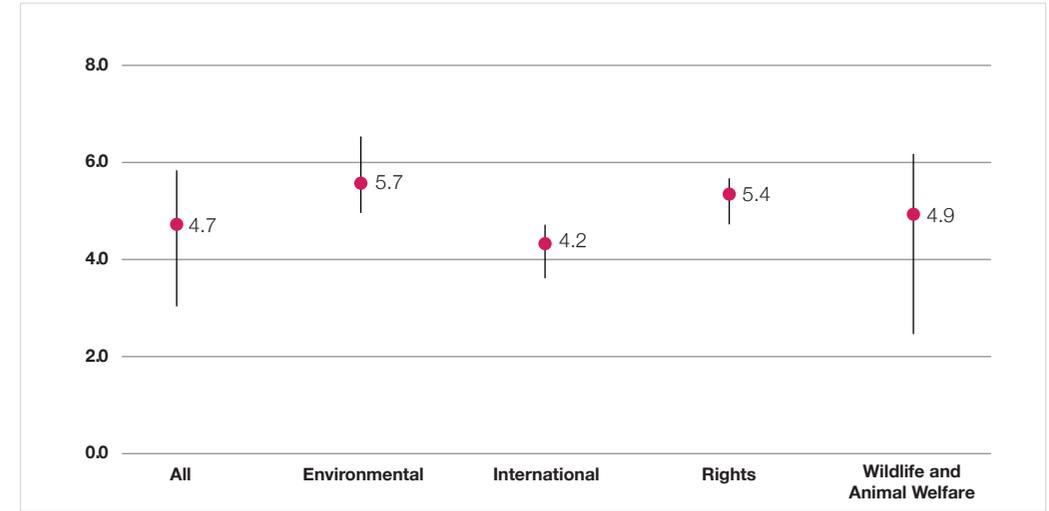
## EMAIL NEWSLETTER CLICK-THROUGH RATES



Email newsletter click-through rates tend to be higher for organizations that have good interactive content, usually advocacy.

Click-through rates for the international sector are by far the lowest, with a median of just 0.8%.

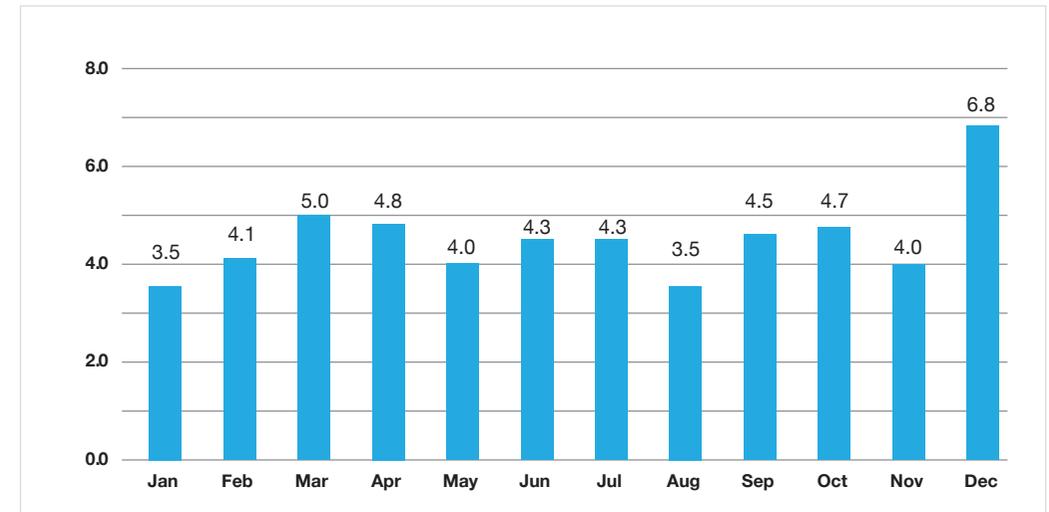
## MESSAGES PER MONTH PER SUBSCRIBER



This year, the environmental sector led in message volume, with an average of 5.7 messages per month per subscriber, well above the median of 4.7 messages.

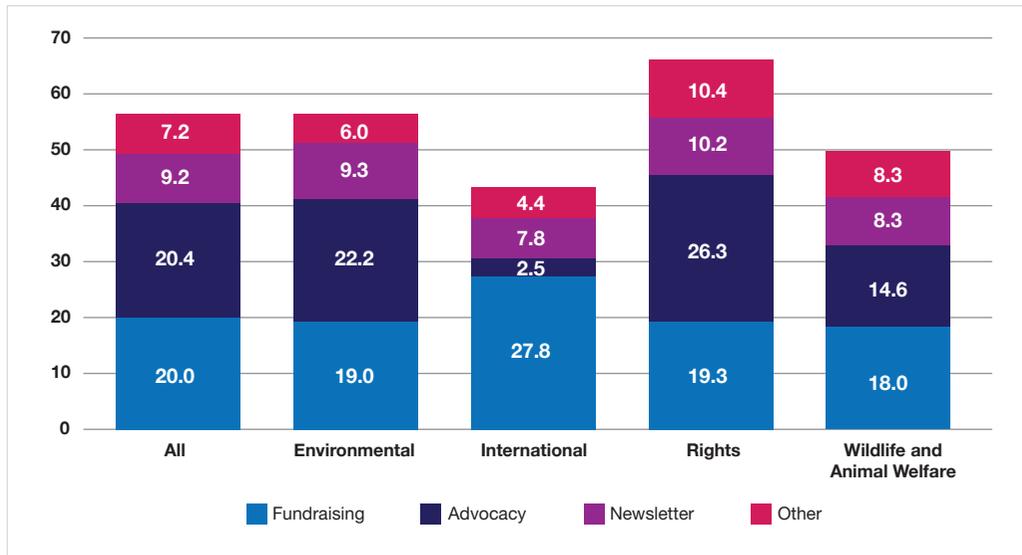
The international sector continues to fall below the median, with 4.2 messages per month per subscriber.

## MESSAGES SENT PER MONTH



Participants' message volume was distributed fairly evenly over the year, falling between 3 and 5 messages per month. Message volume increased during the end-of-year period, likely a result of end-of-year fundraising.

## 2011 MESSAGE VOLUME BY TYPE OF MESSAGE



With developments in marriage equality, political battles over women’s reproductive rights and pro-union protests in states like Wisconsin, rights groups, on average, sent out a whopping 26.3 advocacy messages per subscriber in 2011.

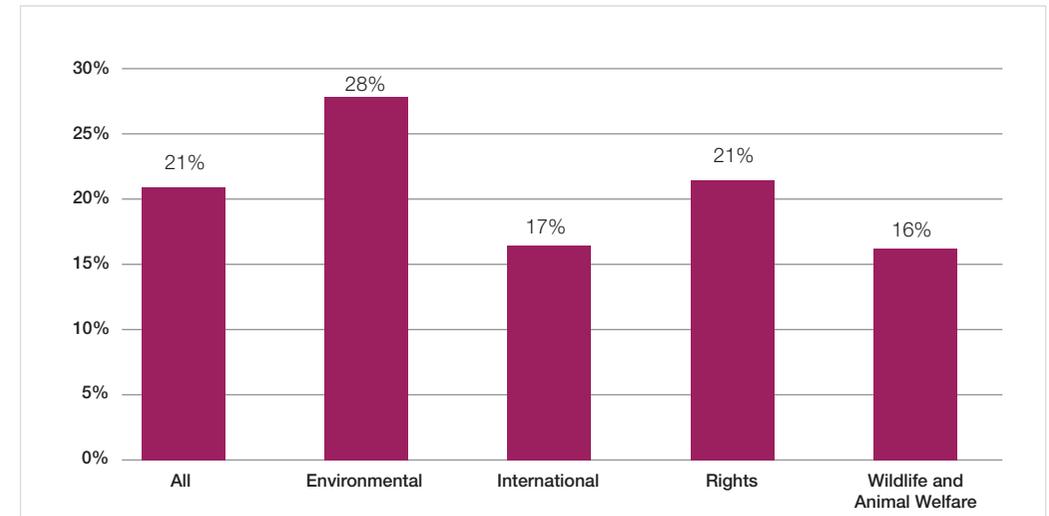
International groups were just as busy raising money for causes around the globe, sending 27.8 fundraising messages per subscriber in 2011.

