

# Development for Conservation

## Fundraising Metrics and How to Use Them

Presented at

**PALTA Land Conservation Conference  
Skytop Lodge**

17 May 2019

**David Allen, Development for Conservation**



**DEVELOPMENT  
FOR  
CONSERVATION**

If you don't know where you're going,  
you'll end up somewhere else.



-Yogi Berra

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## Our Strategic Plan

- Goal #1 – Save the World
- Goal # 2 – Increase Membership
- Goal #3 – Raise as much Money as Possible



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## Strategic Planning



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**Raise it once**

- Capital
  - Land
  - Buildings
  - Equipment
  - Endowment

**Raise it every year**

- Operations
  - People
  - Utilities
  - Supplies
  - Travel



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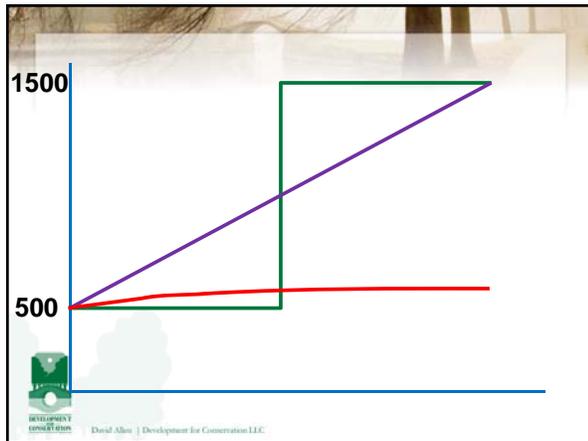
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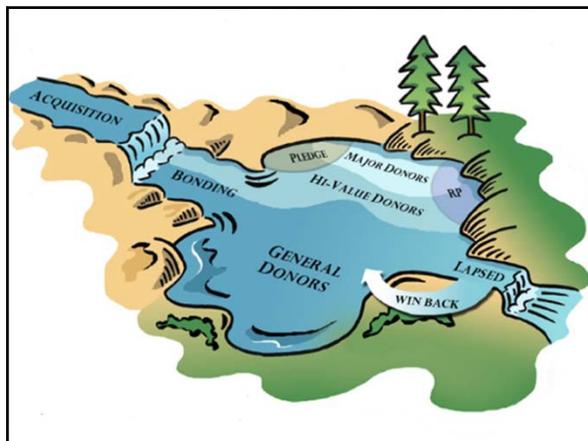
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## Membership Growth

- Related to **Retention** up to a point
- Mostly related to **Recruitment**
- Land Trust growth ambitions fail mostly because fundraisers fail to adequately plan for and **budget for recruitment** activity.



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## Here's What We Hear

- Challenge grants really work – you need to find us a challenge grant
- Newsletters are too expensive and they waste paper – ENews works just as well
- I know a great graphic designer who will do our appeal pro bono - she will help us raise more money



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## Here's What We Hear

- People join because they get involved
- Direct mail doesn't work anymore - you need a social media strategy
- Telephone calls just irritate people
- I wouldn't read a four-page letter, therefore no one will read a four-page letter



