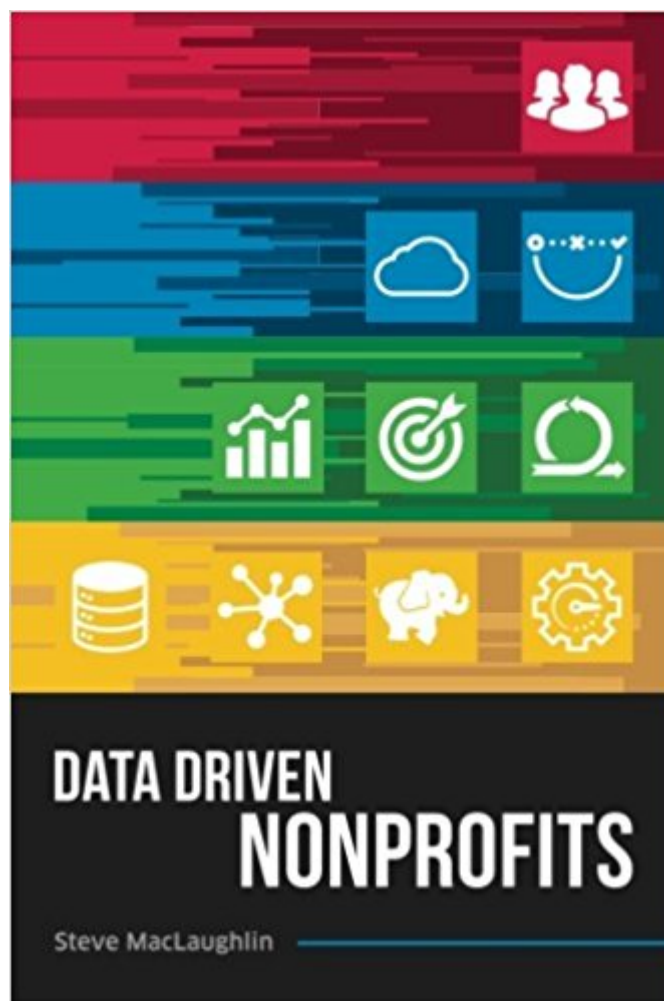


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# Data Driven Nonprofits



## Synopsis

Big Data is completely transforming how companies drive their decision making, but many nonprofit organizations are unprepared to make the most of this opportunity. Nonprofit organizations are vital to making meaningful change in the world and they have significant amounts of untapped potential in their data. Unfortunately, many nonprofits lack the strategies, skills, and guidance to make better engagement, fundraising, advocacy, and program decisions based on their data. *Data Driven Nonprofits* is a guide book for nonprofit organizations that want to improve their performance and increase positive change in the world. Learn from industry leaders and nonprofit professionals that have unlocked the keys to becoming more data driven. Data driven nonprofits accelerate change in the world when staff use data to influence strategy and inform decisions that produce value and impact. Author Steve MacLaughlin is a respected nonprofit industry, fundraising, and online giving expert. He explores how data driven nonprofits are shaping the world and what makes them successful. *Data Driven Nonprofits* will help you understand: • Why data is important to you and your nonprofit organization • How the nonprofit sector, technology, and big data are converging • What are some of the challenges to becoming more data driven • Why the culture of a nonprofit organization plays such an important role • How organizations of all sizes and causes have become more data driven • What the future holds for nonprofits that embrace a data driven mindset *Data Driven Nonprofits* contains insights and interviews from more than 20 respected charity sector experts. First-hand stories from not-for-profit organizations like Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, University of South Dakota, Indiana University, Worldwide Cancer Research, SCIAF, Royal National Institute of Blind People, Project HOPE, Denver Rescue Mission, Florida State University, Humane Society of the United States, VolunteerMatch, Crisis Text Line, and charity: water are featured throughout the book.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Data Driven Nonprofits is to the 'science' of fundraising what Ken Burnett's Relationship Fundraising is to the 'art' of fundraising." - Roger Craver, The Agitator "As a fundraiser's guide to the power of strategic data use over tribal learning - it's a handy addition to the bookshelf." - Julie Dodd, UK Fundraising "If you care about your organization's sustainability, grab a copy of Data Driven Nonprofits." - Pamela Grow, The Grow Report "Dear Fundraiser, buy this book already." - Shanon Doolittle, Fundraising Coach "The book has an easy, anecdotal style and some persuasive arguments. It should be useful to anyone struggling to use data more intelligently." - Stephen Cook, Third Sector "In Data Driven Nonprofits we have fundraising's modern-day equivalent of Moses in the wilderness..." - Ken Barnett, Fundraising Expert and Author of Relationship Fundraising

Steve MacLaughlin is the Vice President of Data & Analytics at Blackbaud and bestselling author of Data Driven Nonprofits. Steve has spent more than 20 years driving innovation with a broad range of companies, government institutions, and nonprofit organizations. MacLaughlin has been featured as a fundraising and nonprofit expert in many mainstream publications, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, The Boston Globe, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, USA Today, Bloomberg, and has appeared on National Public Radio. Steve is a frequent speaker at nonprofit events and serves on the Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN) Board of Directors which supports both the growth and professionalism of the nonprofit technology field as well as building knowledge and information sharing capacity throughout the sector. Steve is a published author of a chapter in the book People to People Fundraising: Social Networking and Web 2.0 for Charities, and a contributing co-editor of the book Internet Management for Nonprofits: Strategies, Tools & Trade Secrets. He has had original articles featured in many publications, including Advancing Philanthropy, Philanthropy Journal, Fundraising Success Magazine, The NonProfit Times, and Civil Society. MacLaughlin earned both his undergraduate degree and a Master of Science degree in Interactive Media from Indiana University.

