

Creative Revenue Sources for Fundraisers

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Mix a demographically desirable online panel with ardent supporters of a nonprofit organization, and what's the result? A new revenue stream for nonprofit organizations.

True, nonprofits notoriously guard their online donors, but those with an openness to cultivate the online relationship in a secure and controlled environment have much to gain. As Peter P. Schoewe, direct mail director for **Mercy Home for Boys & Girls**, emphasizes, **"In this day and age, one needs to be open to all new approaches for revenue generation."**

Partnering with an online research firm is one such approach. Typically the research group will seek out a nonprofit group, which will then contact its members with details of the program and asks the members if they are willing to participate in a survey.

Potential research volunteers are directed to a Website where they can sign up to receive e-mail surveys from the research company. The research firm pays the nonprofit for access to its donors and will typically make a donation to the organization on behalf of each survey participant. There is no list-rental involved.

The donation by the research group goes directly to the nonprofit group that facilitated the member sign-up rather than to the panel member. **This is a way for a loyal supporter to further help his favorite organization and for a nonprofit to gain a new revenue stream with very low development costs.**

Additionally, since the research partner is donating to the charity rather than the donor, the donor continues at his same gift giving level through his normal channels.

Companies no longer have the luxury of a long research process; the need for quicker answers is paramount, and online research has become a significant part of their marketing and product development. In fact, about \$190 million is spent annually for online research, with about 35% of that spent on incentives. So the potential for nonprofits is great.

This approach is a winner for all parties: Participants have one more vehicle to help out the nonprofit, a nonprofit generates a new revenue stream, and the company sponsoring research taps into a demographically desirable audience.

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