## EMAIL LIST SIZE

With only a few exceptions, almost every organization in our study saw their list grow from 2010 to 2011, though the increase in growth rate appears to be slowing. The typical list grew by 16%, but there was wide variance within each sector. The environmental sector saw an especially high variation.

Environmental groups grew their lists at the highest rates, with a 28% increase between 2010 and 2011. Other sectors trailed behind, each growing between 10% and 12%.

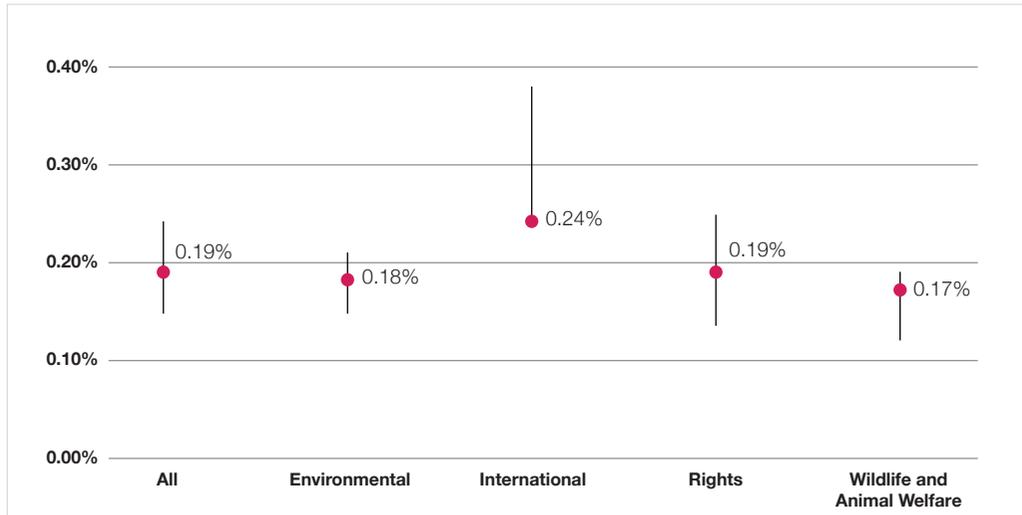
## NET SECTOR GROWTH



The net sector growth depicts the growth of a sector as a whole.

Overall, all sectors experienced a net increase in their email list size between January 1, 2011, and January 1, 2012. The environmental sector experienced the greatest growth. The wildlife and animal welfare sector, which was the largest at the beginning of the year, had the smallest gain with 16%.

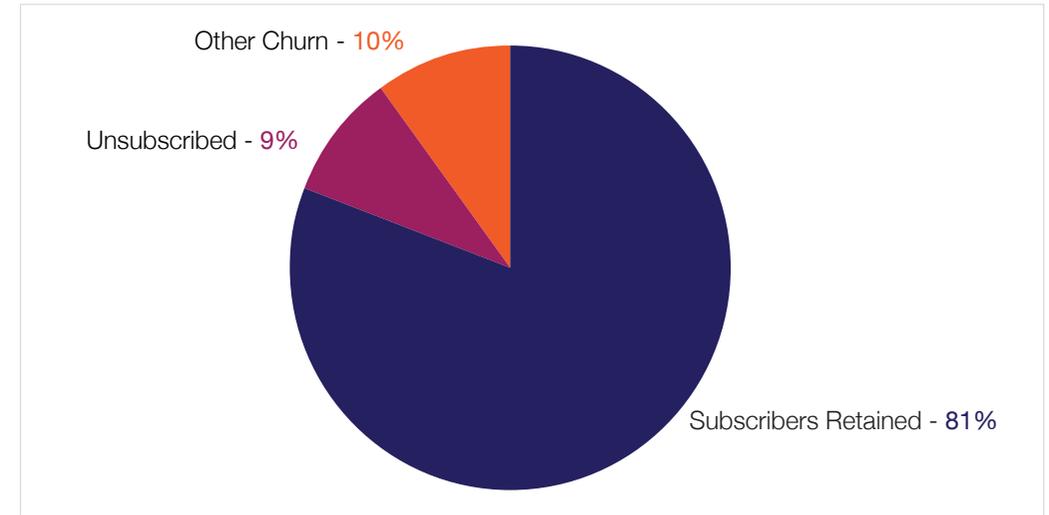
## EMAIL UNSUBSCRIBE RATES



Email unsubscribe rates refer here to the rates at which recipients unsubscribe from specific email communications, rather than the rate at which subscribers remove themselves from the list over a given time frame. This measure continued to hold steady at 0.19%, with a very incremental decrease of 4% between 2010 and 2011.

The international sector had the highest unsubscribe rate, at 0.24%. Wildlife and animal welfare groups had the lowest unsubscribe rates at 0.17%.

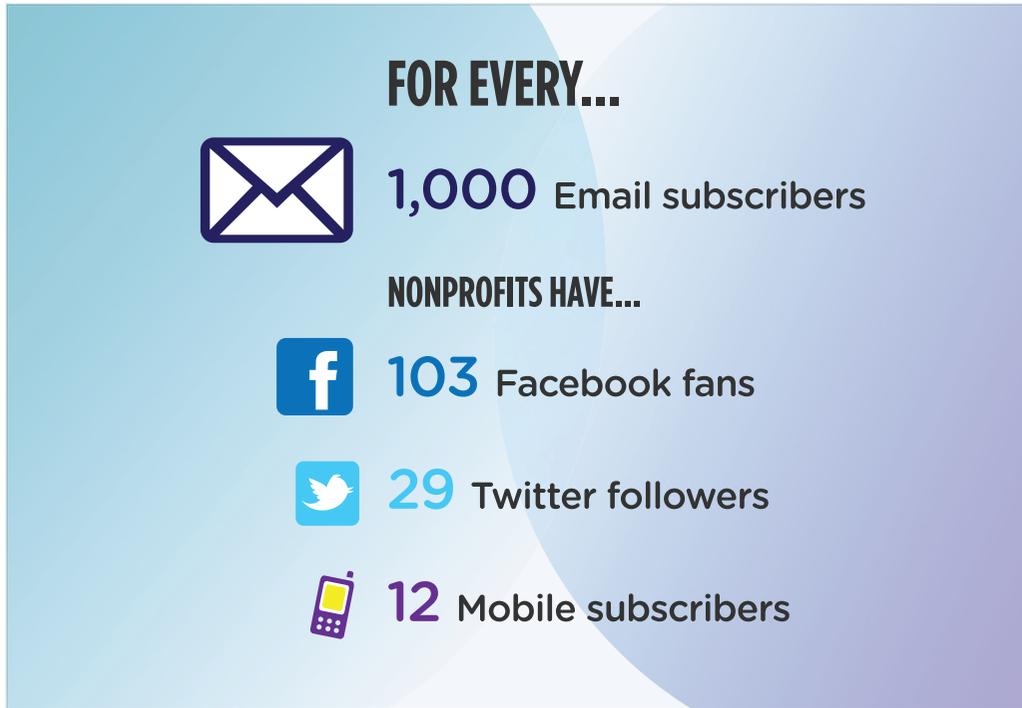
## EMAIL LIST CHURN



Just as people join email lists, people also leave. Every list experiences a natural decline in list numbers due to supporters who unsubscribe or email addresses that become undeliverable. This rate is known as “churn.” (For a more complete definition, please see the glossary.) The overall churn rate was 19%, of which 9% were lost due to unsubscribes and 10% were lost due to other reasons.