"Many organizations still use technology as an electronic filing cabinet. They don't use the power of

that software to do what they could with, and that's because they don't understand what can be done with it."The above quote is one of my favorites from Steve's book, and encapsulates much of my experience with organizations over the previous twenty years. Understandably, many organizations don't have the staff to focus on data health and analysis. Outlined throughout the book are practical steps and ideas for organizations (of any size) to both maintain their data and leverage it to drive action. The book is a great reference for all levels across an organization. Whether you're an executive trying to make decisions for an upcoming comprehensive campaign or a volunteer coordinator looking to increase engagement, Steve provides guidance in using the data that the organization already has or is available through varied resources.

In the two years that I've worked in nonprofit marketing, data has long been a mysterious opportunity. Even with all I understand about technology and the potential to harness this data goldmine, finding a successful strategy around leveraging data to effectively impact visible results has eluded me. Which is exactly why I jumped at the opportunity to read *Data Driven Nonprofits* when it was released earlier this year. Not only was the subject on point, but the author comes from Blackbaud, one of the foremost leaders in nonprofit data management. The book is chock full of helpful information. Almost too full, as I'm sure I missed some of it through my first reading. You need to deliberately read slowly to absorb all of the knowledge MacLaughlin shares through his experience and research. Much of the information was new to me since my background is more in communications rather than fundraising. And honestly some of it was just over my head. But since using data to influence more organizational growth is the goal, an aim at fundraising makes perfect sense. *Data Driven Nonprofits* has plenty of real-world case studies with recognizable nonprofit professionals and organizations. Added to that are several practical next steps on how to use this knowledge to make real change. Just know that this is not for a novice. It offers helpful and impactful content on how to better your nonprofit. But this also assumes that you've got some experience in the field and know some of how nonprofits work. Since those things both apply to me, I was able to glean a good deal of useful ideas from the book. Now if only actually applying them within my organization were quite as easy.

Focusing on data means being a good storyteller. MacLaughlin knows this, and interviewed fundraising leaders, digital marketing managers and CEOs at non-profits around the world to illustrate how they became, and continue to be, data-driven. In his interviews, MacLaughlin discovers how a weakness can become a strength. Michal Heiplik, who ran the membership program at KUHT

in Houston, frequently went to conferences to get ideas but quickly recognized that wasn't enough at the local level where resources are limited. Decisions about programming and pledge drives were based on gut feeling. His colleagues would talk about programs that Heiplik, who was born in Czech Republic, didn't grow up watching. He didn't have the luxury of relying on feelings. He built up his own reporting and did analysis to drive decisions based on data, and before long, the station had one of the highest-performing membership programs in the country. Although the focus of the book is on individual giving, data is also important for institutional giving, communications/marketing, program and staff development. Regardless of where you are in your non-profit career, or if you're a non-profit board member, you will benefit from the knowledge in Data Driven Nonprofits.

In this well written and insightful work, Steve MacLaughlin catalogs how data technology empowers non-profit organizations to discern key trends and patterns from the oceans of data that surround them. The author employs data, historical analysis and deeply useful case studies to highlight how non-profits can become more data-savvy and thereby enhance their fund-raising capabilities, drive innovative outcomes, and improve operational agility. The analysis is incisive, the case studies engrossing and the rich prose propels the narrative of this important work. Mr. MacLaughlin has a gift for writing which sets this entry head and shoulders above the typical business advice book. Many kudos to those non-profits who are using these techniques to drive positive change in our world, and to Mr. MacLaughlin for writing this immensely helpful book to guide non-profits on that journey.

Always grateful to add another solid read to my professional bookshelf. Steve has taken the topic of being "data driven" and delivered an easy to read guidebook for nonprofit professionals. Whether your role is technical, operations or fundraising - there are takeaways and lessons to be learned from this latest book. Read it soon - as you'll be going back and referencing it in upcoming strategy discussions, planning meetings and more.

Great read for both veteran fundraisers and those new to the field. Data Driven Nonprofits removes the intimidation factor from the concept of big data and offers a healthy dose of the human side of the great outcomes charities accomplish.

The latest craze is all about telling better stories. But understanding and leveraging your data is equally as important. This is an excellent book on the history of technology and how to leverage your data to make better fundraising decisions.

Steve does a great job of making the case for nonprofit leaders to understand their greatest asset...their data. He brings in interesting history and stories to illustrate the power behind the numbers.

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