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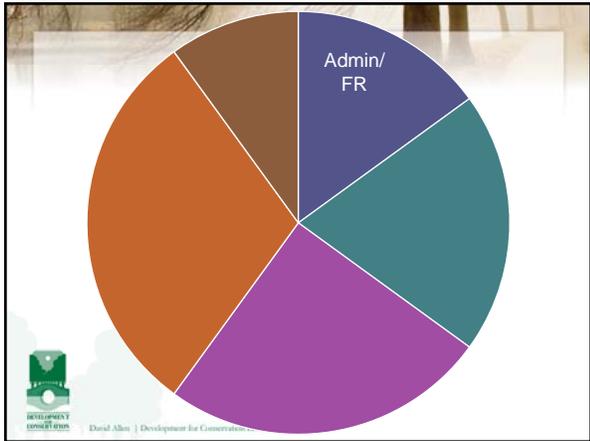
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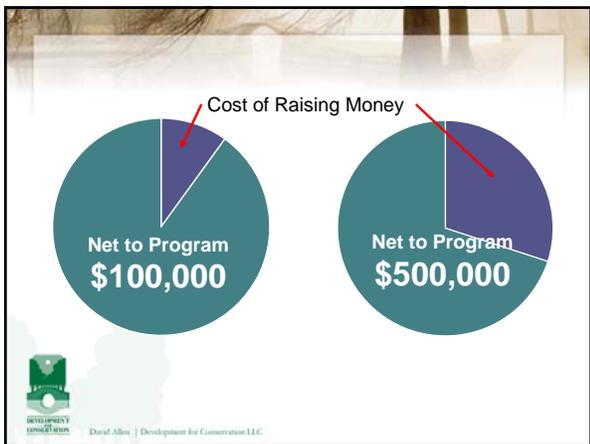
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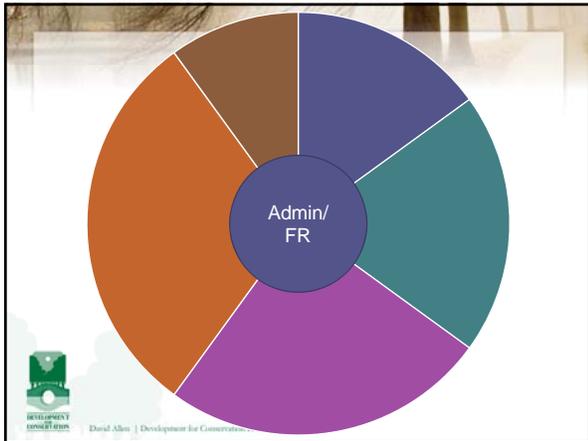
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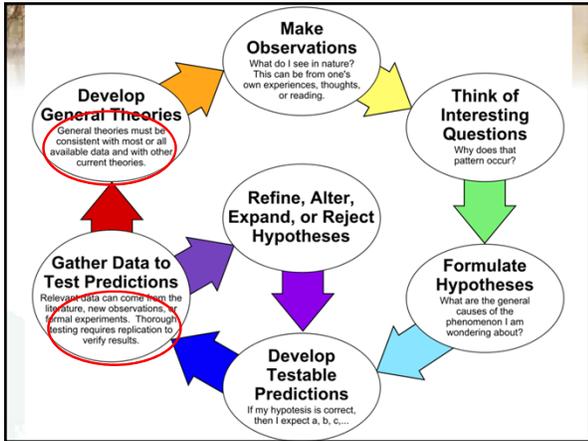
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**Definition**

**A Year** is 365 days (and sometimes 366)

The year I use for my metrics is  
**January 9 – January 8**  
 (It doesn't need to be yours)



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## Definition

A **Source Code** is a code that you assign to every GIFT that tells you what motivated the donor to give

- Implies that every response card (and envelope?) has a source code printed on it
- Implies that you have a key for the codes
- Implies that you take the time to chase down unattributed gifts



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## Definition

A **metric** is simply something that can be counted or measured.

**The value in a metric** lies in the ability to draw conclusions from how it changes over time and how it relates to other metrics.



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We **care** about metrics because the more we **understand** about what we're doing,

the more **control** we have over the outcomes.



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## Data We Need – How Much Money

Data Needed from each gift or transaction

- Amount (Value)
- Date it was given (date on the check)
- Who (or what) gave it (Ind/Fdn/Cor)
- Restricted/Unrestricted
- Gift/Transaction
- Source Code!



(This is the easy one!)

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## Data We Need – Number of Donors

Make some rules and be consistent

- Donors are check-writers (*figuratively*)
  - Some Business gifts are individuals
  - Some Foundation gifts are individuals
- Donors give money philanthropically
- Be consistent with memorials and pledges



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## Data We Need – Actual revenue split

- How much comes from passive sources vs. active fundraising?
- How much comes from corporate, foundation, and individual donors?
- How much comes from philanthropy vs. transactions?
- How dependent are we on just a few donors (or events)?