Unsubscribes are generally the biggest bucket of emails lost to any one cause. Other forms of churn could include bouncing addresses, discontinued addresses, and email addresses that mark the nonprofit’s communications as “spam.” These additional reasons are folded into the “Other” category shown above.

## LIST SIZE, FACEBOOK FANS, TWITTER FOLLOWERS AND MOBILE SUBSCRIBERS

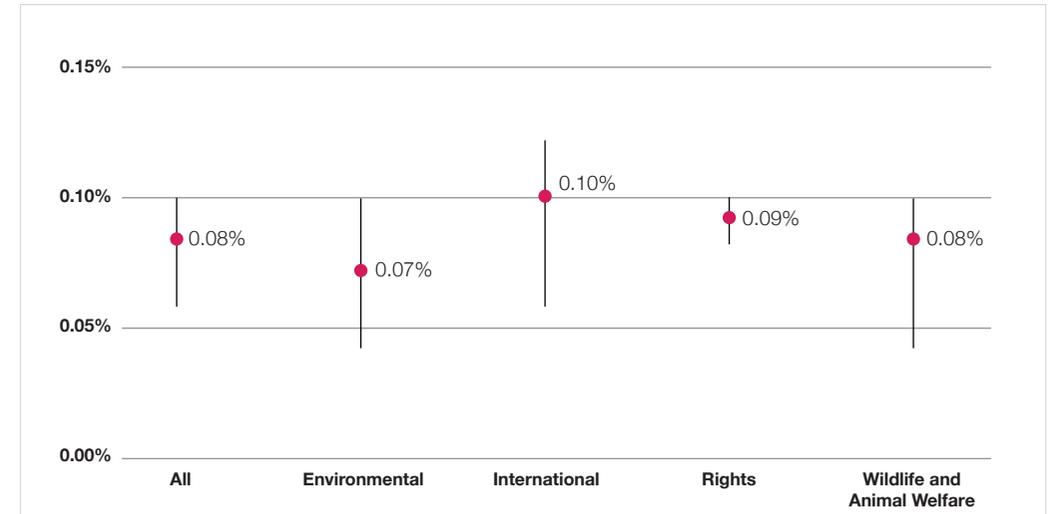


Facebook continues to lead the way for non-email communication methods, with 103 Facebook fans for every 1,000 email subscribers. Proportionally, Twitter has a little under a third of that number. For every 1,000 email users, a nonprofit with a mobile program has 12 text messaging subscribers.

## ONLINE FUNDRAISING

On average, nonprofits increased their dollars raised online by 19% from 2010 to 2011 – a respectable year-over-year increase. The number of gifts rose by 20%, with the typical gift size remaining roughly the same, falling by 2% between 2010 and 2011. As the economy improved, nonprofits generally posted gains or remained at flat rates – with the notable exception of the international sector, which will be discussed more in-depth further in this study.

### EMAIL FUNDRAISING RESPONSE RATES

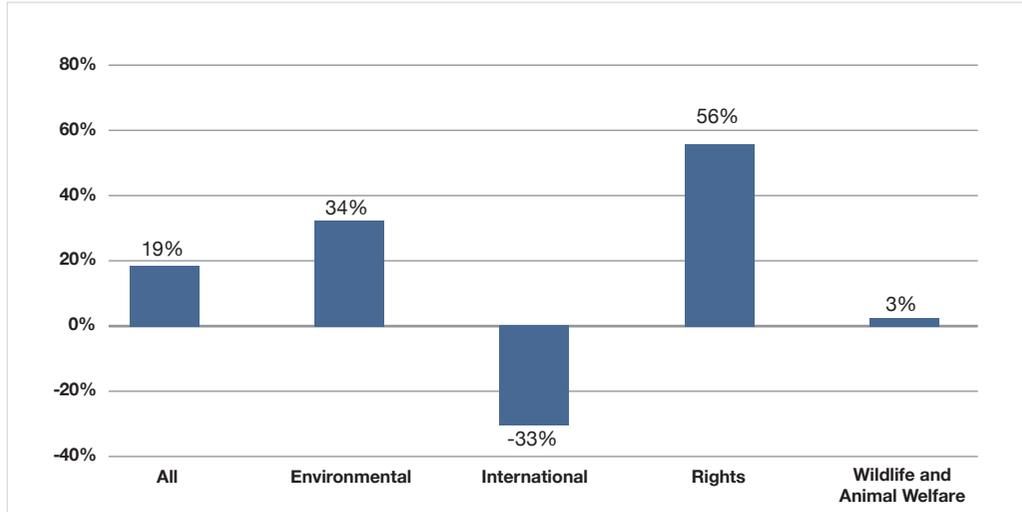


Between 2010 and 2011, the fundraising response rate held steady at 0.08%, with a negligible growth of 2%.

The nonprofit email-driven donation form had a median completion rate of 17%.

The biggest exception to the general flat nature of the response rate between 2010 and 2011 was a 25% drop in fundraising response rates for the international sector – see the next page for more data on the international sector in 2011.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN ONLINE REVENUE FROM 2010 TO 2011

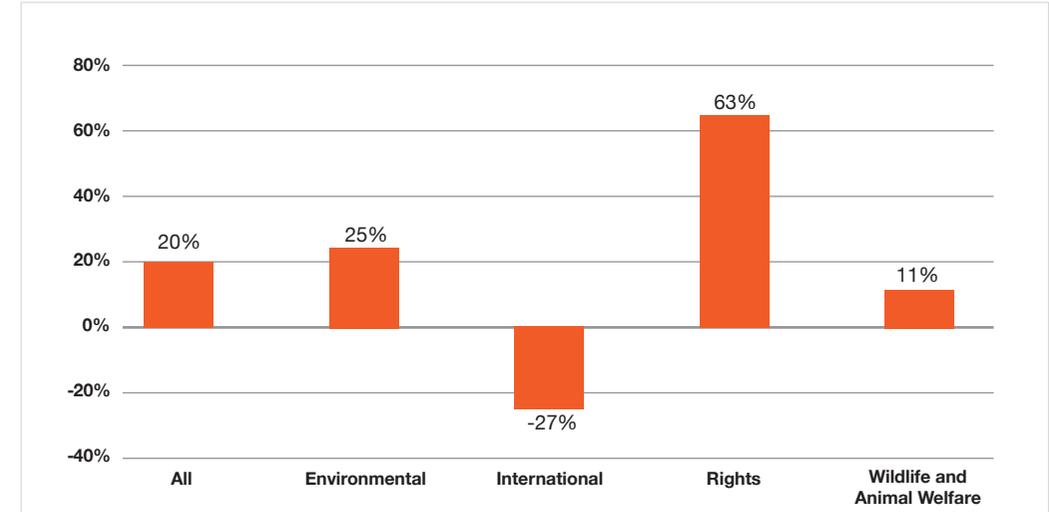


The starkest change in dollars raised from 2010 to 2011 is in the international sector. Between 2009 and 2010, the international sector saw a huge 163% increase in the total raised online, likely due to two major emergencies – the earthquake in Haiti and massive flooding in Pakistan – that received substantial media attention and resonated strongly with donors.

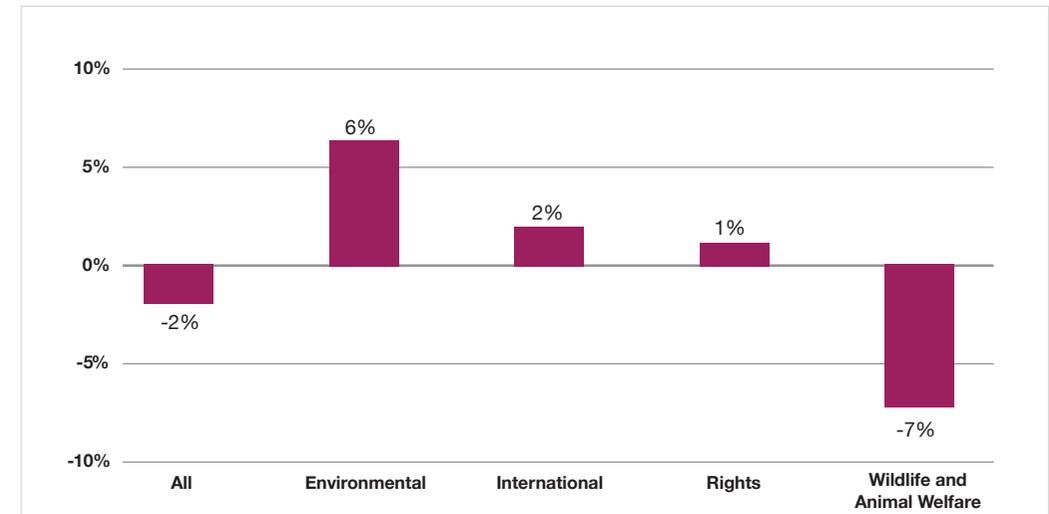
In 2011, online revenue for groups in the international sector dropped by an average of 33%, with number of gifts dropping 27%. However, this change between 2010 and 2011 is misleading in that 2010 was an exceptional year for the international sector. Between 2009 and 2011, the international sector had a 122% increase in dollars raised online, as well as a 93% increase in gifts, far surpassing any other sector's gains in that same time period.

Between 2010 and 2011, rights groups had the highest increase, with the total revenue online jumping by 56% and the number of gifts by 63%. This increase is likely based in part on an especially turbulent year with battles over workers' rights in Wisconsin, numerous women's and gay rights issues and the emergence of Occupy Wall Street and the focus on "the 99 percent" – just to name a few.

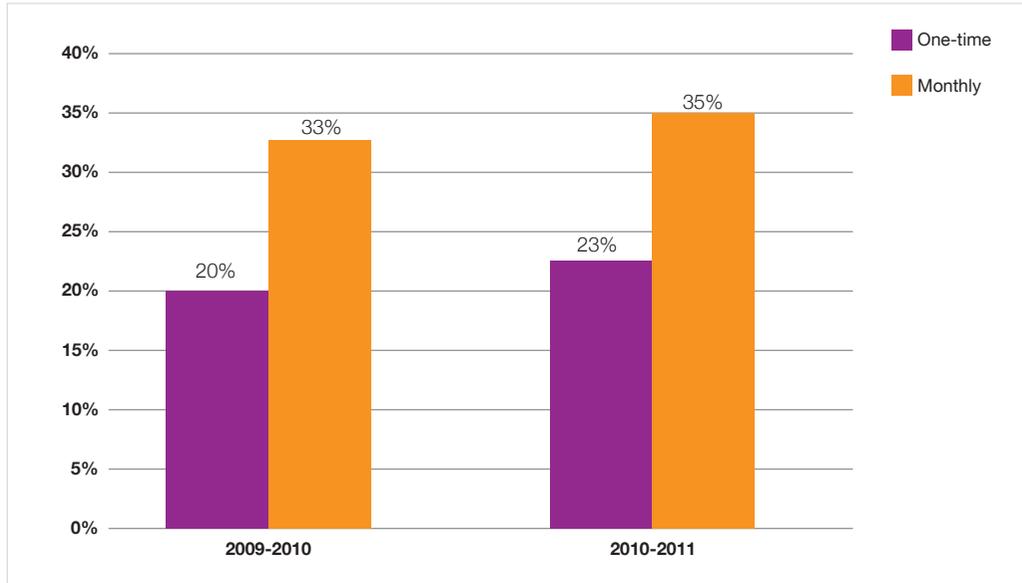
## PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN NUMBER OF ONLINE GIFTS FROM 2010 TO 2011



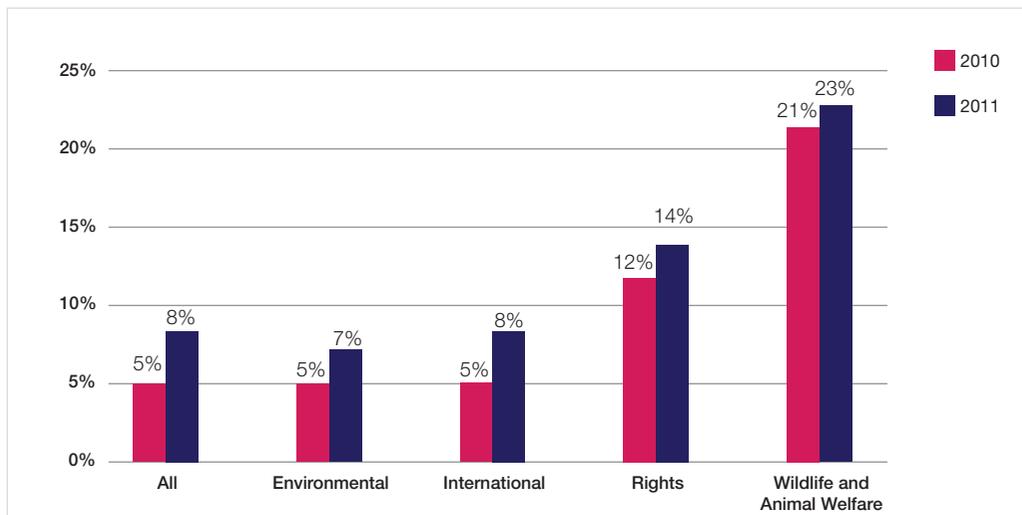
## PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN AVERAGE GIFT SIZE FROM 2010 TO 2011