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## Data We Need – Cost of FR

FOR EACH FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY

- Design and Production
- Postage
- Consulting
- Transportation
- Premiums for joining (and fulfillment!)
- Paid ads
- Event venues
- Etc, Etc, Etc



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## Data We Need – Labor cost for FR

• FOR EACH FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY

- Staff – Not just how much time, but also whose time (opportunity cost)
- Volunteers
- Consulting



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## Information We Can Use

Cost of acquiring a new donor

**FR Cost of Recruitment Activity**  
**# of First Gift Donors**



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**Information We Can Use**

**Cost of acquiring a first renewal**

$$\frac{\text{FR Cost of LY Recruitment Activity}}{\text{\# of First Renewal Donors}}$$


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**Information We Can Use**

**Average Gift**

$$\frac{\text{Amount Raised}}{\text{\# of Donors}}$$


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**Information We Can Use**

**Renewal Rate**

$$\frac{\text{\# of LY donors who give this year}}{\text{\# of LY donors}}$$


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## Information We Can Use

**Five Year Value of New Members**

**Total given by those donors since  
# of First Donors in 2014**



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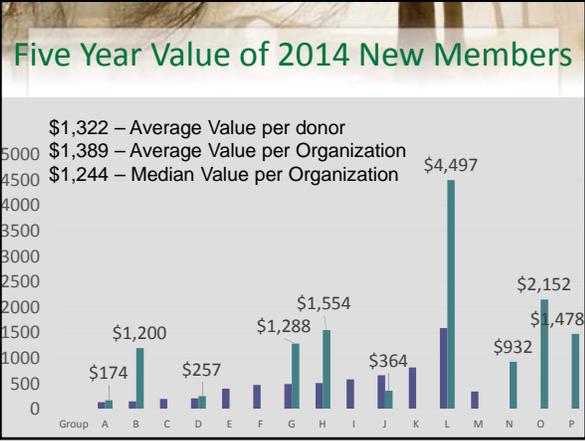
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## What are we learning?

- That organizations dependent on electronic communication for recruitment are not achieving high 5-year-value.
- That having a project you can raise money for matters – it attracts new members, helps with retention, and raises the 5-year-value.



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## The Five-Year Black Box

- News
- Renewals
- Appeals
- Field Trips
- Engagement

\$100 - 150

\$483 - 1,389



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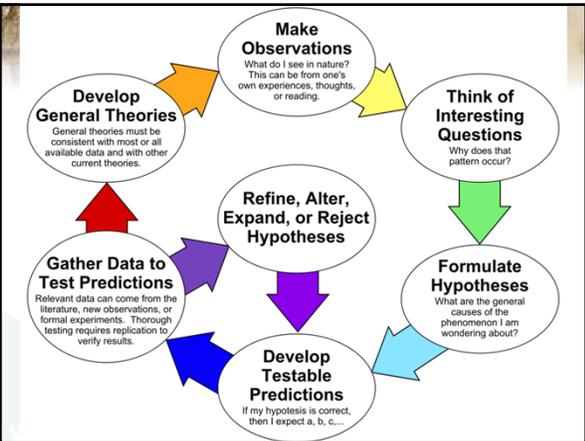
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# DAVID ALLEN

I am a non-profit organizational development consultant. I work with nonprofit organization boards to help their members learn how to be better leaders and advocates.

My background includes 30 years working in membership fundraising, major gift development, communications, and marketing. I worked for about half that time for Nature Conservancy (TNC) chapters in Oregon, Texas, and Wisconsin. In addition to my duties for the individual chapters, I served TNC as an internal fundraising consultant and major gift development trainer.

In 2000, I served as the vice-president of operations for the Wisconsin-based, international conservation organization Sand County Foundation, a position I held through mid-2009.



Gathering Waters Conservancy, a land trust service agency based in Wisconsin, called me in 2004 to ask whether I would be interested in teaching a seminar for Wisconsin land trusts on major donor development. From 2004, then, through 2009, I consulted on a nights and weekends basis with just a few clients each year.

In March of 2009, I launched my consulting business full-time using the name **Development for Conservation**.

Also in 2009, I partnered with Nancy Moore to form Conservation Consulting Group. Together we help land trusts prepare for accreditation by providing assessment, strategic planning, and leadership coaching services.

I consider myself a strategic thinker, problem solver, facilitator, educator, and program developer who brings a particular passion for conservation and the environment.

## **Practice Competencies**

### *Fundraising*

- Development Audit
- Staff/Board Training and Development
- Major Gift Coaching
- Capital Campaigns

### *Organizational Development*

- Strategic Planning
- Practice & Process Assessment
- Problem Solving Facilitation
- Marketing

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