## CHANGE IN DOLLARS RAISED ONLINE: ONE-TIME VERSUS MONTHLY



## MONTHLY GIVING REVENUE AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ONLINE REVENUE



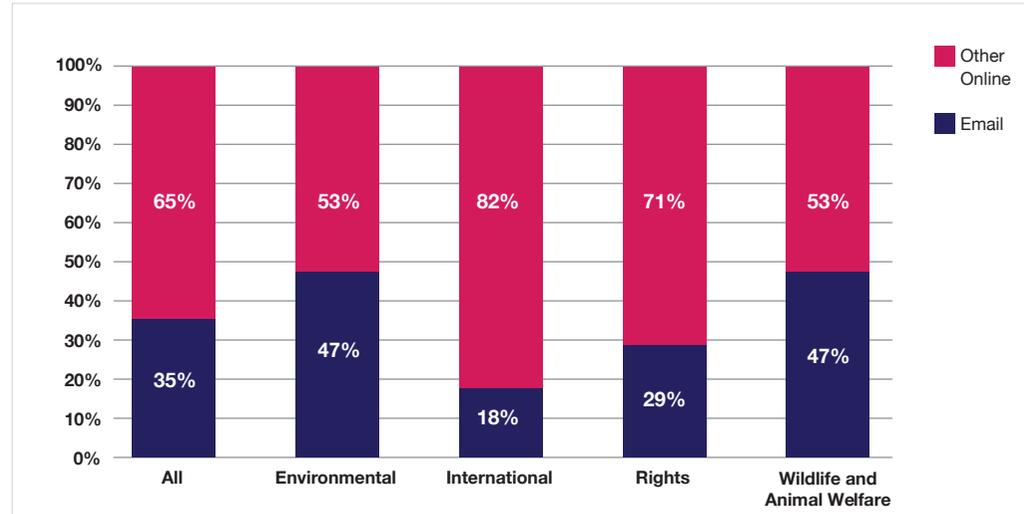
For organizations with a monthly giving program, while one-time gifts remain the largest source of online revenue, online revenue from monthly giving has grown at a much faster rate over the past few years. On average, online monthly giving accounted for 8% of total online revenue in 2011, up from 5% in 2010.

## AVERAGE ONLINE GIFT: ONE-TIME VERSUS MONTHLY



The international sector notably has the highest average gift both for one-time giving and monthly giving, at \$148 and \$32 respectively.

## ONLINE FUNDRAISING SHARE BY SOURCE: EMAIL VERSUS OTHER ONLINE SOURCES



On average, 35% of online revenue was sourced to direct email appeals. The remaining 65% came from other sources, such as unsolicited web giving and peer referrals.

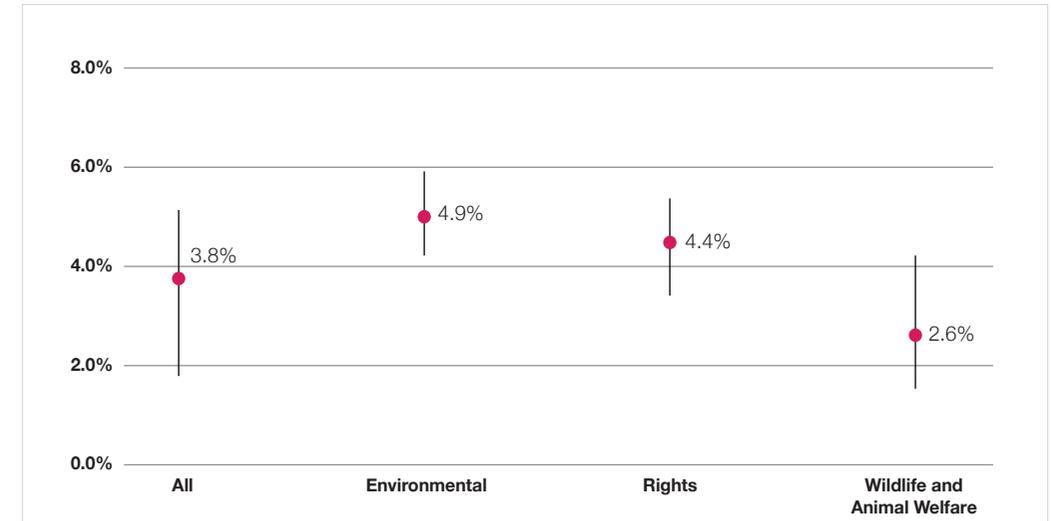
At 18%, the international sector had the lowest average share of money raised via email, which may be due to an increase in unsolicited web giving received during emergencies.

## ONLINE ADVOCACY

Please note that this section only takes into account simple online actions like petitions and webform letters, not higher-threshold actions like call-ins or letters to the editor. These response rates reflect only actions sent to the full list, or to a random sample of the full list.

For examples of online advocacy campaigns that won big in 2011, please see the appendix on page 25.

## EMAIL ADVOCACY RESPONSE RATES



Overall advocacy response rates in 2011 demonstrated a strong improvement over 2010, with an average increase of 28%. The improvement was particularly marked in the environmental and rights sectors, which had average response rates of 4.9% and 4.4% respectively.

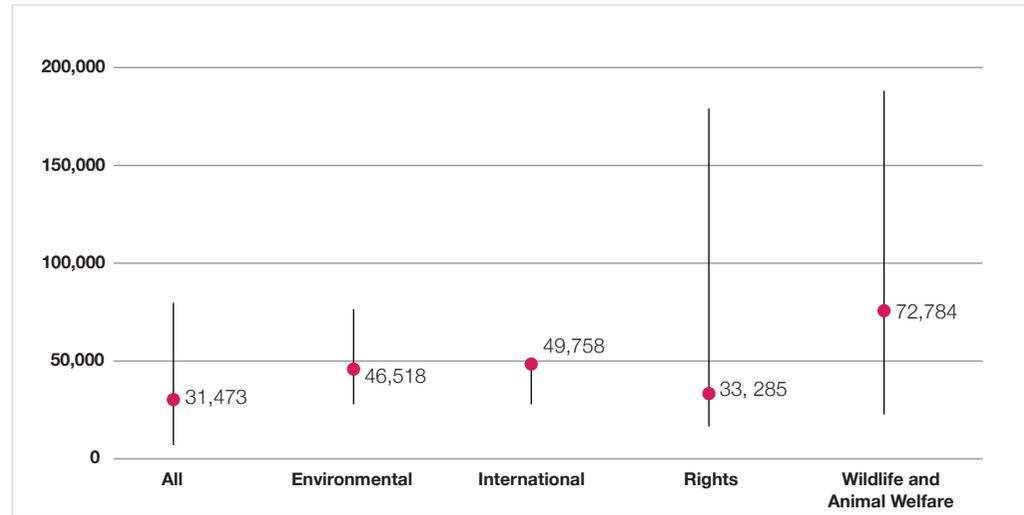
In addition to the overall growth in response rates between 2010 and 2011, only a few individual organizations in this study experienced a significant decline in response rates, which is great news for the health of online advocacy programs.

Additionally, due to a small sample size, we did not calculate the advocacy response rates from the international sector.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

More and more, nonprofits are realizing the benefits of a strong social media presence. Of the 44 participating organizations in this year's study, 35 provided data for at least some portion of the following analyses. Over the next few months, we'll also be releasing additional data on social media benchmarks in *Benchmarks Extras*.

### TOTAL FACEBOOK FAN PAGE USERS

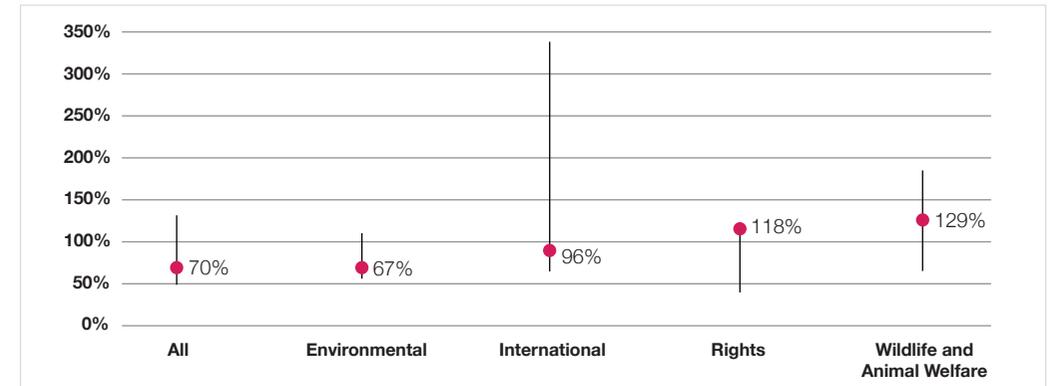


Nonprofits had 103 Facebook fan page users (that is, people who “like” a nonprofit fan page) for every 1,000 email subscribers. The wildlife and animal welfare sector continues to have the largest Facebook presence, with a median of 72,784 total Facebook users.

The wildlife and animal welfare and rights sectors had a wide variance in the number of Facebook users.

The rights sector is also notable for having the largest ratio of Facebook users to email users, with 144 Facebook users for every 1,000 email subscribers, with a “normal” range extending significantly higher.

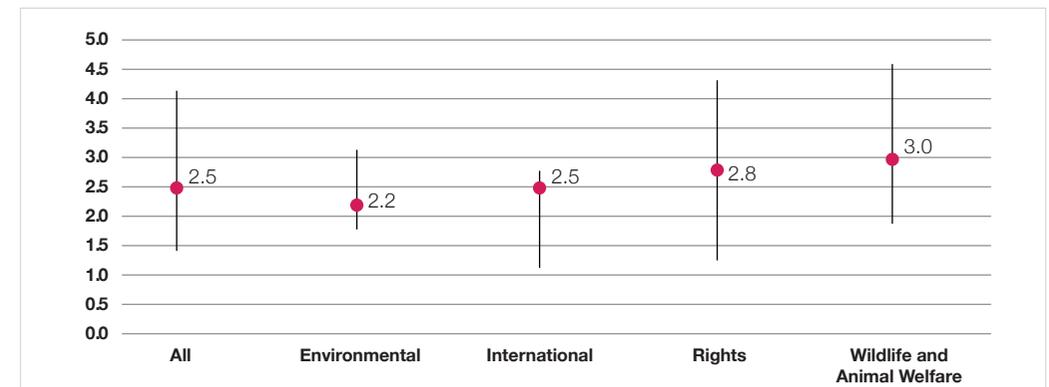
### FACEBOOK FAN PAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATES



Between 2010 and 2011, the median growth rate for nonprofit fan pages was an astounding 70%. Imagine your email list growing at that rate!

Wildlife and animal welfare remained the strongest performer of all the sectors, with an increase of 129%. The average wildlife and animal welfare sector nonprofit ended 2011 with well over double the fan base it had at the beginning of the year.

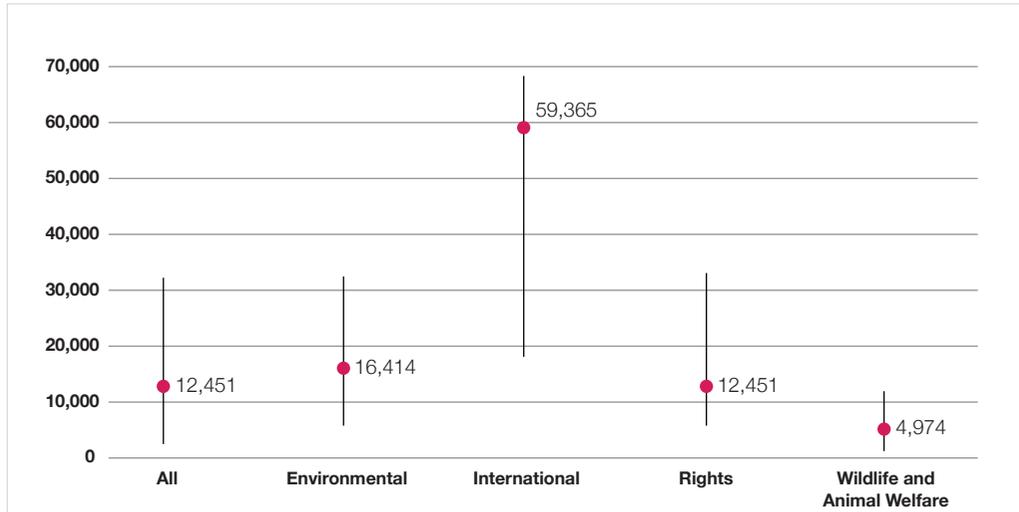
### FACEBOOK FAN PAGE DAILY ACTION RATE PER 1,000 USERS



The “action rate” is calculated as the number of daily “likes” and comments on a page’s content divided by the number of Facebook users. Overall, nonprofits averaged 2.5 actions per 1,000 Facebook users.

The wildlife and animal welfare sector was a leader in the field with an average action rate of 3 actions per 1,000 Facebook users.

## TOTAL TWITTER FOLLOWERS



Nonprofits in this study had an average of 12,451 Twitter followers. The international sector was by far the most beloved by the Twittersphere, with an average of 59,365 Twitter followers. On average, a nonprofit has 29 Twitter followers for every 1,000 email subscribers.

## MOBILE

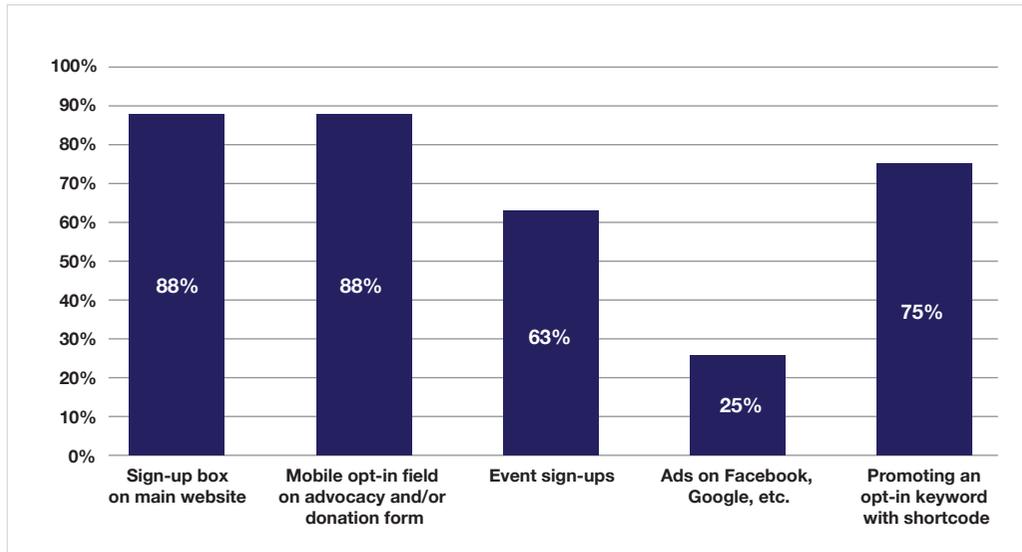
Mobile programs continue to be one of the newest and most cutting-edge ways for nonprofits to communicate with their supporters. Of the 44 nonprofits represented in this study, 12 provided data on mobile programs. We'll be providing additional data and information on aggregate text messaging statistics in *Benchmarks Extras*.

## TEXT MESSAGING, GROWTH, AND CHURN

	25TH PERCENTILE	MEDIAN	75TH PERCENTILE
Text Messaging List Size	4,080	19,665	31,671
List Size as % of Email List	0.8%	1.2%	2.4%
List Growth Rate	28%	46%	87%
Annual Churn Rate	10%	12%	21%

The average nonprofit represented in this study had a total of 19,665 text message subscribers as of January 1, 2012. Those numbers are continuing to see substantial year-over-year growth. Between 2010 and 2011, text messaging lists grew an average of 46%.

## TACTICS FOR RECRUITING NEW MOBILE SUBSCRIBERS



Based on a survey we conducted with our study partners, almost all nonprofits recruited new mobile subscribers via passive methods like a sign-up box on the main website or mobile opt-in fields on advocacy and/or donation forms. Nonprofits were least likely to promote their text messaging with paid advertising on sites like Facebook and Google, with only 25% of nonprofits reporting such activities.

## MOBILE OPTIMIZED EMAILS

Of the nonprofits with mobile programs surveyed, roughly a third had optimized their emails for display on smartphones, and a third had not. The remaining third plan to optimize their emails within the coming year.

As of November 2011, 89.6 million Americans use their mobile phone to access either work or personal email – an increase of 28% in the last year alone.<sup>1</sup>

With one nonprofit participant, the Human Rights Campaign, M+R looked at how many people were opening the nonprofit’s emails on a mobile phone. Over the course of a month, mobile phones accounted for 17% of email opens. Interestingly, on the day an email was sent, that number was as high as 24%. These mobile users were less likely to click, donate, or take action in response to the email.

It’s hard to blame them. Non-mobile optimized emails are tricky to read, so only the most dedicated of supporters would likely take the time and effort to read something like the image at left. The image on the right is what that same email looks like after it has been optimized for mobile phones.



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Mobile Email Audience Grows by Nearly 20 Million Users in the Past Year  
<http://www.comscore.com/2012/01/u-s-mobile-email-audience-grows-by-nearly-20-million-users-in-the-past-year/>

## APPENDIX

### WHAT TO DO WHEN CITY HALL PLANS TO CUT YOUR BUDGET – OR HOW A KINKAJOU GRABBED THE MAYOR’S ATTENTION

*With online advocacy response rates on the rise, we thought it was important to give a closer look at what some organizations are doing online to achieve incredible advocacy successes in the real world. Here’s one story of an advocacy program in action.*

Every year the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has to fight for its city funding – but this year the budget proposal in front of City Hall called for an especially severe cut of more than 50% for WCS’ Bronx Zoo and New York Aquarium.

It was clear that WCS needed to pull out all the stops if they were going to have any chance of saving their funding this year.

#### Getting their attention online

WCS started where they always do – with timely email messages to supporters making it clear that WCS needed their help. They even threw in an impassioned plea from a concerned resident of the Bronx Zoo, Tucker the Kinkajou.



WCS also took advantage of Convio Luminare Online’s new ability to send letters to city council members. **Every letter WCS supporters sent went straight into the inboxes of their City Council Member – and it worked!** Lawmakers and their staff repeatedly noted that WCS was one of the only organizations making sure that every letter they got was from someone in their district.

#### Taking it offline

The campaign also took the petition straight to the parks, collecting signatures from park visitors via iPads and asking other park guests to text their email address to sign WCS’ City Hall petition.

#### Getting results

In the end the campaign generated more than 39,000 actions with over 5,300 new email supporters from the iPad petition and nearly 2,000 from the text messaging petition.

Best of all? City Hall got the message and **restored Bronx Zoo and New York Aquarium funding!**

### ONLINE ACTIVISM: MORE THAN JUST PETITIONS

Let’s face it: Petitions are great, but sometimes your campaign needs a little *je ne sais quoi*. Fortunately, the nonprofit world is teeming with examples of innovative ways to take online advocacy a step further. Here are some of our favorites!

#### Greenpeace’s “Barbie, It’s Over” Campaign

Using a creative combination of animated videos, social media accounts and offline actions, Greenpeace challenged Mattel to stop destroying rainforests to provide materials for its toy packaging. But the stakes got even higher when Ken made it clear he doesn’t “date girls that are into deforestation.” Thanks to Greenpeace’s out-of-the-box thinking, the campaign garnered widespread media attention and compelled Mattel to change its practices. And most importantly, Ken and Barbie got back together. Phew!



#### AARP’s “I Am Not a Pushover” Campaign

Mad Libs aren’t just for kids anymore! When Congress contemplated throwing aging Americans under the bus and making them pay for Wall Street’s economic recklessness, AARP members across America used a cool Mad Libs-esque action form to tell Obama and their Members of Congress, “enough is enough, I am not a pushover.”

#### ARAW Takes on Amazon.com

“Your Amazon.com order has shipped – from a sweatshop?!” – That attention-grabbing subject line kicked off American Rights at Work’s campaign to challenge internet behemoth Amazon.com’s horrific working conditions. This David and Goliath story culminated in thousands of consumers across the country pledging not to shop at Amazon last holiday season.



*Hungry for more great examples? Check out M+R Research Labs – your one-stop shop for the latest in online advocacy, fundraising and social media: [Labs.mrss.com](http://Labs.mrss.com)*

**ADVOCACY EMAIL**

An email that asks recipients to sign an online petition, send an email to a decision-maker, or take a similar easy-to-perform action. For the purposes of this study, advocacy email does not include harder actions like making a phone call or attending an event. Advocacy email rates were calculated from advocacy emails with a simple action sent to either the full file or a random sample of the full file.

**CLICK-THROUGH RATE**

Calculated as the number of people who clicked on any trackable link in an email message divided by the number of delivered emails. People who clicked multiple times in one email were only counted once. In other words, if a subscriber clicked on every link in a message 10 times, this was counted the same as if the subscriber had clicked once on a single link.

**DELIVERABLE EMAILS**

Only the emails that were delivered, not including the emails that were sent and bounced.

**FAN PAGE DAILY ACTION RATE, FACEBOOK**

Calculated as the number of daily “likes” and comments on a page’s content divided by the number of fan page users.

**FULL FILE**

All of an organization’s deliverable email addresses, not including unsubscribed email addresses or email addresses to which an organization no longer sends email messages.

**FUNDRAISING EMAIL**

An email that only asks for a donation, as opposed to an email newsletter, which might ask for a donation and include other links. Fundraising email rates were calculated from all fundraising emails, regardless of whether the email went to the full file, a random sample of the file, or a targeted portion of the file.

**LIST CHURN**

Calculated as the number of subscribers who became unreachable in a 12-month period divided by the sum of the number of deliverable email addresses (or phone numbers, in the case of text messaging list churn) at the end of that period plus the number of subscribers who became unreachable during that period. Study participants were required to track the number of subscribers who became unreachable each month to account for subscribers both joining and leaving an email list during the 12-month period who would otherwise go uncounted.

**MONTHLY GIFT**

A donation where the donor signs up once to donate on a regular schedule, typically by pledging a regular gift amount on a credit card each month. Also known as a sustaining gift.

**NEWSLETTERS, EMAIL**

An email with multiple links or asks, which can include fundraising or advocacy asks. Email newsletter rates were calculated from all email newsletters, regardless of whether the newsletter went to the full file, a random sample of the file, or a targeted portion of the file.

**OPEN RATE**

Calculated as the number of HTML email messages opened divided by the number of delivered emails. Email messages that bounce are not included.

**PAGE COMPLETION RATE**

Calculated as the number of people who completed a form divided by the number of people who clicked on the link to get to that form. For the purposes of this study, it was not always possible to use the number of people who clicked on a link to a specific form, so we used the number of unique clicks in the message.

**PERCENTILE**

The percentile of observed values below the named data point. 25% of the observations are below the 25th percentile; 75% of the observations are below the 75th percentile. The values between the 25th percentile and the 75th percentile are the middle 50% of the observed values and represent the normal range of values.

**RANDOM SAMPLE**

A segment of the full email file selected at random, such that there would be no reason to expect a different rate than an email sent to the full file.

**RESPONSE RATE**

Calculated as the number of people who took the main action requested by an email message divided by the number of delivered emails. We only calculated response rates in this study for fundraising emails and for advocacy emails with simple asks, such as signing a petition or sending an email to a decision maker.

**TARGETED EMAIL**

A segment of the full email file selected purposefully, such as by geography or past action. For example, emailing people in a city, emailing past donors, emailing past action takers, emailing people who have not taken an action, or emailing people who have not made a donation would all be examples of targeted email.

**UNIQUE CLICKS**

The number of people who clicked on any trackable link in an email message, as opposed to the number of times the links in an email were clicked. If a subscriber clicked on every link in a message 10 times, this is counted as 1 unique click.

**UNSOLICITED WEB GIVING**

An online gift from a casual visitor to the website, as distinguished from a gift that is a response to an email message.

**UNSUBSCRIBE RATE**

Calculated as the number of individuals who unsubscribed in response to an email message divided by the number of delivered emails.

**USERS, FACEBOOK**

People who “like” a nonprofit Facebook fan page.

## STUDY METHODOLOGY

The 2012 eNonprofit Benchmarks Study collected data about email messaging, email list size, fundraising, online advocacy, Facebook, Twitter and mobile programs from 44 U.S.-based national nonprofits for the calendar year of 2011. We analyzed the results of 1.2 billion email messages sent to over 25 million list subscribers; more than \$282 million of online donations from over 3.6 million online gifts; and 5.5 million advocacy actions.

The average given for a metric is the median. To calculate the benchmarks metrics reported in this study, we first calculated a metric for each group and then calculated the median across groups, so that no single group had more weight than any other. Each benchmark aggregates data from at least 3 study participants. Not all study participants reported data for every metric.

Study participants provided data about individual email messages sent in 2010 and 2011, including the date the message was launched, the number of delivered emails, the number of email messages opened, the number of unique clicks for a message, the number of actions taken, the number of donations made, the amount donated, and the number of unsubscribes. Study participants coded their individual email messages by type (advocacy, fundraising, newsletter, or other) and further coded each advocacy email by audience (full file, random sample, or targeted). Advocacy rates were calculated from email with a simple online advocacy action sent to the full file or a random sample of the full file. Fundraising and newsletter rates were calculated from all email of that type.

In addition, study participants provided historical data going back to 2006. Study participants with established mobile programs also took a survey about their mobile program.

Calculating list churn for a year requires data snapshots at regular intervals over the course of the year. Looking at list size and new or lost email addresses only at the beginning and end of the year may not account for subscribers who join during the year and then unsubscribe or become undeliverable before the year ends. Study participants were required to track the number of subscribers who became undeliverable each month to contribute to the list churn metric; 12 study participants met this standard.

Although you may be tempted to compare the results of this year's study with past studies, we want to emphasize that the 2012 study represents just a single snapshot in time. The make-up of the participating nonprofits varies from year to year. Therefore, we cannot confidently extrapolate year-over-year studies by placing the two studies side-by-side. At any point in this study where we refer to results from past years, we are using historical data provided by this year's participants to make the comparison.

This year's study segments were grouped by sector as follows:

### Environmental

- Appalachian Mountain Club  
www.outdoors.org
- Conservation International  
www.conservation.org
- Earthjustice  
www.earthjustice.org
- Environmental Defense Fund  
www.edf.org
- Food & Water Watch  
www.foodandwaterwatch.org
- Greenpeace USA  
www.greenpeace.org/usa/en/
- League of Conservation Voters  
www.lcv.org
- National Parks Conservation Association  
www.npca.org
- National Wildlife Federation Action Fund  
www.nwfactionfund.org
- Oceana  
www.oceana.org
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy  
www.railstotrails.org
- Save Our Environment  
www.saveourenvironment.org

### International

- CARE USA  
www.care.org
- GAVI Alliance  
www.gavialliance.org
- International Rescue Committee  
www.rescue.org
- Oxfam America  
www.oxfamamerica.org
- American Red Cross  
www.redcross.org
- U.S. Fund for UNICEF  
www.unicefusa.org

### Rights

- American Rights at Work  
www.americanrightsatwork.org
- Corporate Accountability International  
www.stopcorporateabuse.org
- Free Press  
www.freepress.net
- Human Rights Campaign  
www.hrc.org
- Human Rights Watch  
www.hrw.org
- Innocence Project  
www.innocenceproject.org
- NARAL Pro-Choice America  
www.ProChoiceAmerica.org
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
www.plannedparenthood.org
- Planned Parenthood Action Fund  
www.plannedparenthoodaction.org
- Union of Concerned Scientists  
www.ucsusa.org

### Wildlife and Animal Welfare

- Defenders of Wildlife  
www.defenders.org
- The Humane Society of the United States  
www.humanesociety.org
- IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare)  
www.ifaw.org
- RedRover  
www.redrover.org
- San Diego Zoo Global  
www.sandiegozoo.org  
www.sandiegozooglobal.org
- Wildlife Conservation Society  
www.wcs.org
- World Wildlife Fund  
www.worldwildlife.org

### Other

- AARP  
www.earnedaday.org
- AARP Foundation  
www.aarp.org/aarp-foundation
- American Friends Service Committee  
www.afsc.org
- American Lung Association  
www.lung.org
- Common Cause  
www.commoncause.org
- Easter Seals  
www.easterseals.com
- Friends Committee on National Legislation  
www.fcnl.org
- Girls Inc.  
www.girlsinc.org
- Good360  
www.good360.org

31 THANK YOU TO OUR NONPROFIT STUDY PARTNERS



- Advocacy
- Fundraising
- Newsletter

	All Sectors	Environmental	International	Rights	Wildlife and Animal Welfare	
Open Rate	14%	14%	10%	16%	15%	
	12%	13%	11%	13%	13%	
	13%	13%	10%	13%	13%	
Click-Through Rate	4.2%	6.5%	2.4%	5.2%	4.3%	
	0.47%	0.49%	0.47%	0.54%	0.68%	
	1.6%	2.6%	0.8%	3.1%	2.0%	
Page Completion Rate	81%	87%	-	84%	60%	
	17%	18%	24%	14%	12%	
	3.8%	4.9%	-	4.4%	2.6%	
Response Rate	0.08%	0.07%	0.10%	0.09%	0.08%	
Unsubscribe Rate	0.16%	0.14%	0.27%	0.13%	0.12%	
	0.22%	0.20%	0.24%	0.28%	0.17%	
	0.17%	0.17%	0.28%	0.15%	0.17%	
Average Gift - One Time	\$62	\$53	\$148	\$88	\$47	
	Average Gift - Monthly	\$20	\$17	\$32	\$22	\$18
	Annual Growth Rate	70%	67%	96%	118%	129%
Daily Action Rate per 1,000 Users	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.8	3.0	

### Email

### Donations

### Facebook

For every...



1,000 Email subscribers

nonprofits have...



103 Facebook fans



29 Twitter followers



12 Mobile subscribers